

# NEWS

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United States Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey  
970 Broad Street, Seventh Floor  
Newark, New Jersey 07102

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***Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney***

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***More Information?*** Call the Assistant U.S. Attorney or other contact listed below to see if more information is available.

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***Go to:*** <http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/index.html>

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Construction Company Owner Indicted in Linden Housing Corruption Investigation

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(More)

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Public Affairs Office  
Michael Drewniak, PAO

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<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/index.html>

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NEWARK – A federal grand jury indicted the owner of an Elizabeth construction business today for allegedly paying bribes to a former Linden housing official in return for contracts valued at approximately \$652,448, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Ray Vella, 32, of Elizabeth, owner of Pavel Construction, was charged in the Indictment with five counts of mail fraud, one count of providing corrupt payments and one count of obtaining property by fraud.

The Indictment charges that Vella and others paid the bribes between about January 1998 and December 2006 to Frank Rose, formerly the field representative for Linden's Neighborhood Redevelopment Program. The bribes ranged from between \$500 to \$3,000 at a time. In return, the Indictment alleges that Rose awarded him approximately 16 contracts in construction services worth about \$652,448, according to Assistant U.S. Attorney Adam S. Lurie.

Each mail fraud count carries a statutory maximum penalty of 20 years in prison. The count of providing corrupt payments and the count of obtaining property by fraud each carries a statutory maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. All the counts carry a maximum fine of \$250,000.

Vella is not scheduled to appear in court today. He will be arraigned on the Indictment sometime over the course of the next two weeks, after the case is assigned to a U.S. District Judge.

On Feb. 14, Rose, 53, of Marco Island, Fla., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Anne E. Thompson in Trenton. Rose admitted accepting corrupt cash payments from five different contractors who won lucrative home repair and construction contracts, in exchange for exercising and agreeing to exercise his official influence in favor of the contractors' companies.

Frank Rose's brother Anthony, the former Director of the City of Linden Transportation and Parking Department, also pleaded guilty on Feb. 14 to paying corrupt cash payments to Frank Rose, as did another contractor who paid corrupt cash payments to Frank Rose, Walter Zawacki. On April 24, Venancio Ribeiro also pleaded guilty to making such payments to Frank Rose; Ribeiro was also a contractor who participated in the Linden construction program. For the news release on those guilty pleas, follow links to Feb. 14 and April 24 at the Public Affairs Office website:

[www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/2008releases.html](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/nj/press/2008releases.html)

Between January 1998 and October 2007, Frank Rose was the field representative for the

Neighborhood Redevelopment Program, which sought to revitalize homes and expand home ownership for low- and moderate-income people using federal funds received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. As the Program field representative, Rose directed the Program, solicited bids from contractors who sought Program contracts to revitalize homes, and was supposed to award contracts to the lowest bidders.

Rose admitted at his plea hearing that he solicited and accepted corrupt cash payments ranging from approximately \$500 to \$5,000 per job from five different contractors. Rose admitted that in exchange for the corrupt cash payments he “rigged” the bidding process so that the five contractors were ensured lucrative contracts ranging from approximately \$20,000 to \$60,000 per job.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun, and Special Agents of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Office of the Inspector General, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Rene Febles, for the investigation leading to the Indictment.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Richard E. Constable, III and Adam S. Lurie of the U.S. Attorney’s Special Prosecution’s Division in Newark.

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Defense counsel: Stephen J. Taylor, Esq.,