



# CITY OF OAK PARK

**Mayor**  
Marian McClellan  
**Mayor Pro Tem**  
Paul Levine  
**Council Members**  
Michael Seligson  
Carolyn Burns  
Kiesha Speech  
**City Manager**  
Erik Tungate

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## **Update – Inappropriate Handling of City Funds by Former Employee** **Stephanie Sumner and Husband Charged with Multiple Felonies**

**September 25, 2015, Oak Park, Michigan** - Stephanie Sumner, a former management-level employee of the City of Oak Park, and her husband Michael Sumner are formally charged of embezzlement for the inappropriate handling of City of Oak Park funds.

Stephanie Sumner held the position of Deputy City Clerk and Director of Elections. She was hired by the city in early 2012. Through a series of checks and balances and an internal audit, the city became aware of Ms. Sumner's activities. She was promptly relieved of her duties in March of this year after an internal investigation determined there were grounds for termination. The matter was then handed to the Oakland County Sheriff's Department for formal investigation which resulted in charges placed against the couple.

"All funds have been fully reimbursed to the city through fraud protection insurance coverage," said Erik Tungate, Oak Park City Manager. "Oak Park remains a financially sound community."

"The city hopes to send a strong message to any individual who believes they can defraud the City of Oak Park and dishonor the public's trust in their government. The city has not, and will not, condone such acts," said Tungate. "Be assured, we have processes and procedures in place to uncover acts of fraud. In the unfortunate case, such as this, we pursue justice to the fullest extent allowed by law, as witnessed by the charges made."

Although no industry is immune from persons with ill intent, government offices in general have checks and balances and strict standards of accounting in place to help protect against fraud.

The City of Oak Park was recently awarded – for the 21st consecutive year - the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, or CAFR, for its comprehensive annual financial report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2014. The CAFR is issued by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada and is considered one of the most prestigious awards within government for having the highest level of excellence in financial management and reporting. In order to be awarded a CAFR, an impartial panel of individuals with expertise in public sector financial reporting review submissions for evidence that the government entity goes beyond the minimum

requirements of generally accepted accounting principles to prepare a comprehensive annual financial report that provides the spirit of transparency and full disclosure.

In addition, on September 10, 2015 Standard & Poor's revised the city's debt credit rating to an A+ positive from an A+ stable rating. In their report, S&P rated the City of Oak Park as having adequate economy, strong management, strong budgetary performance, very strong budgetary flexibility, very strong liquidity, very weak debt and contingent liability profile, and a strong institutional framework.

After the discovery of this matter, the city's policies and procedures underwent additional review and scrutiny. As a result, additional safeguards were instituted to further protect against situations like this from happening in the future.

"Our employees take great pride in their professionalism, ethical behavior and ability to serve their community," said Tungate. "Ms. Sumner's behavior does not represent that of our hardworking and dedicated staff."

*The City of Oak Park is situated on the southern-most border of Oakland County, Michigan, and serves as a suburban ambassador to Detroit. Incorporated as a city in 1945, Oak Park's current population exceeds 29,300 and is home to more than 500 local businesses, including corporate headquarters.*

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