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**NEWS RELEASE**  
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**PLYMOUTH SCHOOLS CAFÉ DIRECTOR ARRAIGNED ON CHARGES HE  
STOLE EQUIPMENT, DELI MEAT**

*For years, man ordered premium meats, even lobster, from school for resale at his Cape Cod Snack Shack*

**PLYMOUTH** – A man has been arraigned on charges that for a number of years he stole food, cafeteria equipment, classroom equipment, and paper goods, from Plymouth Public Schools, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz and Plymouth Police Chief Dana A. Flynn have announced.

Patrick VanCott, 62, of Sandwich pleaded not guilty at his arraignment in Plymouth District Court today on charges of Larceny Over \$1,200 by a Single Scheme, and Larceny from a Building. He was held on \$50,000 cash bail and ordered to stay away from all Plymouth school campuses and school storage facility.

On May 30, Plymouth Public Schools officials contacted Plymouth Police after they received an anonymous letter alleging criminal activity at the Plymouth Community Intermediate School. The letter alleged that a person had been stealing commercial equipment and food products from the school. The alleged stolen property is owned by the Town of Plymouth and was paid for by the U.S. Federal Government. Plymouth Police immediately launched an investigation, which identified the suspect as VanCott, Director of Plymouth Public Schools Food Services. As Director, VanCott was the sole person with the authority to place orders for the cafeteria. VanCott additionally operates the Snack Shack at Sandy Neck Beach in Barnstable. VanCott's food orders consisted of premium Angus hamburgers, hot dogs, lobster meat, and other food products that were not served to students or school staff.

On April 4, VanCott is alleged to have taken two under-the-counter commercial refrigerators. Surveillance video shows VanCott at the school on a Saturday loading one of the refrigerators onto a town truck and departing. VanCott then returned to the school in his personal pickup truck and loaded the second refrigerator into his own vehicle. A review of video taken from the Massachusetts State Police Fusion Center cameras located on the Sagamore Bridge showed VanCott's personal truck cross the bridge with the small

refrigerator secured on the rear truck bed. As a result, VanCott was placed on administrative leave from Plymouth Public Schools.

As part of their investigation, police conducted numerous interviews, reviewed surveillance video, and analyzed cafeteria financial documents. The investigation alleges that for years, once a week between Memorial Day and Labor Day, VanCott ordered cafeteria employees to slice two bags of deli turkey and one bag of ham, place them in a box inside the refrigerator with the initials "PVC" written on them. Others reported to investigators they witnessed VanCott take condiments, snacks, paper goods, coffee, and other items from the kitchen.

A list of items that were purchased by VanCott but not currently in the Plymouth Public Schools storage facility was compiled totaling over \$8,300 in goods. The items include but are not limited to:

- Refrigerated sandwich table - \$1,700
- 2 Fry Pans - \$96
- Convection oven - \$850
- Undercounter freezer - \$1,700
- Microwave - \$299
- Bagel warmer - \$294
- Cuisinart coffee maker - \$84

On June 4, Plymouth Police with the assistance of Barnstable Police executed a search warrant at the Snack Shack. They located a 28-foot industrial-sized refrigerator, bins, government-issued food, a coffee maker, blackboards, and other items. VanCott was taken into custody.

The investigation is ongoing by Plymouth Police.

VanCott is next scheduled to appear in court on July 21<sup>st</sup>.