

THE PLAIN DEALER

Recorder Patrick O'Malley's stormy career and life

Friday, May 16, 2008

May: O'Malley beats a crowded field to win the Democratic primary for the recorder's seat. In November, he swamps Republican Elizabeth Schnitzspahn for the last two years of the term. He wins four-year stints in general elections in 2000 and 2004.

2002

O'Malley lines up ward leaders again in a try for the county commissioner job vacated by Jane Campbell, the new Cleveland mayor. Bolstering the bid is his longtime friendship with County Prosecutor Bill Mason, his roommate from their Kent State University undergraduate days. O'Malley sues the party over the way it filled vacant precinct committee posts. Most of the powerful Democrats back Peter Lawson Jones for the seat, but O'Malley refuses to step aside. This sparks a beef with party chief Jimmy Dimora, who contends O'Malley owes the party money for campaign literature. Dimora's candidate, Jones, gets the party's nod in a February vote.

2003

In November, O'Malley is found guilty of disorderly conduct and fined \$100 for his part in a September brawl in Chagrin Falls. O'Malley says he entered the fray to protect a son who was fighting with three men over a \$600 debt.

2004

July: O'Malley is arrested on a misdemeanor charge of domestic violence against his estranged second wife, Vicki. She says O'Malley used political connections to get a special July 4 holiday hearing in order to get out of jail early. The case is thrown out. November: FBI agents raid O'Malley's Chagrin Falls home and confiscate two personal computers. A search warrant said agents were looking for records of a billboard deal that O'Malley helped broker and images of child pornography. Then, Vicki tips off the media by placing information in her Ohio Lottery personnel file, which is public, about the search.

2005

July: Ex-girlfriend Marion Rivera calls police in two suburbs, over a few days, complaining that O'Malley was verbally abusive to her. O'Malley says he caught Rivera cheating and threw her out. He vows to quit dating for a while. "Women have ruined my life and career," he said.

2008

March: O'Malley easily defeats Nelson Cintron to win the Democratic primary and a shot at another recorder term.

April: The Plain Dealer reports at least a third of the employees on O'Malley's 2007 recorder payroll landed their jobs through political connections, including ward leaders and precinct committee members who helped him gain the recorder's job in 1997.

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