
Khabarovsk Territory former property relations minister and chairman of territorial property fund to stand trial for embezzlement of land



The investigating bodies of the Russia's Investigative Committee in Khabarovsk Territory have finished investigating a criminal case against former minister of property relations of Khabarovsk Territory and chairman of Khabarovsk Territory Property Fund. Depending on the role of each one, they are charged with 30 counts of crimes under parts 3 and 4 of article 160 of the RF Penal Code (embezzlement), part 3 of article 30, part 4 of article 160 (attempted embezzlement).

According to investigators, in 2012 a businessman decided to buy lands in the city of Khabarovsk to build a cottage village. He appealed to state bodies, but they answered that there were no available pieces of land of a suitable area. Then he went to the minister of property relations in Khabarovsk Territory asking of assistance. The minister told him that Khabarovsk Territory had embarked on the program of allocating free pieces of land to the families with a lot of children. The businessman could not formally take part in that program, but they developed a scheme how the businessman could get the land almost for a song. Through the real estate agent the businessman found families with a lot of children, who lived in Khabarovsk Territory. The agent told them that they had the right to get land for free, but pointed out that they had to fill in a lot of papers, spend time and money and have connections in state bodies. She made an offer, which many families in strained circumstances willingly accepted. They signed a power of attorney giving the real estate agent the right to make deals with land and got between 5 and 30 thousand rubles in exchange. Between April and September 2012, the businessman gathered a packet of documents for 30 pieces of land allegedly

filled in by the families with a lot of children. Under the agreement with the accused the businessman submitted the documents into the Ministry of Property Relations for allocation of lands for the families. The minister signed orders according to which the families were owners of the lands on paper. In fact all the signed papers went to the businessman and having warrants from the families he registered the lands on himself and a relative of his. This way he got hold of almost 3 ha of land in the city worth over 40 million rubles.

It should be noted that the case against the businessman was tried in April 2014 by the Central District Court of Khabarovsk wherein he received a suspended sentence of 2 years in prison and a fine of 500 thousand rubles. In addition the Court is now hearing the cases against 2 more accomplices – the real estate agent and a head of department in the Ministry of Property Relations charged with complicity and embezzlement. At the motion of the investigators the lands have been arrested. Officers of the Khabarovsk Territory Office of the Interior Ministry took an active part in the investigation.

The investigators have gathered enough evidence, therefore the criminal case with the approved indictment has been sent to court to be tried on the merits.

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