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# The Times-Picayune

## **New Orleans judge makes motions public**

*Records were sealed by mistake, he says*

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Attorneys for former Civil District Judge C. Hunter King want the judge presiding over his criminal case to suppress statements in which King admitted he forced court employees to work on his re-election campaign and lied about it under oath. They also want Criminal Court Judge Julian Parker to throw out the charges, saying the facts of the case do not constitute public salary extortion or perjury.

Those motions are among more than a dozen in the case that were made public Friday.

On Thursday, Parker ruled as moot a request by The Times- Picayune that motions and other pleadings filed in the case be made public, saying he never ordered them to be sealed in the first place.

The Times-Picayune requested the pleadings in April after finding they were not in the file available to the public and that the minute entries in the case said 18 motions, pleadings and responses had been filed under seal.

"The court did not order the record sealed," Parker said, in a five-page written ruling issued Thursday and filed with the clerk's office Friday. "However, absent an order of the court, certain documents were inadvertently sealed. For the record, the court has decided to leave open to the parties the option to seal the record."

Parker on March 19 issued a gag order that prohibited prosecutors and defense attorneys from speaking publicly about the King case, a ban that also applies to the clerk of court. The judge also agreed to seal evidence and discovery in the case, and a handwritten note repeating the substance of Parker's order is pasted on the cover of the file kept by the docket clerk.

"The court will not seal the record at this time," Parker said in his ruling, adding that "this issue is important only to (the newspaper)," and not the legal parties involved.

One of King's four attorneys, Jack Martzell, told Parker at a hearing Friday that his client wasn't interested in sealing the record. Prosecutors did not take a position.

King, 42, is charged with perjury and public salary extortion related to his admission to the Louisiana Judiciary Commission last year that he forced court employees to work on his re-election campaign then lied about it under oath.

The Louisiana Supreme Court unanimously removed King from the bench in October, after finding that his behavior violated judicial rules.

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