

High Museum’s former COO pleads guilty to felony theft



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Brady Lum is accused of stealing more than \$600,000 from an organization that receives federal funds.

By Rosie Manins
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The High Museum of Art’s former chief operating officer pleaded guilty Monday to a single felony theft charge, accused of stealing more than \$600,000 from the organization while entrusted with its assets. Brady Lum, 59, appeared in court before U.S. District Judge Michael Brown in Atlanta and pleaded guilty to theft from an entity that receives federal funds. He initially pleaded

not guilty when arraigned in April. “Guilty, your honor,” Lum told the judge when asked how he wanted to plead Monday. Lum and his lawyer, Don Samuel, declined to comment outside the courtroom. Lum is scheduled to be sentenced Nov. 2. He faces a maximum sentence of 10 years in prison and a fine equivalent to twice the amount he stole as well as up to three years of supervised release. Lum also could be made to pay restitution to the High Museum

and to forfeit any proceeds or property stemming from his crime. He remains on the \$10,000 bond he was granted in April, the conditions of which include seeking employment and staying in Georgia unless granted permission to leave. The guilty plea was part of a deal with federal prosecutors, who are recommending a “low” sentence. Brown said he’s not bound by the plea agreement. “You don’t automat-

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AJC EXCLUSIVE

Burt Jones: ‘We’ll see’ on backing Jackson

In first comments since losing, he says GOP gubernatorial nominee must fix party’s base.

By Greg Bluestein
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Lt. Gov. Burt Jones still isn’t ready to rally behind billionaire Rick Jackson’s bid for governor. In his first interview since his bitter defeat in the GOP runoff, Jones wouldn’t say whether he would vote for Jackson in November and warned that the party’s nominee must repair a fractured GOP foundation before turning to the broader electorate. “We’ll see,” Jones told the “Politically Georgia” podcast when asked whether he planned to vote for Jackson. “Obviously, I’m interested in supporting and keeping Georgia Republican-run and keeping it red. And I think November is going to be a challenge.”

Jones continued on A7



“Nobody’s reached out,” Lt. Gov. Burt Jones says about GOP gubernatorial nominee Rick Jackson’s campaign. AJC

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Listen to the Burt Jones interview on the AJC’s Politically Georgia podcast at [AJC.com/politics/politically-georgia](https://ajc.com/politics/politically-georgia)

Judge: Trump IRS lawsuit filed for ‘improper purpose’

Decision blasts president, his lawyers for filing a lawsuit without real opposing sides.

By Eric Tucker and Alanna Durkin Richer
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump’s lawsuit against the IRS over his leaked tax returns was filed for an “improper purpose,” a judge said Monday in a scathing decision that referred one of his lawyers for potential disciplinary action and characterized the \$10 billion complaint as an exercise in self-dealing. U.S. District Judge Kathleen Williams accused Trump and his lawyers of having manipulated the court system when he sued a federal agency under his control, bypassing a requirement that parties in a lawsuit must have adverse interests, and laying the groundwork for a settlement that granted him immunity from tax audits and created a fund to compensate allies Trump who say they were unjustly persecuted. The judge stopped short of explicitly voiding the deal shielding Trump from tax scrutiny but said the government cannot claim that the agreement was the result of a legitimate legal process. “Whether Executive Branch actors can



U.S. District Judge Kathleen Williams accused President Donald Trump and his lawyers of having manipulated the court system when he sued the IRS. Williams also referred the attorney who filed the suit for disciplinary action. ALEX BRANDON/AP

privately agree to give themselves and their former clients blanket immunities and billions of dollars in tax monies for legally undefined grievances was never an issue advanced to this Court,” said Williams, an appointee of President Barack Obama. “The question is whether the Parties could do so by claiming to be adverse

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A field in Decatur launched the YMCA youth soccer program

Nearly 60 years later, sport’s rise in U.S. comes full circle with the World Cup in Atlanta.

By Carson Bonner
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Nearly six decades before Atlanta played host to matches in the 2026 FIFA World Cup, a handful of professional soccer players from around the world showed up at a DeKalb County YMCA with an idea: teach American kids a game most had never heard of. That idea became the first YMCA youth soccer league in the country and, the YMCA of Metro Atlanta says, a launching pad for the sport’s rise across the United States. Lauren Koontz, president and CEO of the YMCA of Metro Atlanta, traces the YMCA’s soccer history to 1967, when the Atlanta Chiefs arrived as the city’s first pro soccer team. The Chiefs’ roster was stocked with players recruited from overseas, at a time when soccer barely registered as a sport in the U.S., let alone a profession. “There was not a culture or knowledge of soccer, really, as a professional sport,” Koontz said. Forms of soccer were imported into the



Four boys from a 1980s YMCA soccer team pose for a photo. The popular YMCA soccer leagues started in Decatur. COURTESY

U.S. by immigrants, with the game we recognize today being played in the late 19th century at colleges and informal town clubs. U.S. soccer grew in fits and starts over the decades but didn’t really start to take off until the 1960s, with the first youth league founded in California in 1964. Koontz points to a story the YMCA has preserved on video, told by the Chiefs’ captain, who recalled crossing into the

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TODAY’S TOP STORIES INSIDE



WORLD, A2
Trump raises stakes in conflict with Iran
A new U.S. blockade, proposed tolls and fresh military exchanges have reignited tensions with Iran, sending oil prices higher while rattling markets all over again.



METRO ATLANTA, A4
Town Center Mall sold again amid struggles
Once valued at \$300 million, Town Center at Cobb has changed hands again after foreclosure. What comes next could reshape a key corridor northwest of Atlanta.



METRO ATLANTA, A9
New law targets private equity homebuyers
Metro Atlanta helped inspire a new federal crackdown on Wall Street homebuyers. Supporters say it could open doors for families who long have been priced out.



SPORTS, B1
5 All-Star journeys converge for Braves
A young star, a comeback story, a 10-time selection, a durable slugger and a veteran finally getting his due. Meet the five Braves at tonight’s All-Star Game.



LIVING, C2
Soccer demands a lot from the heart
Soccer pushes the body to its limits, especially in Atlanta’s heat. An Emory sports cardiologist explains when fatigue is normal, and when it’s probably not.

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