

Former New Bedford Police Sgt. agrees to plead guilty to stealing nearly \$50,000 in union funds

Defendant served as Union Treasurer for nearly a decade.

A former New Bedford Police Department (NBPD) officer and NBPD Union Treasurer has agreed to plead guilty to stealing nearly \$50,000 in union funds.

Joshua Fernandes, 42, of New Bedford, was charged with one count of wire fraud. A plea hearing has not yet been scheduled. Fernandes is a name that may sound familiar as he was shot in the face during the 2006 Foxy Lady killings. In addition, after he was accused of stealing and damaging his ex-wife's minivan in 2019, a judge ordered Fernandes to undergo mental health treatment.

According to the charging documents, Fernandes abused the trust placed in him by fellow union members by using nearly \$50,000 in union funds to pay for personal expenses including vacations, family outings, and a monthly wireless family phone plan, among other things. Fernandes carried out his scheme by reimbursing his personal credit card accounts with union funds and by using the union's credit cards to pay directly for non-union expenses.

He allegedly spent \$1,038.40 for a stay at the Legacy Vacation Club in Kissimmee, Florida; \$3,030.03 in Ticketmaster fees for New Kids on the Block, Comic-con, Sarah Brightman and Hanson events, \$119.94 for Match.com, and \$1,406 at the Toy Vault in Dartmouth, Massachusetts.

The charging statute provides a sentence of up to 20 years in

prison, three years of supervised release and a fine of \$250,000. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

Acting United States Attorney Nathaniel R. Mendell; Joseph R. Bonavolonta, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Division; and Jonathan Russo, District Director of U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Labor Management Standards, made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorney Eugenia M. Carris, Deputy Chief of Mendell's Public Corruption & Special Prosecutions Unit, is prosecuting the case.