

THE BOROUGH OF MANTOLOKING

For immediate release

Contact person: Mayor George Nebel

MANTOLOKING - The Mayor and Council have expressed unqualified confidence that the leadership of the Mantoloking Police Department and Mantoloking's municipal finance officer have established internal procedures which minimize the chances of financial improprieties like those that have allegedly occurred in neighboring Bay Head.

Bay Head Police Chief Charles Grace Jr. was relieved of duty by the Ocean County Prosecutor after being charged with unlawfully taking money from the Policemen's Benevolent Association (PBA). Investigations of the chief's financial practices continue.

"My colleagues on the Council and I want Mantoloking citizens and taxpayers to know that we have insisted that money and related matters in borough hall be managed in a way that protects them from loss and embarrassment," Mayor George C. Nebel says.

Municipal Finance Officer Michelle Swisher and Police Chief Mark Wright recently explained to the Mayor and Council how they separate duties that involve managing money and accounting for employee attendance. Accurate employee attendance records are important because police officers have liberal allowances of compensated absences and can be paid for sick and vacation days they don't use. At least two and sometimes three persons review every posting and transaction.

The same person never collects and deposits money, the Mayor and Council were told. All checks have at least two signatures, three persons review invoices before they are paid, and all business is transacted through a single general ledger. There are no petty cash funds or reimbursements for out-of-pocket expenses.

"Police officers are responsible for completing a form for every absence, a senior officer reviews and records the self-reports, and the accumulated reports are submitted to the municipal finance officer," according to Chief Wright. The same kind of multi-level procedure is followed before overtime or pay for outside work is approved, he says.

The municipal auditors review the results of these transactions annually. There have been no adverse findings or audit recommendations in recent memory.