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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Former Dayton Employee Sentenced to 5 Years

State v. Christen Turner 2014-CR-2852

DAYTON, OH (02/24/2015) – Prosecuting Attorney Mat Heck, Jr. announced today that **Christen C. Turner**, 39, of Dayton, was sentenced to five years in prison for her conviction on 145 felony counts involving a theft scheme from the City of Dayton.

In 2013, suspicious activity in one of the City of Dayton's financial accounts, the city's "Morals Fund", prompted an internal review. On December 9, 2013, after the internal review, the defendant, a city employee since 1996, who was employed in the office of the city law director and was given the authority to sign approval of legitimate claims in the amount of \$2,500 or less, was fired from her position. The Dayton Police Department initiated a lengthy and complex investigation, with assistance from BCI, Secret Service and the Prosecutor Office's Consumer Fraud and Economics Crime Division Investigators.

The investigation revealed that between 2009 and 2013, the defendant and others were involved in a criminal scheme wherein the defendant would create false claims against the city in her friends' names, sign approval for the fake claims and give the checks to her friends.

These co-conspirators, none of whom worked for the City of Dayton, would then either cash the checks or have others cash the checks on their behalf, and everyone would then share in the proceeds. In total, the defendant was responsible for issuing 146 checks, stealing about \$385,000 from the City of Dayton. Eight of the co-conspirators were previously convicted. Two received probation, three were sentenced to prison, and three are awaiting sentencing.

The defendant was convicted of one count of Engaging in a Pattern of Corrupt Activity, one count of Theft in Office over \$7,500, and 143 counts of Tampering With Government Records. The court sentenced the defendant to serve five years in the penitentiary, pay full restitution in the amount of \$384,937.93 to the City of Dayton and never seek employment with a public office once she is released from prison. The defendant's retirement pension account will be forfeited to the City as a partial payment towards the restitution.

Prosecutor Heck continued, "Most public employees do their job because of a desire to serve the public and are good, trustworthy and dedicated. However, this defendant is the exception – she violated the public's trust and stole money not just from the City of Dayton, but every resident of Dayton."

Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl added, "I want to personally thank the Montgomery County Prosecutor and the Assistant Prosecutors for their tenacity in ensuring the responsible party is held accountable and seeing the City of Dayton receives restitution in this matter."

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