

Sheriff resigns after being charged with felonies

March 18, 2022



Del Norte County Sheriff Randy Waltz announced his resignation Monday, days after District Attorney Katherine Micks filed nominal charges of perjury, voter registration fraud and election fraud against Waltz.

The criminal allegations allege Waltz used a false address on his California voter registration form and used that address to declare his candidacy for sheriff.

The address to a home on Highway 101 in Smith River is actually a short-term vacation rental, other news reports claim.

County Administrative Officer Neal Lopez confirmed Waltz had resigned effective Monday afternoon. Waltz said he was meeting with administrative staff at the sheriff's office later Monday morning to come up with a plan on how to operate without a sheriff. Lopez said for the time being the top officer in the department would continue operations as normal.

In a complaint filed in Del Norte County Superior Court, Micks alleges Waltz committed perjury by listing the false address on his voter registration form.

The complaint claims Waltz filed using the Smith River address despite "knowing he is not entitled to registration." The complaint also states when Waltz filed to run for her he did so by "falsely stating he met the residency requirements."

Waltz is scheduled to be arraigned March 29.

Waltz's legal saga marks the second time in just over a year a politician in Del Norte County is facing charges for using a false address when running for office.

Former Crescent City Councilman Alex Campbell resigned from the post and pleaded guilty to a charge of false declaration of candidacy. Campbell was sentenced to two days in jail, two years of probation and fined \$1,600.

Waltz joined the sheriff's office in 2020 when he was hired as undersheriff by then Sheriff Erik Apperson. When Apperson resigned, stating personal reasons, the Del Norte County Board of Supervisors appointed Waltz as sheriff through the end of 2022.

When interviewed by the Triplicate earlier this year, Waltz said deciding whether or not to run for the office was difficult, but he finally decided to do so to offer some continuity to the office.

Lopez said the board of supervisors will have to decide how to handle the vacant position at the sheriff's office. Supervisors could appoint a sheriff through the end of the year, or they could wait and appoint the winner in the June primary election.

Former Crescent City Police Lieutenant Garrett Scott was the only candidate to file and will win the election unopposed. That leaves the decision to supervisors on how to proceed.

Lopez said supervisors could take applications and interview candidates or they could simply vote to appoint someone of their choosing.