

## DA investigating possible theft of \$116,000 by former Island employee

**By [Stephen T. Watson](#)** | *Published 6:00 a.m. January 18, 2019*

The Erie County District Attorney's Office is investigating whether a former employee in Grand Island's senior center stole \$116,000 in town funds. Town officials said they discovered the possible theft during an analysis of financial transactions at the town's Golden Age Center, which provides services to seniors on Grand Island.

The money went missing from the center's bank accounts between 2011 and 2017, according to Town Attorney Peter Godfrey and the text of a resolution that Supervisor Nathan McMurray has submitted for Town Board action Tuesday. Town leaders immediately contacted the District Attorney's Office and passed along all relevant records after noticing the possible embezzlement in January 2018. Grand Island officials believe a now-former employee is responsible for the losses.

Tuesday's resolution states this person, who is not identified by name, has made restitution of \$6,000 to Grand Island, leaving a balance of \$110,000 that will be covered by the town's insurance carrier. Tuesday's Town Board vote is a procedural matter that will allow the carrier to make this reimbursement.

Godfrey and McMurray declined to discuss the missing money in greater detail, saying they didn't want to affect the criminal investigation. It's not clear how the money was taken or how the suspected thefts went unnoticed for so long.

The Town Board resolution states the town "has implemented certain financial management protocols" to avoid future losses of this type. "The Town Board is working diligently to resolve the matter and cooperate with the DA," McMurray said.

District Attorney John J. Flynn disclosed the active criminal investigation led by his Public Integrity Unit during a recent meeting with Buffalo News editors and reporters, but his office declined further comment Thursday.