

Report: \$1.8 million paid by Wright State to consultant is questioned

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Laura A. Bischoff Josh Sweigart Columbus bureau 11:46 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2017 News

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Ron Wine. TY GREENLEES/STAFF

Columbus

Approximately \$1.8 million of the \$2.3 million Wright State University paid economic development consultant Ron Wine is being questioned by Ohio Inspector General Randy Meyer.

Meyer's investigators identified \$1.8 million in overpayments or unsupported, questionable or unauthorized payments to Ron Wine and his consulting company since 2009. Meyer sent his 20-page report to the Greene County Prosecutor and Ohio Auditor of State for consideration.

Wine is the former Dayton Development Coalition chief executive who the university hired to help secure state and federal funding and contracts.

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In June 2016, the university suspended its contract with Wine while state authorities investigated a litany of issues. In September, Wine sued Wright State University in Greene County Common Pleas Court for \$4.5 million.

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State Rep. Jim Butler, R-Oakwood, made a complaint to Meyer's office in January 2016, raising concerns about Wine's contract work for the university.

Wine told state investigators that he had an "understanding" with former WSU president David Hopkins that Wine's firm would be paid a 5 percent of all funds he helped secure as a retainer fee.

The inspector general identified the following questionable payments:

\$403,028 for payments prior to October 2012 that lack proper documentation;

\$1.13 million in unallowable performance bonuses;

\$63,250 in double billings;

\$139,950 in unauthorized costs; and

\$181,500 in payments that lacked sufficient detail.

The university could only find two contracts with Ron Wine Consulting Group since 2009.