



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release:

Jessup man sentenced to a total of 8 years in prison for stealing more than \$100,000 dollars from a local community association

Howard County, MD (March 11, 2022) – Paul Wayne Wharton, age 72, was sentenced today to 10 years suspend all but five years for a series of thefts committed over an 18-month period. He was found guilty of a theft-scheme over \$100,000 by a jury on October 14, 2021.

Wharton, who was the treasurer of the Ridgely's Run Community Association from January 2017 to December 2018, misused funds from the association's account and made unauthorized payments to his company and himself, submitted fraudulent rent payments for his residence in Jessup and engaged in unauthorized debit card purchases at an estimated total value of \$122,000 dollars.

Wharton has already paid \$40,000 dollars in restitution and was ordered, as part of his sentence, to pay the remaining amount of \$81,352.97.

Additionally, Wharton was also sentenced to three years in jail, with credit for one-day of time served, on a violation of probation for a mortgage fraud case from 2014. The violation of probation sentence (three years) is consecutive to the theft-scheme sentence (five years) for a total of eight years of incarceration.

"When you think of the scope of deception Wharton exhibited in stealing money not once, but 150 times over a nearly two-year period, his actions are stunning," said State's Attorney Rich Gibson. "He not only betrayed the trust and confidence of board members of the Ridgely's Run Association, but also friends, associates and the community who directly benefit from the programs and events being sponsored at that center."

Upon release from the Division of Corrections, Wharton will be placed on supervised probation for five years, must undergo any recommended mental health and drug treatment and abstain from alcohol and drugs. Judge J. Barry Hughes also ordered a civil judgment in favor of Ridgely's Run for \$81,352.97.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant State's Attorney Dillon C. Yeung.

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