

[HOME](#) > [NEWS](#) > [LOCAL](#)

Cudahy Case Recalls Bell Corruption Scandal

A bribery case in a tiny LA suburb is the latest in a series of corruption abuses by city officials in LA County

By [Jason Kandel](#) | Saturday, Jun 23, 2012 | Updated 2:20 PM PDT

[View Comments \(2\)](#) | [Email](#) | [Print](#)

0

[Tweet](#) 9[Recommend](#)[Send](#)

Cudahy city officials Osvaldo Conde, David Silva and Angel Perales are accused in a federal bribery case.

advertisement

The court documents read like a Hollywood script: cash payments made in envelopes disguised as "campaign contributions" and a "massage parlor" that would front for a house of prostitution.

But the allegations involving three city officials in the tiny southeastern Los Angeles suburb of Cudahy are not fiction. They're part of a 143-page FBI affidavit released in conjunction with arrests made on Friday.

The FBI arrested Cudahy's mayor, a city councilman and the city's head of code enforcement on federal bribery charges. [Court documents](#) allege the men accepted \$17,000 in bribes in exchange for their support to open a medical marijuana dispensary in the city.

The case represents just the latest in a series of corruption abuses by city officials in small LA County suburbs, recalling the most attention-generating corruption case in the small neighboring suburb of Bell.

"It's not only Bell. It goes back to South Gate and other cities of southeastern Los Angeles," said Jaime Regalado, executive director of the Edmund G. "Pat" Brown Institute of Public Affairs at California State University, Los Angeles.

"They're troubled cities, all having gone through a fairly substantial demographic shift -- highly immigrant, low-voter threshold ... and with a population largely being asleep in terms of what democracy means or should mean," Regalado said Saturday.

In Bell, former City Manager Robert Rizzo and other municipal officials are accused of [siphoning more than \\$5 million](#) from the city. Rizzo faces dozens of counts of fraud and other charges related to his exorbitant nearly \$800,000 salary and misappropriation of funds.

This week, Cudahy City Councilman Osvaldo Conde, 50, Mayor David Silva, 61, and Angel Perales, 43, who runs the Code Enforcement Division of the Cudahy Community Services

Department, were arrested in connection with the case in that city, prosecutors said.

The men made their initial court appearances in a federal courtroom in downtown Los Angeles on Friday.

"The allegations in this case describe a corrosive and free-wheeling attitude among certain officials in the City of Cudahy," said André Birotte Jr., U.S. attorney for the Central District of California.

"The Department of Justice will aggressively investigate and pursue cases like this to ensure that the integrity of good government is protected and preserved."

In the FBI affidavit unsealed on Friday, authorities laid out the details of the case from recorded conversations that took place beginning in January 2012. The FBI's informant, who formerly owned a medical marijuana shop in a nearby city, tipped off federal agents to the case.

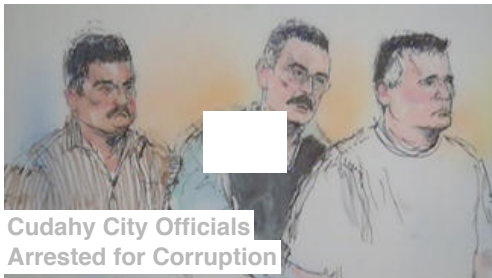
After weeks of negotiations over meals at restaurants -- with drinks and women at a nightclub -- authorities said the Cudahy trio took bribes from the FBI informant. The informant posed as a marijuana dispensary owner seeking to open a business in Cudahy.

In order to get the proposed business' permit approved, Cudahy city officials would have to vote on it. To get the votes necessary, the informant would need to pay cash, court documents said.

PHOTOS AND VIDEOS



Cudahy Officials
Accused of Bribery...



Cudahy City Officials
Arrested for Corruption

[More Photos and Videos](#)

TOP STORIES

TODAY MOST WATCHED MOST EMAILED



Top News Photos: Los Angeles

"Money makes the monkey dance," Perales told the informant, according to court documents.

Conde and Silva "are not your typical ... council people ... They've dealt with, uh, you know, people that throw money down," Perales said.

