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TOWN OF BALL MAYOR SENTENCED FOR FEMA FRAUD

ALEXANDRIA, La.: Roy Hebron, the former Mayor of the Town of Ball, Louisiana, was sentenced yesterday to 48 months in federal prison and ordered to pay \$105,566.10 in restitution and a \$25,000.00 fine for his role in defrauding the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in the aftermath of Hurricanes Gustav and Katrina, United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley announced. U. S. District Judge Dee D. Drell also ordered three years of supervised release following the prison term and 200 hours of community service.

The 30-month joint investigation by the FBI and Office of Homeland Security lead to a three-count indictment against five defendants charging conspiracy, major disaster fraud, and theft of government money. Another defendant, Laverne James, was charged by bill of information with conspiracy. Roy Hebron, Jay Barber, Brenda Kimball and Laverne James all plead guilty to one count of conspiracy. Judy Crowe and Curtis Akins each plead guilty to one misdemeanor count of theft of government money.

The defendants overstated the hours that they worked and the vehicle and equipment used during Hurricanes Gustav and Rita in the time sheets that were submitted as part of the

Town of Ball's applications to be reimbursed by FEMA. As a result the defendants' fraud, the Town of Ball and its employees unlawfully received hundreds of thousands of dollars from FEMA following Hurricane Gustav and Hurricane Rita.

The other five defendants were sentenced on May 6, 2011. Jay L. Barber, 56, elected Chief of Police in July 2008, was sentenced to 3 years probation and ordered to complete 150 hours community service. He was also ordered to pay \$30,814.02 in restitution to FEMA and a \$10,000.00 fine.

Judy M. Crowe, 58, an employee of the Ball Police Department since July 2008, was sentenced to 3 years probation and ordered to complete 100 hours community service. She was also ordered to pay \$1,229.86 in restitution to FEMA and a \$5,000.00 fine.

Curtis A. Akins, 34, a police officer with the Ball Police Department since July 2007, was sentenced to 1 year probation and 100 hours community service. He was ordered to pay \$565.92 in restitution to FEMA and a \$2,000.00 fine.

Laverne J. James, 54, a clerk with the Ball Police Department since April 1993, was sentenced to 1 year probation and ordered to complete 50 hours community service. She was ordered to pay \$1,428.84 in restitution to FEMA and a \$3,000.00 fine.

Brenda F. Kimball, 54, the Town of Ball Clerk since May 2007, was sentenced to 9 months in prison, 3 years supervised release, and ordered to complete 150 hours of community service. She was also ordered to pay \$105,566.10 in restitution to FEMA and a \$6,000.00 fine.

United States Attorney Stephanie A. Finley stated: "The funding provided by FEMA to the Town of Ball was for the benefit of its citizens. These officials took advantage of the

system solely for greed. The biggest losers in all of this are the people in the community. This sentence should send a message that those who steal federal relief funds will be prosecuted and punished. I applaud the prosecutors, the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security for all of their hard work in this case.”

This investigation was conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Alexandria Resident Agency, and the Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General. The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Cytheria D. Jernigan and First Assistant U. S. Attorney Alexander C. Van Hook.

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