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# Springfield mayor, police chief indicted

BY HEIDI R. KINCHEN  
Florida Parishes bureau  
July 13, 2012

7 COMMENTS



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The mayor and police chief of Springfield were indicted Thursday on four felony counts each of conspiring to hide a woman's 2011 citation for driving while intoxicated, state Attorney General Buddy Caldwell said.

Mayor Charles Martin, 62, and Police Chief James Jones, 48, are each accused of obstruction of justice, criminal conspiracy to obstruct justice, injuring public records and criminal conspiracy to injure public records, according to the four-count indictment returned by a Livingston Parish grand jury.

The charges stem from a conspiracy by Martin and Jones to conceal state evidence and to obstruct the prosecution of a suspect involved in

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an April 2011 DWI arrest, Caldwell said in a news release.

The pair were arrested in July 2011 on warrants obtained by the Louisiana Office of Inspector General following an investigation into the incident, Inspector General Stephen Street said Thursday.

According to the arrest warrants, Springfield Police Officer Ryan Weaver arrested Tyra Jones, of Hammond, on suspicion of driving while intoxicated on April 10, 2011.

Tyra Jones allegedly had a blood alcohol level of 0.185 percent, or more than twice the legal limit of 0.08, and was booked into the Livingston Parish Detention Center on DWI and reckless operation of a motor vehicle, according to the warrant.

Martin and Chief Jones later admitted, during an interview with Inspector General and FBI investigators, to concealing the arrest, the warrant states.

According to the warrant, the mayor admitted to illegally attempting to hide the Tyra Jones arrest after receiving phone calls from two close friends about the incident, and the police chief admitted to concealing the DWI report from the district attorney and state Department of Motor Vehicles after conferring with the mayor.

The Inspector General's Office also obtained a recording of a conversation between Chief Jones and Weaver in which the police chief said the original DWI report and related documents would be placed in a "closed" file at the police department, the warrant states.

"The audio also records Chief Jones further stating that, if anyone asked about the file, he would say that he submitted it to the District Attorney's Office and was unaware of what happened to it after he turned it in," the warrant states.

According to the warrant, Weaver repeatedly refused to participate in the concealment of the DWI arrest.

After multiple meetings with the mayor and police chief, however, Weaver began to fear retaliation and agreed to issue Tyra Jones a reckless operation citation listing Springfield Town Hall as the court, the warrant states.

"On the recording, Chief Jones makes an effort to assure Officer Weaver that the plan was legal, saying that the mayor had authority to amend misdemeanor DWI offense," the warrant states.

Louisiana law prohibits Mayors' Courts from judging DWI cases, the warrant states.

"This case is about public safety, pure and simple," Inspector General Stephen Street said Thursday. "Public officials should be doing everything they can to help keep drunks off the road, instead of using their positions to obstruct them from being prosecuted."

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Comments (7)

1) Comment by tradewinns - 07/13/2012

i hope she is one heck of a woman. she has cost these two their political careers and maybe a little jail time.

2) Comment by leftbr - 07/13/2012

Also, Buddy, the scope of your office does not say that you shall "pick and choose" who you investigate or bring charges against. Be sure and emphasize that to Marian!!!!!!!!!!!!

3) Comment by leftbr - 07/13/2012

And Buddy, your office allowed Sid, Captain Harris, Deputy Jenkins, Pitre, Lilly, Bush to get away with hiding the Captain's step-daughter's nasty little plot. Shame on you!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

4) Comment by CountryBoysCanSurvive - 07/13/2012

All is not well in Mayberry and yes she look's Kip's type.

5) Comment by MissCotillion - 07/12/2012

It was Kip Holden's girlfriend ;)

6) Comment by markedwardmarchiafava - 07/12/2012

I'm not really concerned with the "why" as much as I am with the fact the "just-us" system is alive and well in The Banana Republic of Louisiana.

7) Comment by ABayouBoy - 07/12/2012

Why?

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