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Embattled former union boss retires from Mass. State Police



PAT GREENHOUSE/GLOBE STAFF

Dana A. Pullman.

By Matt Rocheleau and Danny McDonald | GLOBE STAFF NOVEMBER 21, 2018

Facing a federal fraud investigation, the former head of the powerful Massachusetts State Police union has retired as a trooper after more than 30 years on the job, marking the latest departure from an agency battered by scandal and controversy in the past year.

Dana Pullman retired from his \$91,000-a-year position effective Nov. 2, according to department spokesman David Procopio.

Pullman departed just weeks after he resigned as the union president amid a federal probe into alleged financial wrongdoing at the State Police Association of Massachusetts, the union representing about 1,900 troopers and sergeants of the 2,150-member law enforcement agency.

His attorney, Martin G. Weinberg, said Pullman's "retirement was in no way a response to any ongoing investigation."

"He worked tirelessly and successfully as the leader of SPAM and is confident that any investigation will compellingly demonstrate that he has not violated any legal obligation," Weinberg said.

With Pullman at the helm, the union known as SPAM increased its clout on Beacon Hill, where he cut a passionate and at times pugnacious figure. He led the union for six years and was its treasurer for several years before that.

This summer, a probe was launched into whether the union reimbursed its board members for political donations. In September, Pullman, through the union's attorney,

denied any wrongdoing in connection with the union's campaign donations.

The federal investigation [has expanded in recent months](#) to a wide-ranging look into possible malfeasance by Pullman and other union leaders, as well as a review of an associated nonprofit fund that benefits law enforcement officers and their families, the Globe reported earlier this month.

Investigators are trying to determine whether Pullman financed a lavish personal lifestyle on the union's dime, spending tens of thousands of dollars on expensive restaurants and a fully equipped \$70,000 Chevy Suburban, the Globe reported. Pullman was paid \$71,000 annually as union president, in addition to his trooper salary.

Pullman's retirement from the department was first reported Wednesday by [WCVB-TV](#).

FBI and IRS agents have been looking at the union's financial records, including documents related to millions of dollars in revenue and assets that Pullman alone had access to, one person with direct knowledge told the Globe.

Federal investigators have also subpoenaed records of the Pullman Brothers Family Foundation, a nonprofit run by Pullman's wife, which raises money for sick children. And investigators have asked about the SPAM Benevolent Fund, a charity that gives scholarships and grants to first responders and their families, the Globe reported.

Separately, the State Police department recently launched an internal investigation of union members, alleging some used a taxpayer-funded time-off benefit afforded to union members for illegitimate purposes. The department also moved to halt some longstanding union benefits, triggering a legal skirmish between the two sides.

On the same day that Pullman resigned from his job as union president in September, State Police Colonel Kerry Gilpin announced the department would no longer allow the union president and one other union official to receive full trooper's pay while they worked full time for the union. She said the practice conflicted with state law.

The State Police department has faced public outcry about a [series of scandals](#) that surfaced during the past year, including ongoing federal and state criminal probes into troopers allegedly collecting pay for hours they never worked.

Nine current and former troopers face charges in ongoing federal and state criminal investigations into overtime fraud. Five of the nine have pleaded guilty, while the rest have pleaded not guilty.

When Pullman stepped down from his union post, he cited "personal reasons."

Messages left with Governor Charlie Baker's office and the State Police union that Pullman formerly headed were not immediately returned late Wednesday afternoon. Procopio, the State Police spokesman, declined to comment beyond confirming Pullman's retirement.

Pullman applied for retirement benefits in a document dated Nov. 2, according to records provided by the state retirement board. But it was not clear what amount he will collect for a pension.

Messages left with Massachusetts Treasurer Deborah B. Goldberg's office, which oversees the retirement board, were not immediately returned late Wednesday afternoon.

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