

PRESS RELEASE

Former Hudson County Parks Department Director and Vendor Admit to Participating in a Bribe and Kickback Scheme; Second Former Hudson County Parks Department Director Charged

Friday, March 20, 2026

For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, District of New Jersey

NEWARK, N.J. – Former Hudson County Parks Department Director Thomas A. DeLeo (“DeLeo”) and business owner William A. Murray each pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit honest services fraud, Special Attorney Jordan Fox announced. DeLeo also admitted to conspiring to launder the proceeds of the scheme.

Special Attorney Fox also announced that Russell Fallacara, who succeeded DeLeo as Hudson County Parks Department Director, has been charged by complaint with conspiracy to commit honest services fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering for his role in the scheme.

On March 5, DeLeo, 76, of Little Silver, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Claire C. Cecchi to a two-count Information charging him with conspiracy to commit honest services fraud and conspiracy to commit money laundering. On March 17, Murray, 56, of Jersey City, also pleaded guilty before Judge Cecchi to an Information charging him with conspiracy to commit honest services fraud. On March 20, Fallacara, 58, of Bayonne, made his initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge André M. Espinosa and was released on bond.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made in court:

The conspiracy, which operated from in or around 2019 through in or around 2024, involved more than \$1.5 million in bribes and kickbacks. Murray made the payments to DeLeo and Fallacara so that Murray’s company would be awarded contracts to work on various Hudson County Parks Department projects, including but not limited to landscape maintenance, paving, and general contracting projects. The bribes and kickbacks often came in the form of cash payments to DeLeo and Fallacara. In one instance, DeLeo received a bag containing between approximately \$60,000 and \$90,000 in cash. In other instances, DeLeo received money that was transmitted through a

consulting company specifically formed to receive bribes and kickbacks, in order to conceal the source and nature of the payments. As alleged, Fallacara received over \$400,000 in cash bribes and kickback payments. Other bribes and kickbacks came in the form of free home repairs and renovations for DeLeo, Fallacara, and their associates.

During their respective tenures as Parks Department Director, DeLeo and Fallacara took official action in exchange for bribes and kickbacks to ensure that Hudson County awarded various contracts to Murray's company, which, over the course of the conspiracy, performed over \$5 million of work for Hudson County.

Both the conspiracy to commit honest services fraud charge and the conspiracy to commit money laundering charge carry a maximum penalty of 20 years' imprisonment.

Special Attorney Fox credited special agents of the FBI's Newark Field Office, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Stefanie Roddy, and special agents with the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Inspector General, Northeast Region, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Jonathan Mellone, with the investigation leading to the prior convictions and today's charges.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Matthew Specht and Francesca Liquori of the U.S. Attorney's Office's Special Prosecutions Division and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jason Goldberg, Chief of the Narcotics and International Trafficking Unit.

The charges and allegations contained in the complaint are merely allegations, and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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