

Dellinger Consulting working in El Dorado County without a license

By Kathryn Reed

A consulting firm that has come under tremendous scrutiny in the last year, including having a complaint filed against it by the El Dorado County District Attorney's Office, is also operating without a county business license.

That wrinkle is not part of the charges filed against Dellinger Consulting, which is operated by Dan Dellinger and Cris Alarcon. However, county ordinance allows for a \$500 fine per day for those operating without a business license. It is also a misdemeanor in California, which if found guilty, could mean jail time up to one year and a maximum fine of \$1,000.

The county's nonchalant approach to business license enforcement was the subject of a grand jury report in June. The grand jury found that in fall 2011 the non-compliance rate was 50 percent, while it was 10 percent by March 2012. The tax collector had been notified last fall.

Going after non-compliant businesses is a low priority for the district attorney.

However, he is pursuing a case against Dellinger to have the firm pay back the nearly \$30,000 it received from Pioneer Fire Protection District.

The DA's office has said, "Under the terms of the agreement between defendants and PFPD it is abundantly clear that Dan Dellinger and Christopher Alarcon were hired and paid, at taxpayer expense, to expressly advocate a position in favor of a ballot measure to raise taxes."

Robert Laurie, who is working on behalf of Dellinger Consulting, issued a statement this month saying, "It is not up to me or Mr. Dellinger to try and guess the DA's motives. However, it seems to me that the Pioneer District acted very responsibly in taking the actions that they did and they are successful, in major part, because of the efforts of Mr. Dellinger. Nearly 80 percent of the voters are happy with the result. Why in the world would the district attorney have a problem with that?"

The Pioneer Fire Protection District hired the consultants after Dellinger listed Superior Court Judge Steve Bailey as a reference. The firm managed the political campaigns of Sheriff John D'Agostini and county Supervisor Ray Nutting. The consulting firm is now providing advice to Superior Court Judge Warren Stracener for his November election. Former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed Stracener to the bench. Dellinger is also in the same camp as Rico Oller, who represented Lake Tahoe in the California Assembly and Senate, and who is trying to be this area's assemblyman again.

A court hearing on the case is scheduled for January.