

Green Bay Mayor Jim Schmitt sentenced

by Ben Krumholz, FOX 11 News
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GREEN BAY (WLUK) -- Green Bay Mayor Jim Schmitt will have to pay \$4,000 in fines and complete 40 hours of community service for his [campaign finance violations](#).

Outagamie County Judge Mitchell Metropolus, who was appointed to the case, issued Schmitt's sentence in Brown County Court Monday morning. Pleading guilty to three misdemeanor charges, Schmitt accepted responsibility for dozens of campaign finance violations.

"Your honor, I am really sorry," said Schmitt. "I am. I apologize to the court, to my family, and especially to the citizens of Green Bay."

After a 20-month investigation, special prosecutor Bruce Landgraf of Milwaukee County determined Schmitt accepted more than \$10,000 in illegal campaign contributions. Landgraf says Schmitt's willingness to cooperate with the investigation helped him find out Schmitt tried to cover-up the excessive donations.

"These are remarkable opposites: lies to hide violations, but cooperation that uncovers it," said Landgraf.

Patrick Knight, Schmitt's attorney, argued the violations were the result of not understanding the rules.

"Jim Schmitt, who has always handled matters on his own, not with a professional involved, was operating under the impression that amounts received could be attributed to other family members," said Knight.

Metropolus [sided with the prosecution](#), agreeing Schmitt tried to cover-up his violations.

"If it was simply a matter of you making honest mistakes, I don't think you'd be sitting here today," said Metropolus.

After learning his punishment, Schmitt explained his actions publicly for the first time.

"I didn't take it as serious and I should have spent the money to have an accountant or a lawyer do that for me," said Schmitt.

Schmitt claims he thought the changes to his finance reports were legal. However, Schmitt admits he was sloppy, making errors like replacing a

corporate contributor with his brother's name and adding junior to another donor's name, creating someone who does not exist.

Schmitt says he quickly amended his finance reports at his kitchen table.

"It was just that 10 to 15 minutes of my life that has cost me two years of pain," said Schmitt.

Schmitt now must pay his fines and serve his community service within the next 60 days. Schmitt plans to serve some of his community service at New Community Shelter on Green Bay's west side.

As part of a plea deal agreed to before the charges were filed, Schmitt has dissolved his campaign fund. The more than \$23,000 he had in campaign money, like other campaign finance violations, has been put in a state fund to help school libraries.