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Operation Bid Rig Corruption Sting One Year Later: Status Update on 25 from Hudson County, NJ



Friday, July 23, 2010

[The Jersey Journal](#)

Joseph Castagna, retired Jersey City Department of Health & Human Services employee, leaves court. He is accused of taking \$5,000 in bribes.

Here's a list of the public officials and others from **Hudson County** who were arrested in **Operation Bid Rig** one year ago today, and an update on that status of all their cases:

CONVICTED

Leona Beldini, former Jersey City Deputy Mayor...**Charge:** Two counts of bribery for accepting \$20,000, conspiracy to commit extortion under color of official right, two counts of attempted extortion under color of official right and one count of acceptance of things of value to influence and reward. **Update:** Guilty of two counts of bribery for accepting \$20,000; not guilty of other four charges; sentenced June 17 to three years in prison, two years of supervised release and \$30,000 fine. She has appealed.

PLEADED GUILTY

Peter Cammarano III, former Hoboken mayor **Charge:** Extortion conspiracy for accepting \$25,000 in bribes. **Update:** Scheduled to be sentence Aug. 3. *Update: The sentencing has been moved to Aug. 5.*

Guy Catrillo, former planning aide in Jersey City **Charge:** Attempted extortion under color of official right for accepting \$15,000 in bribes. **Update:** Fined \$4,000 and sentenced to 18 months in prison and three years of supervised release.

Maher Khalil, former deputy director of the Jersey City Department of Health and Human Services **Charge:** Extortion conspiracy for accepting **\$72,500 in bribes.**

Update: Awaiting sentencing. No date set.

Edward Cheatam, former Jersey City Housing Authority commissioner and Hudson County affirmative action officer **Charge:** Extortion conspiracy for accepting \$70,000 in bribes and funneling 5,000 of it to Jersey City Mayor Jerramiah T. Healy's re-election campaign. **Update:** Awaiting sentencing. No date set.

Denis Jaslow, former investigator for county Superintendent of Elections **Charge:** Extortion conspiracy for accepting \$15,500 in bribes. **Update:** Awaiting sentencing. No date set.

Philip Kenny, former Jersey City councilman **Charge:** Extortion conspiracy for accepting \$5,000 in bribes. **Update:** Sentenced to one year and one day in prison, two years of supervised release and \$4,000 fine.

Jimmy King, former Jersey City Parking Authority director and unsuccessful 2009 City Council candidate **Charge:** Extortion conspiracy for accepting \$10,000 in bribes. **Update:** Sentencing postponed pending the outcome of the Louis and Ronald Manzo cases, which challenge the law King was charged under.

Michael Manzo, retired Jersey City arson investigator and unsuccessful City Council candidate **Charge:** Extortion conspiracy for accepting \$5,000 in bribes. **Update:** Sentencing postponed and no new date has been set.

Michael Schaffer, a former Hoboken councilman and former North Hudson Sewerage Authority commissioner **Charge:** Extortion conspiracy for funneling \$25,000 in illicit campaign contributions to Cammarano. **Update:** Scheduled to be sentence Sept. 15.

Lavern Webb-Washington, unsuccessful Jersey City council candidate **Charge:** Extortion conspiracy for accepting \$15,000 in bribes. **Update:** Sentenced to one year and one day in prison, two years of supervised release. She must forfeit \$5,000. Her June prison surrender date was suspended pending the outcome of the Louis and Ronald Manzo cases.

PLEADED NOT GUILTY

L. Harvey Smith, a former state assemblyman who ran unsuccessfully for Jersey City mayor last year **Charge:** Indicted on charges of extortion conspiracy, attempted extortion and bribery for allegedly accepting \$15,000 in bribes. **Update:** Trial scheduled for Nov. 29.

Louis Manzo, former state assemblyman who ran unsuccessfully for mayor last year **Charge:** Indicted on charges of extortion conspiracy, attempted extortion, Travel Act bribery and mail fraud. **Update:** Extortion conspiracy and attempted extortion charges dismissed with judge saying Manzo could not be charged under the Hobbs Act because he did not hold office at the time. U.S. Attorney's office is appealing the decision.

Mariano Vega, an at-large Jersey City councilman **Charge:** Indicted on charges of extortion conspiracy, attempted extortion, bribery & false statements to feds. He allegedly accepted \$30,000 in bribes. **Update:** Trial scheduled for Oct. 12.

Moshe "Michael" Altman, a Union City real estate developer **Charge:** Indicted on charges of conspiracy, attempted extortion, bribery and money laundering. He's accusing of "washing" about \$668,000 through charities. He allegedly also accepted \$20,000 in bribes. **Update:** Trial scheduled for Jan. 11.

Joseph Cardwell, political consultant and Jersey City Municipal Utilities Authority Commissioner **Charge:** Indicted on bribery charges for allegedly accepting \$30,000 in bribes, \$10,000 of which was on behalf of an unnamed Jersey City official. **Update:** Trial scheduled for Nov. 8.

Dennis Elwell, former Secaucus mayor **Charge:** Indicted on charges of extortion conspiracy, attempted extortion and bribery for allegedly accepting \$10,000. **Update:** Trial scheduled for Feb. 1.

John Guarini, a suspended Jersey City Housing Authority employee **Charge:** Indicted on charges of extortion conspiracy, attempted extortion, bribery and tax fraud for allegedly accepting \$50,000. **Update:** Trial date has not been set.

Ronald Manzo, Louis Manzo's brother and mayoral campaign manager **Charge:** Indicted on charges of extortion conspiracy, attempted extortion, Travel Act bribery and mail fraud. **Update:** Extortion conspiracy and attempted extortion charges dismissed with judge saying he could not be charged under the Hobbs Act because he did not hold office at the time. The U.S. Attorney's office is appealing the decision. Ronald Manzo is also charged in Elwell's indictment for allegedly accepting \$5,000 to introduce Elwell and the government informant. He has pleaded not guilty to those charges as well.

Vincent Tabbachino, a former Guttenberg councilman **Charge:** Indicted in December on charges of extortion conspiracy, attempted extortion, bribery and money laundering for allegedly accepting \$10,000 in bribes. **Update:** Trial

scheduled for Sept. 8. *Update: He will go to trial on the extortion and bribery charges Oct. 4. The money laundering case will be tried separately.*

Lori Serrano, ran unsuccessfully for Jersey City Council last year

Charge: Indicted on extortion conspiracy and mail fraud charges for allegedly accepting \$10,000. **Update:** Trial date has not been set.

CHARGED BUT NOT INDICTED

Joseph Castagna, retired Jersey City Department of Health and Human Services employee **Charge:** Extortion conspiracy for allegedly accepting \$5,000 in bribes.

Richard Greene, aide to former assemblyman L. Harvey Smith

Charge: Conspiracy extortion for allegedly accepting \$5,000 in bribes and funneling them to Smith's mayoral campaign.

Jack Shaw, Jersey City political consultant

Charge: Conspiracy to commit extortion under color of official right for allegedly accepting \$10,000 in bribes. **Update:** Died days after he was charged. An autopsy found he overdosed on Valium, a prescription anti-anxiety medication.



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