

Breaking News—CCC Board of Trustees Select Interim President!!! –Start Date August 1, 2017, Former President Gone Already!! –Special Called Meeting July 17, 2017 Seals the Deal-Almost! Report by Robert A. Williams

The Cleveland Community College Board of Trustees Called a Special Meeting for 7:00 PM July 17, 2017 to interview a candidate for Interim President. By the end of this meeting the Board of Trustees Voted to Instruct their Attorney to work out the details to hire Dr. William Aiken as the Interim President effective August 1, 2017. President Steve Thornburg is officially President until July 31, 2017, but sources say Thornburg has already left for good as he has awarded himself FLMA paid leave until his end date.

Dr. Aiken is originally from Greenville, Tennessee, served as President of Sampson County Community College until retirement in 2012, in retirement served as Interim President at four different Community Colleges and now will serve as Interim President at CCC pending the paperwork to do so. According to sources Dr. Aiken has been thoroughly briefed on the problems and scandals at CCC and in his final statement to the Board of Trustees and members of the public was “I will make a difference!”

As the reason for the closed session to interview Dr. Aiken has now been satisfied, by law the minutes of the closed session are now public documents and records. We will obtain those minutes and make a public report. Chairman Wes Westmoreland made statements to me that the CCC Board is now committed to total transparency and minimizing confusion. The CCC Board of Trustees have a long way to go to accomplish that, but we will assist them with our suggestion wherever we can, whenever we can and as often as necessary.

Stay tuned for an article that will describe other discussions that transpired during the July 17, 2017 Special Called Meeting.

And remember folks, this is the start of fixing CCC, not the end. What a shame Dr. Aiken wasn't brought on board back in January, 2017.

More information regarding the Selected Interim President at CCC is attached below:

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Part XVII: July 11, 2017-A Day that Will Live in Infamy

At Cleveland Community College!!! –Shannon Kennedy to be Next President of CCC??? –Board of Trustee Gridlock, Lie Detector Tests, Conflicts of Interest Allegations and Total Board Incompetence Cost Taxpayers and Donors \$200,000 with more losses and scandals sure to come!!! Report and evaluations by Robert A. Williams

Editor's Notes: While writing Article Part XVI (Published July 8, 2017) about the CCC Board of Trustees meeting held June 11, 2017 regarding the many scandals and the leadership crisis at Cleveland Community College, which have been magnified ten times over by cover-up, gridlock, and what appears to be all around bumbling (seemingly on purpose) by the CCC Board of Trustees, and the planned schemes by the CCC Administration the following thought became obvious:

"Perhaps it is time to just pull the plug on Cleveland Community College and Cleveland County students go to Gaston College, Isothermal or Catawba Valley Tech in Hickory."...Robert

A. Williams in CCC Part XVI Article. I would now modify this a bit to leave off the word "Perhaps" and add "have the State Board of Community Colleges completely take over the running of CCC." As it is now certain after the July 11, 2017 CCC BoT meeting that the CCC Board of Trustees are not capable, as a group of individual trustees with enough of them to cause gridlock so their own agenda to keep a lid on the bad things that have happened and are still happening can prevail. I was relatively late in coming to this conclusion.

The James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal reporter who first broke this sordid mess at CCC back in her April 4, 2017 article concluded her article early on by saying "If trustees aren't willing to fully investigate potential whistleblower claims, which seems to be the case now, the onus is on North Carolina's State Board of Community Colleges and other higher-level policymakers to do so. If that doesn't happen, innocent college instructors may be mistreated, students may end up shortchanged, and taxpayer funds may be wasted on questionable or poorly managed programs."

It is sad to say that the scandals swirling around CCC have now been traced back to the hiring of Dr. Shannon Kennedy, her rapid and controversial rise to power and dual enrollment program problems surfacing as early as 2005. Now the scandals have been exposed and Dr. Steve Thornburg is still on the job pending his \$200,000 payoff. And the CCC Board and the scheming administration seems to be heading toward promoting Dr. Shannon Kennedy to President of Cleveland Community College. Read on. I bet when the pieces of the puzzle are put together in this article every reader with the most basic level of comprehension will come to the same conclusion as the James C. Martin Center Reporter and as I have come to those same conclusions.

