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# Elmwood Park Mayor Charged With Voter Fraud, Resigns



Jerry DeMarco



Elmwood Park Mayor Francesco Caramagna resigned from office after being charged with election fraud for filling in ballots for voters, authorities confirmed Monday.

As Daily Voice reported last week, an investigation by the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office produced the charges against "Frank" Caramagna, 74, who became the first Democratic mayor of the borough in 47 years when he was elected to the post in 2017.

Now-former Elmwood Park Mayor Francesco Caramagna Photo Credit: *MUGSHOT*:  
Courtesy BERGEN COUNTY PROSECUTOR

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Acting Bergen County Prosecutor Dennis Calo said his office received a complaint earlier this month that Caramagna "interfered with the election process with regard to applications for vote by mail ballots in the 2017 mayoral election in Elmwood Park."

Calo said his investigators determined that, between March 2017 and November 2018, Caramagna "had interfered with the secrecy of the election process by completing portions of the application for vote by mail ballot, primary election ballot certifications and general election ballot certifications of registered voters in the borough."

Caramagna was booked into the Bergen County Jail on Monday, then released pending a May 22 first appearance in Central Judicial Processing Court in Hackensack, after he returned from a vacation with his family in Orlando.

Daily Voice reported last week that a defense attorney for Caramagna was in plea-bargain talks with the county prosecutor's office -- a deal that would have required his resignation. His term would have expired this Dec. 31.

Caramagna currently has the option of a pre-indictment guilty plea, which would lead to a more lenient sentence than he'd receive otherwise. Or he can wait and see what type of charges a grand jury returns and decide whether he wants to try and cut a deal with prosecutors or go to trial.

**SEE:** A defense attorney for Elmwood Park Mayor Frank Caramagna apparently was in negotiations with the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office in response to a voter fraud investigation, sources confirmed Tuesday.

<https://dailyvoice.com/new-jersey/saddlebrook/police-fire/sources-elmwood-park-mayor-investigated-in-alleged-voter-fraud-probe/766647/> (<https://dailyvoice.com/new-jersey/saddlebrook/police-fire/sources-elmwood-park-mayor-investigated-in-alleged-voter-fraud-probe/766647/>)

Council President Daniel Golabek, 24, will be acting mayor until Democrats select someone to serve out the remaining seven months of Caramagna's term.

A grandfather of six who won the mayoralty on his fifth try, Caramagna taught Italian and Spanish for several years at Elmwood Park High School. He's also a former Board of Education trustee.

"It has come to my attention that I am the subject of an investigation into what has been described to me as technical violations of the election laws regarding absentee ballots," Caramagna wrote in a resignation letter Monday to Acting Borough Clerk Erin Delaney.

Caramagna maintained his "complete innocence" and vowed to fight what he characterized as "politically motivated" charges.

He said he resigned "with sadness and a heavy heart" after consulting family, friends and a defense attorney -- "not because I have in some way betrayed my office but to minimize my embarrassment to my family, friends and supporters as I defend against whatever accusations might ultimately be made against me.

"I do so also to prevent the use of this investigation by my political opponents to smear the good reputation of the democratic candidates running for re-election in November, whom I will continue to support for the good of Elmwood Park."

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