

## Ex-Detroit mayor aide guilty in sex scandals

Special to Sentinel-Voice

DETROIT — Stoic and publicly silent through months of a sex scandal, the woman whose relationship with former Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick led to his downfall broke her silence Monday, shedding tears as she pleaded guilty.

Christine Beatty, a former aide to the mayor, accepted a four-month jail sentence in exchange for admitting to obstruction of justice charges for her actions in a civil lawsuit brought by two police officers. The officers claimed Kilpatrick retaliated against them when they suspected wrongdoing by members of his inner circle.

Sexually explicit text messages between Kilpatrick and Beatty, published in January by the *Detroit Free Press*, contradicted witness-stand denials they were having an affair. Both were married at the time.

"I lied under oath," Beatty told the judge, echoing the words Kilpatrick used during his own guilty plea in September.

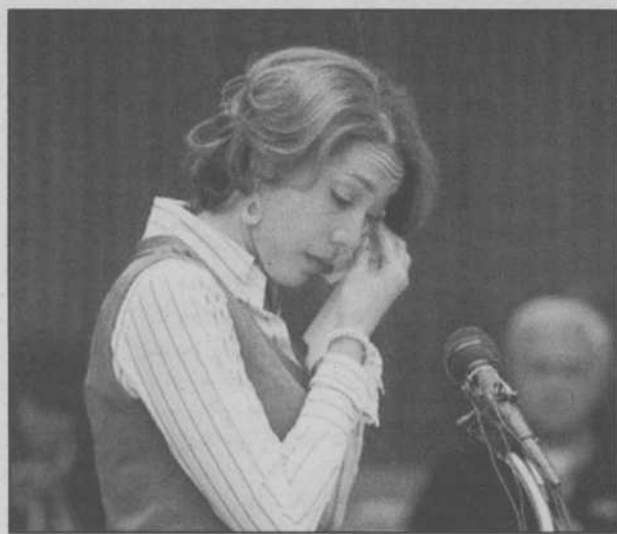
"I did so with the intent to mislead the court and jury and to impede and obstruct the fair administration of justice," she said in pleading guilty to two felonies.

Beatty, 38, initially was unable to choke back tears.

Wayne County Circuit Judge Timothy Kenny gave her a moment to compose herself.

Beatty's jail sentence will begin Jan. 5. With credit for good behavior, she could be free in 100 days.

Beatty, the mother of



Former Detroit mayoral aide Christine Beatty wipes away a tear and pauses while reading statements admitting to two felony charges agreed upon in plea deal in the city's text-messaging sex scandal in Judge Timothy Kenny's courtroom at the Frank Murphy Hall of Justice in Detroit.

two young daughters who has since gotten divorced, had vigorously fought her case until Monday.

"It was time to get it over with, get on with her life, get it out of her children's lives," defense lawyer Mayer Morganroth said outside court. "Otherwise it goes on and on."

Beatty refused to speak to reporters as she left the court.

Beatty was charged with perjury, misconduct and obstruction of justice for her testimony before and during a 2007 civil trial in Wayne County.

"We live in an age where greed and protecting one's secrets is glorified and accepted. I am very pleased that this defendant admitted her guilt," county Prosecutor Kym Worthy said later.

Kilpatrick, 38, pleaded guilty three months ago, resigned from office and was sentenced to 120 days in jail.

In the civil lawsuit, officers Gary Brown and Harold Nelthrope claimed their police careers suffered when Kilpatrick learned they suspected misconduct by his se-

curity unit. Among the allegations: Police bodyguards helped cover up Kilpatrick's extramarital affairs.

A jury ruled last year in favor of Brown and Nelthrope. Kilpatrick settled that case and another one for \$8.4 million when he learned that a lawyer for the former officers had obtained the mayor's text messages.

City Council members said they didn't know the deal carried secret provisions to keep a lid on messages between Kilpatrick and Beatty. Then the *Free Press* published some excerpts earlier this year.

Kilpatrick was ordered to pay \$1 million in restitution to the city and surrender his law license. Beatty must pay \$100,000 and cannot attend law school while on probation.

