

Ex-cop Poland to spend 18 mos. in prison

Former South Lake Tahoe police Officer Johnny Poland is going to prison for 18 months.

The sentence came down Wednesday. Poland must turn himself in to the Bureau of Prison on Nov. 6.

Poland had pleaded guilty in May to one count of obstruction of an official proceeding. The maximum sentence he could have received was 20 years behind bars.



Former South Tahoe Officer Johnny Poland receives 18-month sentence. Photo/LTN file

The 45-year-old has been on the other side of the law since June 2007 when he was initially fired by the local police department because of an incident in November 2006 at South Tahoe High school.

He fought that termination and was reinstated in fall 2009.

A federal investigation began in November 2011, at which time Poland was put on paid administrative leave. He was indicted at the beginning of this year.

Poland started with SLTPD in 1998. He resigned after admitting guilt and his position has since been filled.

“Mr. Poland ended his career in law enforcement by abusing his position of trust at every turn,” U.S. Attorney Benjamin Wagner told the court. “When faced with the consequences of his misdeeds, he then attempted to influence witnesses who were called to testify against him. Such behavior cannot be tolerated. Mr. Poland stands in contrast to the other outstanding men and women in law enforcement who conduct themselves with dedication and honor every single day.”

Court documents, on June 29, 2011, Poland interfered with a federal investigation of a South Lake Tahoe gang member. Poland persuaded the gang member’s girlfriend to conceal and destroy evidence. In October and November 2011, Poland tampered with this witness in an investigation into his own conduct as well as the conduct of the gang member. Poland instructed another witness to conceal and destroy evidence rather than provide it to federal authorities. Poland admitted that he corruptly attempted to alter, destroy, mutilate, and conceal evidence material to an official proceeding.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report