

Detroit News

Estimated printed pages: 2

June 5, 2008

Section: Metro

Edition: Online

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Paul Egan / The Detroit News

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By Paul Egan

The Detroit News

Atty. Gen. Mike Cox's office will investigate alleged perjury by an assistant of Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy, a spokesman said Wednesday.

Cox decided his office would act as a special prosecutor in the case after efforts to find another county prosecutor to volunteer to act as a special prosecutor were unsuccessful, said Rusty Hills, a spokesman for Cox.

In April, Worthy asked for a special prosecutor to investigate Assistant Prosecutor Karen Plants and possible perjury by police witnesses in a 2005 cocaine case. Worthy suspended Plants with pay pending the investigation.

Worthy, who had previously backed Plants in the face of the perjury allegations, requested the special prosecutor after the Michigan Attorney Grievance Commission brought a formal complaint against Plants, who had headed Worthy's major drugs unit. The attorney discipline proceedings against Plants are still pending.

Cox sought a special prosecutor through the state's Prosecuting Attorney Coordinating Council but decided his office would handle the investigation after four counties turned the case down, Hills said.

Hills would not say who from Cox's office is assigned to the investigation and said he does not know how long the investigation will take.

Kim Eddie, assistant executive secretary of the coordinating council, said it's not the first time he has been unable to find a county prosecutor to act as a special prosecutor in a case.

It appeared the Plants case could be complex and time-consuming and that was likely a factor, he said.

Worthy, who on March 24 brought perjury and other felony charges against Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick and his former chief of staff Christine Beatty, has been criticized for treating the Plants case less seriously. Worthy has said she believes Plants' actions complied with the Michigan Rules of Professional Conduct for lawyers.

Maria Miller, a spokeswoman for Worthy, could not immediately be reached for comment.

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