



AG ANNOUNCES CONVICTION OF FORMER VFD ASSISTANT CHIEF FOR ETHICS VIOLATION AND THEFT IN AUTAUGA COUNTY

(MONTGOMERY) –Attorney General Luther Strange announced the conviction late yesterday of a former assistant chief of the Autaugaville Volunteer Fire Department for a felony ethics violation and third-degree theft. Mack Cell Harmon was found guilty by a jury in Autauga County Circuit Court following a two-day trial. Sentencing is set for August 20.

The Attorney General’s Special Prosecutions Division presented evidence to an Autauga County grand jury resulting in Harmon’s indictment in November of 2013. Also indicted were Danny Chavers, former chief of the Autaugaville VFD and a former chairman of the Autauga County Commission, and Ernest Terry Stoudemire, also a former chief of the Autaugaville VFD. Chavers pleaded guilty in March to five felony charges, two for violating the ethics law and three for first-degree theft. An ethics charge and a second-degree theft charge are pending against Stoudemire.

The evidence presented by the Attorney General’s Special Prosecutions Division showed that Harmon was the assistant chief of the Autaugaville Volunteer Fire Department in 2012. Using his official position, Harmon illegally obtained and kept \$500 of a donation made by a private citizen that was intended for the Fire Department. This occurred at a time when the Fire Department was recovering from the theft of its money by Danny Chavers and the donation was intended to help with expenses.

“These are serious crimes involving a betrayal of the public trust and the theft of money that belonged to a volunteer fire department,” said Attorney General Strange. “I am pleased that this defendant stands convicted of these violations and hope that he will face a stern punishment for his wrongdoing.”

Harmon’s ethics conviction is a class B felony, punishable by two to 20 years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$30,000. The third-degree theft violation is class A misdemeanor punishable by up to one year in the county jail and a fine of up to \$6,000.

Attorney General Strange commended those involved in bringing this case to a successful conclusion, noting in particular Assistant Attorneys General Bill Lisenby and Pete Smyczek of the Special Prosecutions Division, investigators of the Special Prosecutions Division and members of the Autaugaville Volunteer Fire Department.

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