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Maes: Police Chief Knew Of Gambling Ring

DENVER - Colorado GOP gubernatorial candidate Dan Maes has released decades-old personnel files amid recent questions about his law enforcement career in Kansas in the 1980s — records that support his claim that his boss did know that he was investigating a gambling ring and meeting with the Kansas Bureau of Investigation.

The KBI has said Maes never worked with them.

Maes provided his termination letter from 1985 to The Associated Press. In it, Liberal, Kansas Police Chief Richard Kistner told Maes he was being fired for telling his girlfriend that her family was under investigation.

"You were specifically cautioned not to reveal the contents of your conversations with your superiors and KBI agents" to his girlfriend or members of her family, Kistner wrote.

Kistner said he doesn't remember the investigation or dismissal. The department and the KBI did not return phone calls seeking comment.

In his dismissal appeal, Maes told Kistner he told his girlfriend six months after the investigation into a gambling ring ended that her family had been under investigation "as a gesture of love" for the lies he had told her.

Maes, who previously said he was working as an undercover agent, said he learned about the alleged bookmaking ring in August 1984 and told Sgt. Jimmy Peak, the sergeant of detectives. Maes says he was told the department didn't pursue such operations. He told the department about another gambling operation and "our department seemed indifferent." Peak died in 2008.

Maes says the police department set up a meeting with KBI agents Dave Yarborough and Bruce Mellor, and his police captain ordered Maes to keep Yarborough informed.

"My only misconduct has been the sharing of the pressures and anxieties of a complex investigation with the most important person in my life," he told City Manager Alan Morris, who upheld the dismissal.

American Constitution Party gubernatorial candidate Tom Tancredo has questioned Maes' version of events and demanded that Maes release his personnel file. Both men are running against Democrat John Hickenlooper in the November election.

Bob Blecha, director of the Kansas Bureau of Investigation, has said there is no record of Maes working for the bureau or as an undercover agent. He said there was an investigation of bookmaking in Liberal at the time but "it was unsuccessful." Blecha refused to provide details because there was no prosecution.

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Associated Press Researcher Susan James also contributed to this report.

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