

1 IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
2 WESTERN DISTRICT OF ARKANSAS
3 FAYETTEVILLE DIVISION
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6 IN RE: USAO [REDACTED]
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10 Transcript of the interview of
11 Eddie Cooper
12 Taken on February 16, 2017
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1 today?

2 MR. COOPER: Yeah, he never indicated to me
3 that he paid it or anybody else paid it. But apparently
4 somebody paid it. Him or Tom Goss paid it. It appears
5 that way.

6 MR. ELSER: Just so we have it on tape, I don't
7 remember if we recorded it. So just relate what
8 happened between -- when you were present between Woods
9 and Rusty. Can you relate it again? I don't think it
10 was on tape because we were going to ask about that last
11 time, and just so that we have it.

12 MR. COOPER: We were just -- our office is
13 straight across the street from the capital, and a lot
14 of senators and representatives would come over there
15 and talk. You know, we'd ask them, hey, we need help on
16 this bill and they'd come over and talk about it. And
17 Woods came in and -- I don't know what day it was.
18 Whenever. But anyway, he essentially threatened Rusty
19 in front of me and said, "I'm not wearing a wire. I
20 have people that I have to take care of today. I need
21 my \$30,000 by the end of work today." Rusty -- probably
22 because I was in the room -- told him to "Go fuck
23 himself. I don't know what you're talking about." And
24 he said, "I will ruin you on the hill if I don't have my
25 money by the end of the day. There's people I have to

1 take care of." I think one of them he was talking about
2 was Michael Lamoureux, president of the senate at the
3 time.

4 MR. CESSARIO: Why do you think that?

5 MR. COOPER: Because Michael and Woods were
6 real instrumental in Woods getting the \$2 million.

7 MR. CESSARIO: Okay.

8 MR. COOPER: Michael worked whatever magic with
9 the governor's office to say, hey, we're going to give
10 this guy 2 million.

11 MR. CESSARIO: So you think Woods owed
12 Lamoureux some money based on that transaction?

13 MR. COOPER: That's what it sounded like. I
14 don't know who else he would have owed it to, because
15 Lamoureux was the one who could say, yeah -- because if
16 you're president of The Senate, you get to say where
17 it's going.

18 MR. CESSARIO: Do you know how he would have
19 paid him?

20 MR. COOPER: Well, I mean, if Rusty or Tom
21 would have given him cash money, I'm assuming somewhere
22 he would have gave part of it --

23 MR. CESSARIO: Okay.

24 MR. COOPER: -- to Lamoureux or same as the
25 Neal thing. The same deal.

1 MR. CESSARIO: Okay.

2 MR. ELSER: So do you remember -- do you
3 remember when approximately that was, Eddie? Do you
4 have any idea on a time frame for that meeting?

5 MR. COOPER: That would have been the second
6 legislative session Jon Woods served as senator, about
7 three months after the session ended. Because it took
8 about that long before the state started disbursing the
9 money.

10 MR. ELSER: So in '13 is when he got -- it's
11 his first term. Is that his first term in '13?

12 MR. COOPER: I thought it was his second.

13 MR. ELSER: That's his first. So he gets
14 elected in '12 and begins serving in '13?

15 MR. COOPER: Does he have a four-year term?

16 MR. CESSARIO: Yes. They changed the rules at
17 that point I think to four years.

18 MR. COOPER: Well, you draw.

19 MR. CESSARIO: Yeah.

20 MR. COOPER: It's luck of draw whether you get
21 a 2 or 4 when you're a senator. I didn't know what
22 length he had.

23 MR. ELSER: That's right. Because he was
24 running again this time. That's right.

25 MR. COOPER: But I thought it was in the second

1 term that he got so much money. It might have been the
2 first.

3 MR. ELSER: It was the first. So that would
4 mean that it was after the session had ended in '13 but
5 before the money had been sent out by the agencies or,
6 you know?

7 MR. COOPER: Right. And whatever day --
8 apparently, it was time for the agencies to send the
9 money out.

10 MR. ELSER: Right. So the process -- just see
11 if I have this right. They do the appropriation bills
12 for the GIF funds. Then there's a bill at the end that
13 funds it all, and that's when you determine whether or
14 not particular appropriations are actually going to get
15 money out of that and how much; is that right?

16 MR. COOPER: Right.

17 MR. ELSER: And then there's a period,
18 depending on where the money goes, for the development
19 districts, it goes to DF&A. Some of them go to DHS.
20 But anyway, they have that process where the session
21 ends, and there's a period before the money actually
22 gets transmitted from those agencies for purposes of the
23 grant; is that right?

24 MR. COOPER: Yeah. That's right. And the
25 state kind of drags their feet along on it. And, you

1 know, it may -- it may be like July 1st when it happens.

2 MR. ELSER: Right.

3 MR. COOPER: The fiscal year of the state was
4 July 1st to June 30th. They don't run January to
5 January. That's their budget cycle.

6 MR. ELSER: So at some point, probably July or
7 maybe after July 1st is when the money actually gets
8 released because it's now going to be available for the
9 new fiscal term? Something like that?

10 MR. COOPER: Yeah.

11 MR. ELSER: And so it's going to be during that
12 period where Woods has already known -- he knows now the
13 money has been released and he needs -- he's demanding
14 30,000 to pay somebody else and says he's got to pay
15 them today; is that right?

16 MR. COOPER: Right.

17 MR. ELSER: Okay.

18 MR. COOPER: And the state -- I say they drag
19 their feet. The state is funded in three categories, A,
20 B, and C. A is mandatory. Keep your prisons open,
21 whatever. You know? The schools, mandatory things that
22 have to be done. Category B, GIF would fall under. If
23 it's available, it gets out. Category C never gets
24 funded.

25 MR. ELSER: Right.

1 MR. COOPER: You can pass anything you want.
2 If it gets put in category C, nothing is going to
3 happen.

4 MR. ELSER: Okay. So, now, I guess, do you
5 know about the -- some of the GIF funds going to South
6 Arkansas Youth Services and a Jerry Walsh?

7 MR. COOPER: Well, I didn't know -- I don't
8 know that. But when you started asking me questions
9 about that, I -- my mind started clicking. Well, if GIF
10 money went there, I understand how it could have been
11 paid out. It was probably not paid out -- it wasn't
12 said, you know, you're getting paid from GIF money. But
13 got paid for something.

14 MR. ELSER: Right.

15 MR. COOPER: And the way that -- if there was
16 GIF money that Walsh and youth services -- South
17 Arkansas Youth Services -- if they did get GIF money --
18 for whatever reason, Jerry Walsh had -- he paid Rusty
19 Cranford's son enough money over a two-year period that
20 he bought and paid for a house in Little Rock that cost
21 \$125,000.

22 MR. ELSER: So Chase Cranford you're talking
23 about?

24 MR. COOPER: Right.

25 MR. CESSARIO: Did Chase ever work there?