

Ed foundation admits taking money from known felon

By Kathryn Reed

“After several days of no comments, I feel that it is time to make a more detailed statement about the rumors that have been published as fact,” Lake Tahoe Educational Foundation President Nancy Rollston wrote in a Sept. 9 email to her board and others.

The press release that was sent to only one media outlet on Sept. 10 – and *Lake Tahoe News* was not that outlet – confirms what *Lake Tahoe News* has already published. And that is that disgraced South Lake Tahoe City Councilwoman Angela Swanson was at a meeting where Rollston took a donation of \$1,128 from Gino DiMatteo.



But the nonprofit education group does not explain the odd dollar amount that was delivered in cash in a bag.

DiMatteo was arrested Aug. 31 on charges of bribing Swanson and various drug related infractions. He has pleaded not guilty to all charges. Swanson has not been charged.

DiMatteo is a felon. *Lake Tahoe News* last week asked the city attorney, city manager and police chief the following questions: *Can you please give me Gino's application for his pot shop? Was a criminal check done? What did it turn up? I thought if anyone had a criminal background, they couldn't open a pot shop if they had a criminal background. Where is the truth in that?*

No one from the city has answered any of those questions.

El Dorado County Deputy District Attorney James Clinchard, who is prosecuting the case, continues not to return phone calls. So, Swanson's future is unknown.

The press release says a foundation officer was interviewed by district attorney's investigators Aug. 31. The other officers besides Rollston are Pradip Patel-vice president, Jerry Bindel-treasurer, Debra McHugh-secretary, and Chris Campion-past president.

The press release says, "Although Angela Swanson was present, she did not accept the contribution." Swanson is on the ed foundation board.

That does not exonerate her under the letter of the law.

The press release says the foundation was given the money June 13. The alleged bribery, according to the complaint that was released Sept. 4, took place on or between June 5-13.

In a statement, Swanson has said she did nothing "intentionally" wrong.

However, it was Swanson who initiated the transaction.

DiMatteo and those who have been on the receiving end of DiMatteo's generosity have publicly stated at multiple City Council meetings how he has given money to multiple organizations and individuals in town.

DiMatteo as owner of City of Angels 2 was before the City Council multiple times either advocating for his industry or seeking votes from the council related specifically to his now shuttered business. Swanson has always been a strong advocate for medical marijuana, having a family member who she has told *Lake Tahoe News* is not ill who has a card to get the drug-medicine.

Swanson did not return a phone call.

