

Part VII: Cleveland Community College Scandals!!!– More Opinion from Readers and Colleagues Collected and Report by Robert A. Williams

Editor's Note: This Editorial written and published by Hal Trammel reminds all of us that Cleveland Community College President Steve Thornburg could not have allowed all the many alleged misdeeds at CCC, CCS and the Commissioners all by himself. More heads need to roll. besides Thornburg. Like the CCC Executive Vice President, the CCS Board of Trustees, CCC HR, the Cleveland County Board of Education, the Commissioners, and more. It is time for a clean sweep in Cleveland County. The following editorial suggests the CCC Board of Trustees has allowed the scandals to go on for so long and is a good place to start the clean sweep.

From Palmetto News-Opinion (with permission)

Shelby, NC – In the second meeting of the Cleveland Community College Board of Trustees this month, once again, the majority refused to address the problems going on there. Word has it that only 4 trustees were in favor of taking action and removing the President from his position. There was no word in regards to the fate of his faithful assistant. From afar, it reminds one of the age old card trick, Three-Card Monte. This card trick, which has been around since the turn of the 15th century, and the object of the game is to “keep your eye on the lady”, which is a red queen of hearts, along with the jack of clubs and spades. It's a con game, and the dealer will simply move the cards around, using slight of hand to, as the player is distracted by the dealer drawing attention away from

what is really going on. In other words, the player is watching the smoke rather than the fire. And that's what we have at the Cleveland Community College.

It was exposed back in 2013, that the Shelby Star had a contract with the Cleveland County School system, worth approximately \$92,000 per year, for graphic design (billboards), newspapers in schools, consultation, marketing and public relations. In other words, the school system was paying the Star for favorable coverage...and appears to still be doing so. It also appears that the college is following suit, and receiving favorable coverage from the Star. The public is being spoon fed information that reveals only what the schools want the people to know. And it is nothing more than the local news media allowing themselves to be used as a conduit for positive press releases.

What is not being addressed is the alleged misuse of grant funds, a trustee accusing a former employee of criminal acts, teachers being dismissed and blamed for things that actually arise from the ineptness of the administration, and the cover up of an alleged tryst between administrators. Supposedly, the trustees decided yesterday, May 23, 2017, that they could continue to kick the can down the road and the community wouldn't care...that is, if they even knew about all these issues. Sad thing is, integrity seems to be in short supply. While those in charge act as if these problems are nothing but a little ember that will burn out shortly, when the reality of it is, very soon, this ember will turn into a wild fire, and the smoke from the cover up will not be enough to extinguish the wild fire that will rage, from the lack of the trustees doing what is right.

There are voices of reason, but they are not being heard. Those voices are being shouted down by bluster, babble and BS. The mess at the community college is now being ridiculed throughout the state. Those that have given aren't willing to give another dime. People are tired of being treated like

mushrooms. (kept in the dark and fed, you know) Not only are there alleged moral issues, there are also alleged issues of criminality, but yet, the beat goes on. In a world of true integrity, it would be fairly simple for a board to say; "Sir / madam you are in no position to bargain nor barter. Here is what we have decided to do, in the best interests of this school. You will be relieved of your duties, effective immediately."

Then, the board should think about their own future. Someone needs to step up and be in charge, and make some sound decisions for the good of the school and the community. Carrying on as if nothing is wrong, is not a solution.