

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 18, 2009

Ex-Union Business Manager Indicted for Running Up \$85,000 Credit Bill, Mostly at 'Gentlemen's Clubs'

(More)

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NEWARK – The former business manager of a Somerville carpenters union local appeared in federal court today on an indictment charging him with embezzlement from the union, Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr. announced.

Shawn Clark, 44, of Branchburg, was arrested early this morning by Special Agents of the Department of Labor Office of Inspector General. He is charged with conspiring with others to embezzle more than \$85,000 from Local 455 (Somerville) of the International Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners between December 2000 and December 2007.

The Indictment was returned on June 17, 2009. Clark appeared today for an initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge Esther Salas, who allowed Clark to be released on a \$100,000 unsecured bond. The sixteen-count Indictment charges Clark with one count of conspiracy to embezzle from Carpenter's Local 455 and fifteen counts of embezzlement.

From about 1996 until June 2008, Clark was employed by the New Jersey Regional Council of Carpenters as a Business Representative, but was also the defacto Business Manager and a member of Local 455. According to the Indictment, Clark was the sole holder of an American Express credit card which was issued to Local 455 and which was to be used solely for the business and benefit of Local 455 and its members.

Clark, however, allegedly used the credit card to make more than 450 separate charges at 14 different gentlemen's clubs, for a total of more than \$65,000. The Indictment categorizes a number of the charges, which include: 331 charges totaling more than \$49,000 at Double D's in Morristown; 59 charges totaling more than \$8,000 at Johnny A's Hitching Post in Paterson; 26 charges totaling more than \$3,500 at Torpedo's in Bound Brook; and nine charges totaling more than \$2,300 at Pure Go Go in Manville. On two separate occasions, Clark charged over \$1,000 on the credit card at Double D's, and he would routinely incur charges of over \$300 at a single visit to the various establishments, according to the Indictment.

The Indictment also alleges that Clark improperly used the union's credit card at other restaurants and bars, and that few of these expenditures were in the conduct of legitimate union business. For example, Clark made approximately 125 charges at Chimney Rock Inn restaurants in Bridgewater and Gillette, and approximately 40 charges at Bazooka's restaurant in Bridgewater, for a total of more than \$7,000.

The Indictment further alleges that Clark improperly used the union's credit card to make hundreds of purchases at a Staples store and at the United States Post Office, and that these purchases were also not in the conduct of official union business. These expenditures totaled approximately \$18,000.

Clark was fired from the New Jersey Regional Council of Carpenters in June 2008 and was expelled by the International Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners in January and fined \$50,000.

Each count of the Indictment carries a statutory maximum sentence of five years in prison, a

\$250,000 fine and restitution to the union.

Marra credited Investigators of the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Labor - Management Standards, under the direction of District Director Ralph E. Gerchak in New York, for the investigation leading to the Indictment.

The case is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jonathan W. Romankow of the Strike Force Unit in the U.S. Attorney's Office in Newark.

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Defense Counsel: John Fahy, Esq., Rutherford