

S. Tahoe councilwoman implicated in bribery case

By Kathryn Reed

South Lake Tahoe City Councilwoman Angela Swanson is the public official Gino DiMatteo is accused of bribing.

“I have been advised by the El Dorado County District Attorney’s Office that I am involved in an investigation into the activities of Gino DiMatteo. I have cooperated with the district attorney’s investigation and I will continue to do everything I can to assist the investigation until the matter is concluded,” Swanson told *Lake Tahoe News*.



Angela Swanson

Swanson said the revelation that she could be part of this came as a “shock and affront” to her.

DiMatteo was arrested Aug. 31 at Bank of America in South Lake Tahoe on charges of felony possession of a controlled substance, possession of marijuana for sale, and bribing a public official.

The DA’s complaint has not been released, but could be on Sept. 4. Key to the charges is the word “attempted” is not used in relation to the bribery charge.

However, as of Sept. 3, Swanson has not been charged with any crime. She has retained an attorney.

Police officers and DA investigators were at the Swanson residence on Friday night, the same day they served search warrants at DiMatteo's banking institution, his house and current business – Push Fitness.

Also arrested Friday was DiMatteo's wife, Irene. She faces felony charges of possession of marijuana for sale, possession of concentrate cannabis, and conspiracy to commit a crime.

Both DiMatteos are still in jail.

District attorney's officials and South Lake Tahoe officials remain mum about the case.

Swanson said she does not intend to step down from the City Council because she has done nothing wrong. She told *Lake Tahoe News* she would step aside from certain duties if she would be a controversial figure. Swanson also said she will not be involved in open or closed session discussions involving DiMatteo, medical marijuana or the current case she is party to. The council on Tuesday morning will be discussing DiMatteo's claim against the city.

Swanson's colleagues on the City Council are for the most part taking a backseat until more details come forward. Mayor Claire Fortier and Councilman Tom Davis had no comment.

Councilman Hal Cole told *Lake Tahoe News*, "This is probably the worst thing any official could be accused of. I just hope for the best."

Councilman Bruce Grego said, "I don't know whether she is a witness or what her position is in this. I have not talked to her."

Former South Lake Tahoe City Manager Tony O'Rourke told *Lake Tahoe News* he last spoke with DiMatteo after the council decided to not allow him to move his medicinal marijuana shop. While he was not surprised by the arrest based on all the

allegations swirling around the pot shops, he was surprised Swanson would be a target of an investigation.