

NEWS

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Monmouth County Developers Admit Bribing Utilities Authority Executive Director, Obstructing Justice

(More)

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NEWARK – Two Monmouth County developers and a business partner pleaded guilty today to bribing a sewer authority official with thousands of dollars in architectural drawings to gain favor in getting sewerage service to their projects in Marlboro Township, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Brothers Steven Meiterman, 44, of Marlboro, and Bernard Meiterman, 43, of Manalapan, also admitted obstructing the grand jury investigation into their dealings with the Executive Director of the Western Monmouth Utilities Authority (WMUA) by coaching the architect on how to testify falsely before the federal grand jury investigating their dealings in Monmouth County.

Bernard Meiterman is an attorney and acted as general counsel to the Meiterman companies.

Edward Kay, 39, of Marlboro, the Meitermans' business partner, an investor and bookkeeper in some of their real estate ventures, also pleaded guilty. All three defendants admitted before U.S. District Judge Susan D. Wigenton to bribing the sewer authority official, Frank G. Abate, by paying thousands of dollars in architectural drawings for Abate's home in exchange for Abate exercising his authority for their benefit. Steven Meiterman and Bernard Meiterman further admitted to coaching the architect to conceal the fact they had paid him for services on behalf of Abate, and to falsely inform law enforcement and a federal grand jury that he, the architect, "forgot" to bill Abate for the work.

Abate, of Marlboro, was convicted on May 25, 2007, following a two-week jury trial. On Aug. 13, 2007, Judge Wigenton sentenced Abate to 51 months in federal prison and fined him \$10,000.

"These were successful developers and businessmen," said Christie. "We now know that at least some of their success was built on bribery and contributed to the corruption infesting Monmouth County."

The charge to which Steven and Bernard Meiterman and Kay pleaded guilty, a violation of a federal law known as the Travel Act (using the U.S. mail to facilitate corrupt payments to a public official), carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine

Judge Wigenton scheduled sentencing for Feb. 7 for Bernard Meiterman and Feb. 14 for his brother and Kay. In the plea agreements, the parties stipulate that, under the advisory U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, Steven Meiterman faces a probable sentencing range of between 46 and 57 months in federal prison; Bernard Meiterman, 37 to 46 months and Kay, 18 to 24 months. The U.S. Sentencing Guidelines are advisory, and neither the

parties' stipulations nor the Sentencing Guidelines are binding on the court.

All three defendants were initially arrested and charged by Indictment on Dec. 6, 2006, and a federal grand jury returned a Superseding Indictment against them on March 20, 2007. They remain free on bail secured by equity in their respective homes in the amounts of \$250,000 for Steven Meiterman and \$200,000 for the other two defendants.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI's Red Bank Resident Agency, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weysan Dun, with the investigation leading to the charges against the Meitermans and Kay.

Christie also credited Assistant U.S. Attorney Judith H. Germano of the U.S. Attorney's Office, Special Prosecutions Division, in Newark, who is prosecuting the case.

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Defense Counsel:

Steven Meiterman:	Michael B. Himmel, Esq., and Maureen A. Ruane, Esq., Roseland
Bernard Meiterman:	Edward J. Dauber, Esq., Newark
Edward Kay:	Robert G. Stevens, Esq., Princeton