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Mission Viejo councilman faces assault and battery case

Mission Viejo's Lance MacLean offered anger management classes to get charges stemming from UCI incident dropped.

By **GREG HARDESTY, ERIKA I. RITCHIE**
and **JOHN CRANDALL**

The Orange County Register

MISSION VIEJO Councilmember and former Mayor Lance MacLean has been charged with assault and battery stemming from an incident in October in which he pinned a fellow UCI employee against a wall during a loud concert.

MacLean, 49, has pleaded not guilty to the case to his attorney, Kay Rackauckas, but disputed the facts of the incident.

MacLean has since taken an early retirement from UCI, where he worked for 27 years. He said he plans to begin a second career in public relations -- something he's been thinking about for a while.

Farrah Emami, a spokeswoman for the district attorney's office, as well as Rackauckas, provided some details about the incident:

Around 8:15 p.m. at "Shocktoberfest," held outside the UCI Student Center, MacLean noticed that more students than anticipated had shown up at the event and that all the nearby bathrooms were locked.

MacLean asked the alleged victim -- identified by Emami as director of UCI Hospitality & Dining Services -- to unlock the restrooms but he was ignored, according to Rackauckas.

The alleged victim was Jackson Burdette McManus, based on an online directory of UCI employees.

MacLean, listed in court documents as 6 feet 5 inches and 200 pounds, "pinned (McManus) up against a wall" in front of several witnesses that included campus police, Emami said.

two misdemeanor charges, filed in December at the Harbor Justice Center in Newport Beach. A pre-trial hearing is scheduled for June.

The charges carry a maximum six months in jail but will be dismissed if MacLean successfully completes a court-approved course in anger management, a district attorney's spokeswoman said today.

The incident occurred Oct. 26, when MacLean -- then a UCI employee -- was mayor of Mission Viejo. It involved an alleged victim identified in court documents only as "Jack M.," another university employee.

MacLean, who was associate executive director for student government, was released on his own recognizance, according to court documents.

When first contacted by a Register intern Thursday about a possible criminal case against him, MacLean, said his middle name was Ralph and that he was born in 1957. Actually, MacLean's middle name is Robert and he was born in 1958.

MacLean, in a telephone interview Friday, said he felt uncomfortable giving out his personal information to a reporter he didn't know.

He referred all questions about the criminal "There were about 2,000 people there and Lance saw many of them (uninating) outdoors," Rackauckas said. "He was trying to avert a crisis."

McManus, reached by phone Friday, declined to comment and referred all questions to campus media representatives. Caitly Lawhon, a UCI spokeswoman, said more than 3,500 students attended the event.

"Both sustained minor injuries," Lawhon said. "The UCI Police Department conducted a criminal investigation and forwarded it to the District Attorney's Office. There was also an administrative investigation and since December MacLean no longer works at the university."

MacLean was not in court at his arraignment Jan. 2 and had his attorney enter pleas of not guilty for him.

A pre-trial set for Jan. 30 was rescheduled to June 24 to give MacLean time to complete anger-management training.

"I can't even believe the (UCI) police wrote him up," Rackauckas said. "This has been a disaster for Lance... We feel the DA's office is doing the right thing (in planning to dismiss the charges)."

MacLean has no previous criminal background, Emami said.

Fellow councilmember Gail Reavis expressed shock and disappointment at hearing the news of her colleague.

"I'd like to see a public explanation on this," she said.

Contact the writer: 949-454-7356 or ghardesty@ocregister.com