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# Civic leader repays debt in Arizona, gets probation

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LIHU'E, Kaua'i — Gary Baldwin, longtime head of the Kaua'i Economic Development Board and charter member of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority board, has repaid an Arizona debt that resulted in felony theft and fraud charges, and had all but a single misdemeanor theft count dismissed.

Baldwin, 56, did not contest the allegation that he had taken the money from a Phoenix-area eye surgeon and agreed to a plea bargain. He was sentenced this week to a year of probation following payment of \$260,000 to the victim. Baldwin was not available for comment, but a friend described the case as a collection action that went overboard.

"All of the felonies, and they had a stack of them, every one of them went away, and even the misdemeanor is going to be expunged" if Baldwin successfully serves out his probation, said Gregg Gardiner, a publisher and chairman of the Kaua'i Island Utility Co-op, who served as a director on the Kaua'i Economic Development Board during Baldwin's service there.

Baldwin was arrested by the FBI last July on a warrant from Maricopa County, Ariz., where a sealed indictment was issued in 1986. Eye surgeon David Dulaney had charged that Baldwin defrauded him of more than \$330,000 intended for the purchase of a Lear jet.

Baldwin moved to Hawai'i and although authorities accused him of fleeing to avoid prosecution, he held prominent positions on Kaua'i and in the state and did not change his identity. He eventually was located through voting records.

Because the indictment was sealed, Baldwin reportedly never learned that he was a wanted man until the FBI showed up at his North Shore home to arrest him.

Baldwin continues to live on Kaua'i and remains involved in economic development activities, but he is no longer associated with the Hawai'i Tourism Authority and has been replaced as head of the Kaua'i Economic Development Board.

"Gary's done an awful lot for our community. He's a brilliant guy, and he's still got a lot to offer," Gardiner said.

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