July 11, 2017, 11:30 AM, Cleveland Community College, Shelby, North Carolina.

I walked into the CCC Jack Hunt Campus building seconds behind 2017 School Board candidate Kevin Whisnant. Mr. Whisnant, uncertain where the Board of Trustees Board Meeting was to be held, waited for me at the top of the stairs. I showed Mr. Whisnant where the Board Meeting was to be held. We were the first of many that were coming to attend the BoT scheduled meeting. Little did anybody expect at that time, but a planned scheme by CCC Administration to “trick” the Trustees had already begun. Read on!!

As we were still very early, Mr. Whisnant and I were waiting outside the President’s Office door when CCC President Dr. Steve Thornburg came out the door pulling a lectern that had sheets of paper attached to it. I asked Dr. Thornburg if that was where you want us to sign in to attend the meeting? Dr. Thornburg said, “no, this is the sign-up for people who want to speak to the Board during public participation.” I immediately “smelled a rat” as this public participation signup sheet already had a number of signatures already on it, before it ever hit the light of day. I did not recognize any of the several signatures on that sheet. However, since I have attended County Commissioner meetings and School Board meetings for years, I have learned to pay attention to even the slightest detail of what goes on in Board meetings. And when there is some deviation, there is a reason for it that will soon play out if you pay close attention. Read on and I will explain to you the significance of those pre-signed public participation sign-up sheets during the course of the Board Meeting.

As the time for the meeting to start (12 Noon-sharp) came near and more and more citizens were coming in, we all went into the Board Room and found a seat. I immediately recognized that the CCC Board and Administration had read my previous article criticizing the “fancy meal” that they had at taxpayer expense. Fine china, lily white custom monogrammed (cloth napkins, silverware, steaming hot serving trays and a full and

fancy meal. This time they still had all the fancy china, etc. but the meal was a single large scoop of chicken salad and a sandwich roll. Plus a very small individual dish containing some grapes or black olives. I was not close enough to tell which.

Since I happened to have found a seat close to the head of the big shiny table, I reminded Chairman Greg Melton that according to North Carolina law, the Board of Trustees had gathered together at 12-Noon and that is when the meeting actually began, And that just simply changing the agenda to show the meeting started at 12:30 PM so the Trustees could eat their meal did not satisfy NC Law regarding changing the time, place or date of a Board meeting. Mr. Melton immediately turned around, left and came back with Ms. Shante Martin, an attorney with the NC State Community College Association. Ms. Martin explained that they had posted a time change on the President's Office door and that was all they needed to do to change the time of the meeting. Well, I was not going to have any of that. I informed Ms. Martin that posting a sheet of paper on the President's Door at a Community College that happened to be closed for the summer did not meet the standards of public notification according to the law as it was stated. Also, I said, the Board of Trustees would have had to vote at their last meeting before the change of schedule for the meeting and they had not done so. Ms. Martin had no answer for that. But again, this was the first time a lawyer had attended a CCC Board of Trustee meeting. Again, I smelled a Rat!!! Bad legal advice telling the Board that what they did was right when it was obviously wrong. Something was up. In just a few minutes I see Ralph Meekins, the CCC Board lawyer. Later there would be a third lawyer. Something was definitely up.

Anyway, there were 18 to 20 of us sitting in those uncomfortable fold up chairs at the 12-Noon meeting start time and we were not about to leave. We sat there and watched the

Board eat their meal, such as it was, until 12:30 PM. Then it was announced that there were a number of people who had been standing outside and the room fire safety capacity would be exceeded. Therefore the meeting was relocated to a much larger room downstairs.

