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Wapakoneta Mayor Charged with Corruption

(WAPAKONETA, Ohio) — An Auglaize County grand jury has indicted Wapakoneta Mayor Thomas Stinebaugh on public corruption charges related to business dealings that he conducted while in his elected position, Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost announced today.

Stinebaugh was indicted on eight counts of having an unlawful interest in a public contract, a felony of the fourth degree; eight counts of conflict of interest, a misdemeanor of the first degree; and one count of theft in office, a felony of the third degree.

“This case is a textbook example of public corruption: the leveraging of a public position to gain improper personal benefits,” Yost said. “The taxpayers of Auglaize County deserve better and we’re going to ensure that no one is above the rule of law.”

The charges stem from allegations that in his capacity as mayor, Stinebaugh entered into contracts with family members and a business partner. Additionally, he is accused of having the city pay for a sewer line on a property that his private company was developing. These incidents occurred between 2016 and 2019.

Suspension proceedings will be initiated for Stinebaugh under Ohio Revised Code 3.16, which authorizes the suspension of a public official who has been charged with a felony in a state or federal court when the felony relates to the performance of the official’s duties.

The case was investigated by the Ohio Ethics Commission and the Bureau of Criminal Investigation. The Ohio Attorney General’s Special Prosecutions Section is prosecuting the case.