

Former Yonkers library employee denies stealing \$163K

By Rebecca Baker • rebaker@lohud.com • The Journal News • August 11, 2011

A former Yonkers library worker pleaded not guilty Monday to charges that she swindled \$163,582 out of the public library system over more than six years.

Margo Reed of Yonkers was arraigned in Westchester County Court on an 18-count felony indictment charging her with second-degree grand larceny, falsifying business records, filing a false instrument and filing a false tax return.

She remains free without bail and is due back in court on Nov. 16, although her lawyer, Lawrence Sykes, will meet with prosecutors on Aug. 24.

Sykes declined to comment on the charges after the arraignment.

Reed worked in the library's business office and was responsible for collecting fines and other revenue from the three branches of the Yonkers Public Library System.

She was also responsible for handing over the library's revenue to the Yonkers Finance Department for deposit.

County prosecutors say she stole the money between July 7, 2004 and Dec. 7, 2010, from One Larkin Center in Yonkers.

Police said she had a key to the library's locked deposit bag and used it to pilfer cash. She also is accused of altering business records to hide the missing funds.

District Attorney Janet DiFiore said the stolen money could have been used to buy reading materials and computers for Yonkers libraries.

"In today's economy, with limited resources and tight budgets, this kind of crime directly impacts children, students, the elderly and anyone who looks to the public library system as a place of knowledge and enjoyment," she said in a statement.

Yonkers' Inspector General Dan Schorr said Reed's arrest should be a cautionary tale to all city employees that they face criminal charges should they steal from the city.

"We will continue to assist library officials as they institute enhanced fiscal controls to prevent theft and fraud," he said in a statement.

Reed's next court appearance is June 8 and she faces up to 15 years in state prison if convicted of grand larceny. She was released on her own recognizance.

Yonkers' 2009 salary records indicate that Reed made \$43,323 in gross pay and worked for the city since 1985. She lives in a federally-subsidized apartment building where residents' rents are based on their income.

She filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy in 2003. Virtually all her debt was credit-card related, court papers show. According to federal court records, Reed's case was closed on April 13, 2004, and a judge released her from all her debts.