Upon observation I had concluded this group of Trustees were really not ready for prime time. They were also not ready to comply with the open meeting laws of North Carolina. The whole deal with the meals and all was just a small indication. Governmental bodies such as the CCC Board of Trustees are supposed to conduct their business in public. This meet and eat stuff behind closed doors as they had been doing and are still trying to do is a relic of long ago. They only got by because nobody questioned them. That might be fine as long as things are running well. But folks, these guys and gals on the CCC Board of Trustees have refused to face the facts. Things are not going well at CCC, there are scandals at every turn and this College, Administration and Board of Trustees are all under a microscope. And they don't even get the fact they are not even conducting their meetings in accordance with the law. Normal governmental agency Board meetings are held in meeting rooms and don't include fancy meals eaten in front of the public that is paying the bills. Especially when important donors like Mrs. Patsy Rose, three members of the LeGrand family (Stuart, Brian and Brendan), former Board Chairman Ellis Monroe and noted philanthropist Charlie Carrigan are treated so poorly. Rude behavior by CCC, bordering on uncouth. (It was noted that Sheriff Alan Norman, Wayne King and Allen Langley did not eat their prepared meal in protest of such a waste of taxpayer dollars.) Read on folks. I am just starting to tell this tale.

So, now we all go to the much larger meeting room downstairs. When I enter the room I see the horseshoe shaped arrangement for the Board Members on one end of the room and many rows of chairs on the other end of the room for the public. More

importantly, I see that most of the chairs for the public are filled up front by people with CCC identification badges. Apparently CCC employees who are on the payroll. Those of us who were not CCC employees were forced to sit in the very back rows.

But that didn't last long. When the Board meeting was called to order, us in the back could not hear a word. There was no sound system. I smelled another Rat right off.

So, I pick up my clipboard that I always bring to meetings to take notes on, stand up and make my way around the right side of the room to right up to where the Board members were sitting. I should have also brought my chair as I now had to stand for the duration. But I could hear it all. I saw Stuart and Brian LeGrand and others do the same as I had done over on the left side of the room. We intended to hear what was going on in this public meeting no matter how hard the CCC Administration and (some on the) Board tried to keep us in the dark or, in this case, out of hearing range.

The first item on the meeting agenda was regarding ethics and reports of unethical behavior. From all the minutes of previous CCC Board of Trustee meetings, no conflict of interest was ever brought before the Board although several board members had obvious conflicts. This time was different.

Board member Wayne King had brought up the fact that CCC does business with Westmoreland Printers which is an obvious conflict of interest in accordance with the law as Board member Wes Westmoreland is the owner of Westmoreland Printers and stands to gain by his business with CCC. In general a CCC Board member has a conflict of interest when, among other things he or she "derives any income or commission directly or indirectly from the his business with CCC." So, Wayne King is 100% correct. (This same situation also seems to apply to Board members Allen Langley and Greg Melton, whose terms ran out June 30, 2017.)

However, the lawyers, Ralph Meekins and Shante Martin said no, everything was all right. Wayne King wasn't having any of that. He stated in his reading of the law that the law basically meant what the law says and he was not accepting the "advice" of the attorneys to the contrary.

Westmoreland apologized to the taxpayers of Cleveland County if he had made a mistake by any misinterpretation of the law and said he would refuse any future printing business with CCC.

Editor's Note: Wayne King was totally correct to not blindly accept the two attorney's advice. He had read the law and the law was clear. Wayne King as a board member, is personally responsible for his own vote (as are the other board members) no matter what the consequences are. And the lawyers are not. You take their advice at your risk, not theirs

Wes Westmoreland was right too. Sort of. Westmoreland cannot change his past dealings with CCC but he swiftly corrected his mistake by refusing to do any more printing work for CCC. (However, Westmoreland did not offer to resign for his transgressions as many would consider appropriate.) Wouldn't it be nice if all board members, including Westmoreland would take that approach on all the issues at CCC. This was not the end of it though. Read on.

