

Ruling keeps Stallworth out of commission seat

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DETROIT -- Keith **Stallworth** lost his **seat** on the Wayne County **Commission** when he pleaded guilty to a federal felony charge, a judge ruled Tuesday.

Wayne County Circuit Judge Edward Thomas dismissed **Stallworth** 's lawsuit aimed at keeping the \$70,000-a-year post.

Stallworth , a former state representative, submitted a March 13 resignation letter under pressure from his colleagues and delivered March 18 what commissioners thought was a farewell speech.

But **Stallworth** , 46, **of** Detroit, argued commissioners had unwittingly voted to accept a March 14 letter withdrawing his resignation -- not the resignation itself.

Stallworth pleaded guilty March 7 to constructing a financial transaction to evade federal currency reporting requirements, a 5-year felony. He is scheduled to be sentenced June 23.

Thomas accepted the county's argument that state law provides for officeholders to lose their posts upon pleading guilty to crimes punishable by imprisonment.

"At the end **of** the day, it never mattered whether he resigned or not, or whether they accepted his resignation," said Wayne County Corporation Counsel Azzam Elder.

Stallworth didn't immediately say whether he plans to appeal. "He is currently considering his options," said his attorney, Dennis Mitchenor.

The decision clears the way for Cheryl Cushingberry, appointed by the **commission** to hold **Stallworth** 's **seat** until a special election is held.

Commission Chairwoman Jewel Ware said she would meet with Cushingberry today to discuss committee assignments.

Caption: **Stallworth**

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