



The City of New York  
Department of Investigation

ROSE GILL HEARN  
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**DOI ARRESTS PARKS EMPLOYEE FOR ACCEPTING BRIBE**

ROSE GILL HEARN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the arrest of GREGORY FERGUSON, a Crew Chief with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR), for allegedly receiving a \$60 bribe from a DOI undercover investigator posing as an Alternative Sentencing Program (ASP) participant in exchange for buying his way out of two days of court-ordered community service in McCarren Park in Brooklyn.

FERGUSON, 45, of Manhattan, has been charged with Bribe Receiving in the Third Degree, a class D felony, Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, a class E felony, and Receiving Reward for Official Misconduct in the Second Degree, a class E Felony. If convicted, he faces up to seven years in prison.

Commissioner Gill Hearn said, "Community service is not meant to be a walk in the park. It is a court-ordered alternative to jail time and is meant to be served. Excusing an ASP participant from assigned community service in exchange for personal monetary gain is a crime and DOI will continue to actively monitor and arrest such individuals."

ASP participants are defendants who have committed offenses ranging from violations to misdemeanors, and are sentenced to perform community service. Following the arrests of DPR employees JANET BILLUPS in April 2006 and ESSEX POPE in March 2005 for receiving bribes from ASP participants in Manhattan, DOI conducted proactive integrity tests of DPR employees in Brooklyn's parks to determine if ASP participants in that borough could buy their way out of court-ordered community service. POPE was sentenced to 90 days in jail and 200 hours of community service; BILLUPS' case is currently pending.

On June 10, 2006, a DOI undercover investigator posing as an ASP participant serving two days of community service, met with FERGUSON at McCarren Park in Brooklyn. The undercover told FERGUSON that he did not want to work and asked FERGUSON if he could leave. According to the criminal complaint, FERGUSON stated to the undercover, "Okay, Okay, sixty bucks. We just got to keep this between me and you though." After the undercover paid Ferguson \$60 for two days of credit, FERGUSON told him to return at 7:00 a.m. the next day, June 11, 2006, at which time FERGUSON told the undercover to sign a weekly attendance sheet for June 10 and 11, 2006. FERGUSON then checked two boxes on the form stating that the undercover completed two days of community service.

DOI Commissioner Gill Hearn thanked DPR Commissioner Adrian Benepe and his staff for their assistance and cooperation in the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI Deputy Inspector General for DPR Theresa Land-Latta, and members of her staff, including Chief Investigator Belarminia Ortiz and Confidential Investigator George Shabouk, under the supervision of DOI Deputy Commissioner Vincent E. Green. The Office of the Brooklyn District Attorney Charles J. Hynes is prosecuting the case.

Criminal complaints are accusations. Defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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