In court documents, Perales also mentioned to the informant his role in establishing a house of prostitution that would be run by a "Korean madam." The illicit business would bring in up to \$15,000 per month, Perales said.

"She used to have a business in, uh, in San Francisco," Perales told the informant during one meeting, according to court documents. "You know, it's legal, that's legal over there [in Korea]."

Conversations that the FBI recorded show that Perales helped arrange the pot dispensary deal and knew dirty secrets, including information about former City Manager George Perez, who was fired in March 2011.

Perez sued the city in March of this year for breach of contract, saying he was owed nearly \$400,000 in severance, vacation and sick time under the terms of his contract, according to court documents. The city countersued, saying Perez had illegally given himself raises. The related cases have not been settled.

The District Attorney's office opened an inquiry into Perez's pay raises this month, [according to the Los Angeles Times](#).

A message left for Perez's attorney, Stanley L. Friedman, was not immediately returned.

NBC4's Melissa Pamer contributed to this story.

Follow NBCLA for the latest LA news, events and entertainment: [iPhone/iPad App](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Google+](#) | [Instagram](#) | [RSS](#) | [Text Alerts](#) | [Email Alerts](#)

Posted Jun 23, 2012

0

Tweet

9

Recommend

Send

Leave Comments



Add a comment...



Post to Facebook

Posting as Norma Jean Almodovar ([Not you?](#))

[Comment](#)



Randy McNary · Purdue University

This end of the County has been like this for years. No surprise, considering Bell and Cudahy are neighboring cities.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · [Follow Post](#) · 15 hours ago



Mary Barrow · Owner at Barrow/Hoffman Public Relations

hang 'em high.

[Reply](#) · [Like](#) · [Follow Post](#) · 8 hours ago

Facebook social plugin



Watch and Vote



[Dramatic LA News Photos](#)



[Long Lost Celebrity Twins](#)

[FOLLOW NBCLOSANGELES](#)

Patio Giveaway

Enter to Win

One Lucky Winner Will Receive a Round Patio Table, 2 Chairs and an Umbrella

[MORE NEWS](#)

[MORE LOCAL](#)

[PHOTOS AND VIDEOS](#)



SPORTS
SoCal Sprinter Jeter in "Very Special Place"



US-WORLD
Islamist Mohammed Morsi Wins Egypt Election



US-WORLD
Tropical Storm Debby Gains Strength

More News



LOCAL
Glendora's Bryan Clay Misses Out on London



LOCAL
Arrest Made in Hit and Run That Killed Child



LOCAL
Cops Probe Murder-Suicide in Beverly Hills

More Local



AS-SEEN-ON
Cleaning Up Skid Row



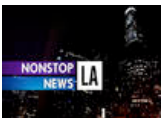
SPORTS
SoCal's Volleyball Pair



MUSIC
Celebrity Weight Watchers: Deena Cortese

More Multimedia

WHAT'S NEW



California Nonstop
NBC's three Local Media stations in California.
[Read more](#)

FOLLOW US

Sign up to receive news and updates that matter to you.

[Send Us Your Story Tips](#)

CHECK OUT



© 2012 NBCUniversal, Inc. All rights reserved. Portions by Broadcast Interactive Media. A Division of NBCUniversal

[Terms Of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#)

[FCC Independent Programming Report](#)
[FCC News and Information Programming Report](#)
[NBC Non-Profit News Partnership Reports](#)



[Archive](#) | [Feedback](#) | [About Us](#) | [Advertise](#)

NEWS

- Local
- Olympics
- Politics
- Decision 2012
- Sports
- Health
- Tech
- Weird
- Weather
- Prop Zero
- Press Here
- U.S. & World

THE SCENE

- Food & Drink
- Fashion
- Shopping
- Events
- Real Estate
- Cars

ENTERTAINMENT

- Celebrity
- Movies
- Television
- Music
- PopcornBiz

ON AIR

- As Seen On Shows
- Contests
- Community
- About Us
- TV Schedule
- CNBC
- Television Without Pity
- LX.TV
- Access Hollywood
- Bravo
- iVillage
- NewsRaw

WEATHER

- Forecast
- Maps & Radar
- Severe Weather Alerts
- Weather Stories

TRAFFIC

1st Look
Open House
Worth the Drive