State of Alaska
DEPARTMENT OF LAW

PRESS RELEASE

Former Pilot Station Mayor Pleads Guilty to Felony Election Interference

November 14, 2024

(Bethel, AK) – Today, 68-year-old Arthur Sammy Heckman, Sr. entered a guilty plea to one felony charge of Unlawful Interference with an Election for inducing or attempting to induce an election official to fail in the official's duty by force, threat, intimidation, or offers of reward.

Heckman was indicted in July 2024 on eight felony charges and eight misdemeanor charges for misconduct involving the 2022 and 2023 Pilot Station municipal elections while he served as Acting Mayor. The remaining charges were dismissed as part of the plea agreement.

Heckman began serving as Acting Mayor of Pilot Station after the death of former Mayor Nicky Myers in May 2022. Under the Pilot Station Municipal Code, Heckman should have served as Acting Mayor until the Oct. 2022 municipal election, when a Mayor would be officially elected by the newly-seated City Council. Immediately after the Oct. 2022 election, Heckman directed that the ballots be placed in a locked filing cabinet and not counted. In Oct. 2023, Heckman directed that an election not be held in Pilot Station. This misconduct was brought to the attention of the Office of Special Prosecutions and the Alaska State Troopers by concerned Pilot Station citizens and City Council members, and by the Local Government Specialists for the region.

This case was investigated by Sergeant Nathan Bucknall of the Alaska State Troopers' Alaska Bureau of Investigation. The case was prosecuted by Assistant Attorney General Erin McCarthy of the Office of Special Prosecutions.

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The Attorney General and Department of Law staff may not provide legal advice to private citizens or organizations. Please contact an attorney if you need legal advice.
The Alaska Lawyer Referral Service or your local bar association may be able to assist you in locating a lawyer.