

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Former Ocean Township Mayor Weldon Gets 58 Months in Prison for Taking Bribes from Developers

(More)

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NEWARK – Terrance D. Weldon, the former mayor of Ocean Township and the city manager for Asbury Park, was sentenced today to 58 months in federal prison for extorting more than \$60,000 in cash bribes from three developers between 1998 and 2001, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

U.S. District Judge William H. Walls also fined Weldon \$20,000. Judge Walls ordered Weldon to surrender to the federal Bureau of Prisons by Jan. 21 to begin serving his prison sentence.

Under the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, Weldon faced a probable sentencing range of between 51 and 63 months in prison. There is no parole in the federal system and Weldon can be expected to serve nearly all of that time, except for potential good-inmate credits.

Weldon, 59, of Ocean Township, pleaded guilty to three counts of extortion on Oct. 10, 2002, admitting that he took cash bribes from three different developers. As noted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Mark McCarren today in court, Weldon's sentencing was delayed as he provided extensive cooperation to the FBI and U.S. Attorney's Office and due to health reasons.

Weldon cooperated with expanding corruption investigations in Monmouth County. His cooperation assisted the government in getting three other guilty pleas and the pending indictment against the founding member of a major public engineering company.

"This is a sad chapter in the career of another corrupt public official in New Jersey," said Christie. "We remain vigilant and active in identifying and prosecuting others like Weldon who serve themselves while purporting to serve the public."

"There doesn't seem to be an end to the corruption and greed in this state," said FBI Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun. "Mr. Weldon found out that there are severe consequences for corrupt acts by politicians people should be able to trust. Corrupt officials should pay attention. The bell is tolling."

Weldon had served as mayor of Ocean Township since 1991 and as city manager of Asbury Park from November 2000 until he was charged. Weldon, who was also a member of the Ocean Township Planning Board, admitted at his guilty plea that he took cash bribes for assisting three developers to secure zoning and subdivision approvals on three unrelated projects in Ocean Township.

Weldon admitted that in the late spring or early summer of 2001, he accepted \$50,000 in cash from a Neptune developer who sought and ultimately received approval to build a 75-unit residential development in Ocean Township. Weldon confirmed that he voted in favor of approving this development as a member of the Ocean Township Council on three

separate occasions, including a crucial vote to rezone the property to allow the developer to build as many homes as possible.

Weldon admitted that he hid the \$50,000 in his home. The cash was seized by the FBI during the execution of a court-authorized search warrant in January 2002.

Weldon also admitted receiving three separate payments ranging from between \$2,000 and \$3,000 each from a second developer in connection with a 328-unit residential development in Ocean Township. Weldon admitted that in connection with these payments, he assisted the second developer with applications to amend the site plan for the development in his role as a member of the Planning Board during 2001. Weldon also voted in favor of one of the site plan amendments.

Finally, Weldon admitted accepting a total of \$5,000 in two separate payments from a third developer who, in 1998 and 1999, was building homes along Mark Place in Ocean Township.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun, and the IRS Criminal Investigation Division, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge William P. Offord, for their work in developing the case against Weldon and others.

The government was represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney McCarren.

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Defense Attorney: Robert Galantucci, Esq.

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