

News Roundup

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Three former Buncombe County officials and one former county employee who previously [pleaded guilty](#) to corruption charges were sentenced this week in federal court in Asheville. As WLOS [reports](#), former county manager Wanda Greene, former county manager Mandy Stone, former county assistant manager Jon Creighton, and former county employee Michael Greene each were sentenced to terms of imprisonment for their various corrupt activities. Joseph Wiseman, a businessman who frequently contracted with the County and pleaded guilty to a conspiracy charge related to bribery and kickback schemes with some of the officials, also was sentenced to prison. Prosecutors said that more indictments in the case are forthcoming. Keep reading for more news.

Greene. Judge Robert Conrad described Wanda Greene as the “architect of a culture of corruption” and sentenced her to 84 months in prison and fined her \$100,000 based on her plea to [four corruption charges](#). Greene used county credit cards for her own benefit, engaged in fraud, and participated in the bribery and kickback scheme with Wiseman.

Creighton. Jon Creighton was sentenced to 18 months in prison and one year of supervised release. He also was fined \$25,000. Creighton pleaded guilty to participating in the [kickback and bribery scheme](#) involving Wiseman.

Stone. Mandy Stone was sentenced to 33 months in prison, one year of supervised release, and was fined \$15,000 for her participation in the [kickback and bribery scheme](#).

Wiseman. Joseph Wiseman, of Georgia, was sentenced to 37 months in prison in connection with the [kickback and bribery scheme](#). Wiseman apparently has worked with Buncombe County for over 30 years and the county was his engineering firm’s primary client between 2014 and 2017.

Greene. Michael Greene, Wanda’s son, was sentenced to six months in prison and fined \$5,000 in connection with his conspiracy plea relating to [misuse of county credit cards](#). Michael was aware that Wanda was using county funds to buy electronics, cell phones, and gift cards for the family.

Guns in Dorm. The Associated Press [reports](#) that a freshman at High Point University, Paul A. Steber, was arrested this week after another student alerted authorities that Steber had guns and ammunition in his dorm room. Steber was charged with possessing a gun on campus and making threats of mass violence. Disturbingly, the AP report says that Steber had been watching videos online about how to carry out a mass shooting.

Election Charges. The Wilmington Star-News [reports](#) that Surf City Town Councilman Jeremy Shugarts was charged late last week with six felonies related to allegations that he repeatedly claimed a Surf City residence that was not accurate in elections filings. Shugart currently is running for mayor in Surf City.

Pool Plea. Rockingham Now [reports](#) that former Eden city manager Brad Corcoran entered an Alford plea this week to a felony charge of larceny by an employee in connection with falsifying timesheets. Corcoran added hours to his daughter’s timesheets for her work as a part time lifeguard, without her knowledge, and deposited the extra funds into his own account. He was sentenced to 18 months of supervised probation and ordered to pay \$20,000 in restitution to the city.

Equal Justice. The Appeal recently published a [story](#) about a billionaire’s plea bargain in Las Vegas that has raised questions about equal treatment of criminal defendants in that jurisdiction. Henry T. Nicholas III, a co-founder of Broadcom and a major supporter of Marsy’s Law, was arrested earlier this month on drug trafficking charges after a wide range of illegal drugs were discovered in his hotel room. He entered into an Alford plea agreement requiring him to perform community service, attend drug counseling sessions, and donate half a million dollars to a “yet undetermined” drug treatment facility in Las Vegas. The article says that public defenders have developed draft motions asking for plea deals for their clients that are as favorable as Nicholas’s.