Under state sentencing guidelines, she likely faced 19 months or more in prison if she had been convicted of all seven charges, according to Worthy's staff.

cause she speaks her mind and that is very important," Clayton said.

"Lee is also helped by being in a strong Democratic majority and she will be able to get things done without a lot of trouble. I remember the days when the Republicans were in the majority.

"It was difficult to be chair of the CBC because you were basically a minority inside of a minority. Lee certainly won't have to deal with that."

Clayton said that Lee should remember that the CBC of its early days is not the same as it is today.

"The CBC is very diverse, for you have liberals, moderates and some conservatives," he said.

"This is a natural consequence of having more members. And that is a good thing because Black America is not monolithic."

James Wright writes for the *Afro-American Newspapers*.

## Birmingham mayor up on bribery charges

Special to Sentinel-Voice

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — The mayor of Alabama's largest city, Larry Langford, was arrested Monday on federal bribery and fraud charges connected to a multibillion-dollar sewer bond deal that has driven the surrounding county to the brink of bankruptcy.

Federal prosecutors in Birmingham said Langford, Montgomery investment banker Bill Blount and lobbyist Al LaPierre were charged in the 101-count indictment released Monday. The charges also include money laundering and filing false tax returns.

Langford is accused of receiving \$230,000 in bribes from Blount, some of them routed through LaPierre, to influence the bond deals while Langford was president of the Jefferson County Commission. Blount's firm made \$7.1 million in fees from the bond work.

The indictment says Blount paid \$219,500 to LaPierre for his help.

Langford and LaPierre pleaded not guilty in a court appearance and were released on \$50,000 bond each. Blount arrived later at the courthouse to surrender.

The three men also have denied any wrongdoing in the face of similar allegations contained in a civil lawsuit by federal regulators.

Langford, 62, was taken into custody around 7 a.m. Monday, FBI spokesman Paul Daymond said. Langford was president of the Jefferson County Commission before he was elected mayor last year. Birmingham is in Jefferson County.

The county is trying to avoid filing what would be the largest municipal bankruptcy in U.S. history over \$3.2 billion in debt for sewer bonds, nearly double the record of \$1.7 billion set in 1994 by Orange County, Calif.

Jefferson County's bonds went sour as the mortgage crisis hit and banks tightened up on lending, sending credit costs for the bonds skyrocketing.

The Securities and Exchange Commission accused Langford in a lawsuit of taking more than \$156,000 in undisclosed payments and benefits from Blount and routed through LaPierre.



LARRY LANGFORD

The mayor's chief of staff said city business would go on as usual. In a statement, Deborah Vance-Bowie also said the indictment of Langford was "certainly no surprise to us" and that they had expected some action from U.S. Attorney Alice Martin as she nears a possible end of her appointment with the swearing in of a new president in January.

"We are glad the mayor will finally have his day in court," the chief of staff's statement said.

Langford has said the investigation was politically motivated.

He contends Martin, who was appointed by President Bush, has targeted Democrats.

### Jobs

(Continued from Page 2)

the group, the American Trucking Associations, supports investments in infrastructure as a method of reducing the nation's overall carbon emissions and cutting delays and congestion.

"But nothing is going to help the trucking industry except for an increase in trade and repairs to the economy," said Clayton Boyce, vice president of public affairs for the ATA.

Obama pointed to the past as a reason for optimism, saying that Americans in this country's darkest hours have risen above their divisions to solve their problems, as a hope for the future.

"We have acted boldly, bravely, and above all, together," Obama said. "That is the chance our new beginning now offers us, and that is the challenge we must rise to in the days to come. It is time to act. As the next president of the United States, I will."

AP Special Correspondent David Espo and AP Business Writer Samantha Bomkamp contributed to this report. Will Lester writes for the *Los Angeles Sentinel*.

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## Caucus

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Gov. Rod Blagojevich does not select an African-American to replace Obama in the U.S. Senate. And a CBC member, Rep. Jesse Jackson Jr., D-Ill., has made no secret of his interest in the job.

University of Louisville political science professor Dr. Dewey Clayton said that given that Obama is in the White House, Lee should do very well.

"I think she will be a chair that makes a difference be-