

**FROM THE DESK OF
BURR RIDGE MAYOR GARY GRASSO**

One of our successful residents and restaurateurs has been in the news recently for some serious criminal charges alleged against him. In this era of destructive-based social media and TV news reports, I should have sent this message to you sooner rather than later. Waiting only allows the smear vultures to pounce, spin and accuse.

On April 29, FBI agents arrested Philipppo “Gigi” Rovito, Jr. on an indictment issued from the Northern District of Indiana that included over twenty other individuals concerning illegal gambling along with allegations of extortion of one person who did not cover his bets. That is serious and concerning for Gigi, Burr Ridge, and me as mayor, and certainly not the notoriety we want for our community. If Gigi is found or pleads guilty to a felony, there will be severe consequences to his ability to operate any further in Burr Ridge. For now, he is out on bond and presumed innocent until otherwise proved.

Here’s what I have learned: the indictment specific to Gigi alleges that the apparent target of the indictment, an Indiana restaurant owner, came to Capri in June 2025 asking for Gigi. Why that person was even there is concerning and what he claims someone said Gigi supposedly said has to be thoroughly investigated. To my knowledge, there is no specific allegation that Gigi actually threatened or physically harmed anyone. There is hearsay about it though. The allegation, so far, as to Gigi is that he is part of this illegal gambling activity in Indiana (not acceptable if true) and that “someone said that Gigi said” he would harm the gambler for not paying his debt. That too is serious and troubling if true, but – so far – is only what everyone knows to be hearsay that is not usually allowed in courts of law in this country. On that level, I am also concerned as an attorney and citizen that a US attorney would indict a person on hearsay. Maybe there is more to it that will be revealed.

No doubt a factor in the government's action is that Gigi, as most know, has a double felony record from serious actions he was convicted of doing when he was 17 years old in 1991. Gigi served six years in prison for those serious transgressions. He paid the debt society said was owed. That was 35 years ago. Gigi is 52 now, married and successful.

I discovered Gigi's bad history in 2008 when the village performed a routine check on all persons given liquor licenses and managing liquor establishments in the village. It is against state law for convicted felons to have liquor licenses or manage liquor establishments. While Gigi was not "on the license," everyone knew he was managing Capri by 2008, the restaurant that his parents had opened. I promptly wrote to inform him that he could no longer manage Capri.

We later also learned from our village attorney that Illinois has an exception to the no-felons law; there is a state mandated process that allows, if met, a convicted felon to not only manage a restaurant but also be licensed to have a liquor license. That is state law now (supposedly because back-in-the-day, so many Chiago bar owners had records). Gigi was advised that if he met the state standards, he could return as manager of Capri and be on the liquor license.

In 2010, Gigi requested a hearing that a Village Trustee chaired, and where his lawyer presented evidence that met the State's rehabilitation requirements. On behalf of our Acting Liquor Commissioner (a revered and longtime village trustee), the Village Attorney then wrote an opinion that Gigi had met the standards for rehabilitation under state law, and the Village granted, and I signed a liquor license in Gigi's name in 2010 pursuant to state law. Gigi has qualified thereafter every year for a liquor license at Capri, subject to what arises from the indictment.

In the meantime, we have a civic duty, through our justice system, to determine the facts about Gigi's involvement in these allegations and only then act accordingly. Know that as your mayor my first concern is always Burr Ridge. If the allegations against Gigi are proved or

admitted, I will act in my sworn role as mayor to see that he ceases being able to manage businesses at Capri and Are We Live and no longer will be on the liquor licenses.

For now, I will continue to go to Capri as I frequently do; often with my wife Janet, who was a Burr Ridge village trustee (2013-2017) and understands these are serious allegations that must be addressed. You can find us most times at a high-top near the bar. Yes, there is a pasta entrée with our last name on it (which is excellent as is all the food at Capri; try it), as there are also dishes named for Hall of Fame athletes and coaches – rather good company. My wife and I, of course, frequent all of the fine and casual restaurants and shops in Burr Ridge. Yes, I also represented Gigi in two civil lawsuits where I thought he was wronged; and did so successfully because he was not responsible. It's still America, isn't it?

But that was yesterday and does not excuse Gigi today. So, as for Gigi and Capri, I will keep all of you apprised and will follow this bad news closely and never run from it. I will act accordingly and fully when the facts are known in the justice system and office I have sworn an oath to uphold. However, I will never act based upon the social medial vultures, hearsay, or local news reporters who spin the facts.

If you want to communicate with me about this, or anything else, please call my cell (312-498-3202) or email me (ggrasso@burr-ridge.gov). I will always respond.

Our Village slogan, rightfully, is "Burr Ridge, a Very Special Place." I intend that to always be true. I am proud to be your Mayor. I work at it and consider it an honor of my life.

Thank you for your time and the trust you have placed in me to represent you.

/s/ Gary Grasso, Mayor

May 11, 2026