

DA's Office investigating allegations that Greece supervisor had worker do private jobs



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The Monroe County District Attorney's Office is investigating allegations in a lawsuit that a former Town of Greece employee did private jobs for years at the behest of Town Supervisor Bill Reilich and Deputy Supervisor Michelle Marini.

In the lawsuit, Robert "Bobby" Johnson, who worked for Greece for 36 years, alleges that Reilich had him work at the supervisor's private business in Sweden, called "Hot Rod Ranch," where cars are refurbished and resold. Reilich sometimes paid him minimally for the work, and other times had him use paid time off, the lawsuit alleges.



The allegations from Johnson, the town's former public works deputy commissioner, could if true constitute crimes — namely offenses centered on

the falsification of official records or the misuse of power by government officials. However, at this point the allegations are just that — claims in a civil lawsuit that have yet to be vetted by the forthcoming litigation much less tested for criminal elements.

A statement from District Attorney Sandra Doorley did not reveal much about the office's investigation, or whether other law enforcement has or could be called upon to assist. In the statement, she said: "We have been made aware of certain allegations against the Greece Town Supervisor and other members of the Town of Greece administration. We will make no further comment on the investigation at this time."



The investigative agencies could be local, state or federal, should there be grounds for deeper scrutiny. The DA's Office could rely on its own investigators, or enlist from other agencies, such as the State Police.

In a response, Reilich and Marini said in a statement Tuesday: "Although the Town has not yet been formally served with a complaint, we are aware of the allegations levied by Robert Johnson. The Town looks forward to vigorously

defending against this lawsuit in a court of law. This administration is dedicated to serving this community, and this lawsuit will not distract us from our focus on providing for the residents and businesses in the Town of Greece."



Johnson alleges that the private work at the ranch morphed into more personal chores for Reilich and Marini, including work at their homes. He retired, he alleged, after Reilich suggested he lie to the District Attorney's Office in its 2021 investigation into the drunken driving crash of then Police Chief Andrew Forsythe.

The town then withheld health benefits Johnson was due in retirement, the lawsuit alleges.

"What happened to Bobby Johnson is reprehensible and we welcome any action that holds those responsible accountable," Johnson's lawyer, Maureen Bass, said in a statement Wednesday about the DA's investigation. Bass is an attorney with Abrams Fensterman LLP.

Past crimes committed by Greece officials demonstrate the number of different law enforcement entities that could become involved. The DA's Office itself investigated Forsythe's drunken driving crash, and also revealed an internal coverup of the crash within the department.

When a Greece assessor conspired with an appraiser to lie about corporate assessments in exchange for kickbacks, the FBI led the investigation, working with other local agencies.

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