

Gov: Ethics rules in T chief's favor

By JESSICA VAN SACK

Gov. Deval Patrick acknowledged yesterday that the MBTA has a lot riding on the outcome of a lawsuit seeking to halt the proposed Fenway Center — a case that features the wife of the T's general manager as lead counsel for the plaintiffs.

"We want to win the lawsuit," Patrick told the Herald, contradicting administration aides who insisted last week that the state's connection to the suit was tangential. "That's the first order of business."

MBTA General Manager Richard Davey disclosed his wife's key role in the lawsuit on July 29, four months after he was appointed.

Davey's wife, Jane Willis, a partner at law firm Ropes & Gray, represents HRPT Medical Buildings Realty, a neighbor of Yawkey station — which is set to be renovated as part of the \$500 million Fenway Center residential and retail development. The suit was filed in March 2009 against the Boston Zoning Board and takes issue with the board's approval of the project.

Patrick said Davey's disclosure was sufficient, adding he "has done everything the ethics commission asked him to. He's complied with the rules. I think that's most important."

But gubernatorial rival Treasurer Tim Cahill demanded that Patrick, whose wife, Diane, is also a partner at Ropes & Gray, take a tougher stand.

"(Willis) should not be arguing this case," said Cahill, who is challenging Patrick as an independent. "Given the

clear conflict in this case, the governor should ask (Davey) to ask his wife to recuse herself."

A MBTA spokesman said last week that Davey "acted with an abundance of caution" and "will re-

move himself from any and all real estate and construction matters pertaining to the Fenway Center development."

Fenway Center's developer has said he believes the suit is aimed at trying to land a cash windfall from the T through an eminent domain taking.

A math whiz, Willis was portrayed by Kate Bosworth in the film "21," which depicted a group of brainiacs from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University who made a fortune counting cards in Las Vegas blackjack games.

Ropes & Gray released a statement last week saying HRPT had been a client for many years, noting that Davey was appointed a year after the suit was filed.



DAVEY

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2010 BOSTON HERALD