

Aneth official pleads guilty to stealing \$105K in HUD funding

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AG: Used for personal, family gain

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Attorney General Ethel Branch announced July 24 that Victor Dee, the former acting executive director of the Aneth Community Development Corporation, an agency that receives funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, has pled guilty to charges brought by federal prosecutors relating to his misappropriation of \$105,000 of HUD funds that he used to benefit himself and his family members.

“The Navajo Nation will continue to make it a priority to hold all tribal officials accountable for these types of abuses,” Branch said. “We will no longer allow individuals to enrich themselves and their families at the expense of the health and strength of our community.”

The prosecution arose from an audit of the Aneth Community Development Corporation conducted by the Navajo Nation Office of the Auditor General at the request of the Aneth Chapter.

The audit found that Dee had taken, or otherwise mismanaged, significant sums of government funding, and recommended charges be brought against him.

The Auditor General, with assistance from the Navajo Nation Office of the Prosecutor, investigated the audit findings. The tribal investigation revealed that Mr. Dee had abused his

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position and the findings were turned over to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the United States Attorney's Office.

As acting executive director of the Aneth Community Development Corporation, Dee was responsible for ensuring federal funds received by the agency were used for economic development opportunities for the Aneth Chapter.

On July 11, Dee pled guilty to a federal felony in the U.S. District Court for the District of Utah for willfully misapplying over \$100,000 of HUD funding, with the intent to defraud HUD, by giving that funding to himself and his family members.

Dee's plea agreement will require him to repay the \$105,000 that he misappropriated, and the prosecution will recommend that he be given a 6-month sentence with half served in incarceration and half served in home confinement.

However, the final sentence will be decided by the Judge at a sentencing hearing in September 2017. The plea agreement does not bar the Navajo Nation Department of Justice from pursuing its own charges against Dee.