

Minor Lacrosse launches internal investigation

But criminal investigation continues, say police

By Paul Baswick

SIX NATIONS — The Six Nations Minor Lacrosse Association's new executive is launching an internal investigation into missing funds involving the organization's former treasurer.

Wendy Staats, Minor Lacrosse treasurer for the 2001 season, added substance to persistent rumours within the organization last Tuesday by admitting her role in the disappearance of thousands of dollars from the organization's coffers.

The amount of funds traced to Staats was about \$25,000, 2001 third vice-president Art Martin stated at the Jan. 22 general annual meeting. That amount, he added, had been repaid down to a balance of \$12,838.

The new executive, selected last week, is forming a joint executive/community finance committee charged with conducting an internal investigation of transactions for the years 2000 and 2001, newly-appointed association president Carmen Thomas said Tuesday.

"One of the outcomes of that finance committee working together is to present the facts. We're going to go to the community with it. They're going to have lots of questions and we have to have the

answers. That's what we want to prepare for, and then we're going to leave it for them to decide," said Thomas.

"We would hope that Wendy would work with us on this. She's openly admitted that she has done wrong, but if she can take that further and face the community, face the parents. That's her big test. She came to our meeting on Saturday and apologized and she's very sorry for what she's done. She's living through her own personal hell right now."

Thomas said he expects the committee and the executive will be able to give the community answers in fairly short order.

"We hope to have this resolved within the next three weeks. We're going to be working hard."

He said it is likely a decision will be made whether to pursue criminal charges against Staats once the financial details are presented to the public.

"We're going to take direction from them. That's the way we're looking at it," he said,

"One of the suggestions that came forward last Saturday was that we present the facts, take it to the community, put a ballot

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