The next item of business on the agenda was the swearing in of new Board of Trustees. Michael Cheng and Betty Carrigan were sworn in by the Cleveland County Clerk of Court Mitzi Johnson.

Editor's Note. Four Board of Trustees members terms ended June 30, 2017.

1. The vacancy created by former Board Chairman Ellis Monroe's resignation in disgust a few months ago was filled by the County Commissioners with Commissioner Jason Falls. The Commissioners also appointed Falls for a full term back in June.

2. The Commissioners appointed Michael Cheng to replace Greg Melton

3. Governor Roy Cooper appointed Betty (Mrs. Charlie) Carrigan to replace Allen Langley.

4. The School Board has not appointed anybody yet to the seat held by June Yarboro. Our information is that Mrs. Yarboro has smartly informed the CCS Board that she does not want to be re-appointed to the CCC Board. It is expected that the School Board will make their appointment at the CCS Board meeting July 24, 2017. That appointment may be contentious as we have been informed that former board member Allen Langley, who was originally appointed by the Governor and whose term expired, now wants to be re-appointed to the CCC Board by the CCS Board. Some hanky-panky appears to be going on here. Especially since another highly qualified person has expressed an interest in being appointed to the CCC Board by the CCS Board. Also note that CCC Board of Trustee member June Yarboro, whose term expired June 30, 2017 attended the July 11, 2017 CCC Board of Trustee meeting and voted in that meeting. Perhaps her vote was illegal and may have otherwise caused a continuation of gridlock in several 6-6 tie votes in this July 11, 2017 meeting as there were only eleven legitimate Board members present. Thus negating any possibility of a tie votes that are coming up shortly in this highly controversial meeting and possibly making, along with other situations, the vote to pay Thornburg \$150,000 null and void. Someone on the Board of Trustees needs to ask their many attorneys about that.

Now some fireworks in this meeting that was to end up lasting nine hours. The next item on the agenda was a report from the nominating committee and the election of new officers for the new 2017-2018 term. For this Item, the presiding officer of the meeting was turned over to Board Secretary Dr. Thornburg.

The Nominating Committee Chairman, Lamont Littlejohn, with much explaining reported that the Nominating Committee (which

were not named) had recommended Wes Westmoreland as Chairman and Jason Falls as Vice Chairman. Then in what appeared to be a clear departure from normal parliamentary procedure (Robert's Rules of Order) Rev. Dr. Littlejohn made the nomination in the form of a motion. Then Wayne King immediately makes a "substitute" motion to nominate Jason Falls as the Board of Trustees Chairman citing Westmoreland's conflict of interest that was previously discussed but not resolved to King's (and possibly others including myself) satisfaction.

The Board meeting entered into a period of confusion, bordering on chaos. Thornburg was "confused" and asked multiple times for legal opinions on parliamentary procedural rules. (I thought Thornburg knew better than this but throwing the Board into a total state of confusion might have been his plan all along, especially for later on in the closed session to come,) A vote on the substitute motion was a 6-6 tie (remember Yarboro's possible illegal vote) therefore it did not pass. Then the vote on the first motion also tied, so it did not pass either. Then Jason Falls and Wes Westmoreland were each asked to give a little speech on why each of them wanted to be chairman.

Then they decided to vote on the same motions again although neither of them passed the first time around. The substitute motion was voted on first and another 6-6 tie. Then the first motion was voted on and the results were 6-5 to pass. Board member Gordon Hamrick had abstained from voting that time. Then the question arose about how could Hamrick have voted all the previous votes and then abstained. And more discussion.

The wind up of all this was that Wes Westmoreland was declared Chairman and Jason Falls was declared the Vice Chairman. Westmoreland, at this point, took over as the presiding officer for this July 11, 2017 CCC Board of Trustees meeting.

Next on the agenda was the new Public Participation section.

These minimum rules as mandated by state law require 15 minutes be set aside in every meeting and each participant be allowed up to three minutes.

Editor's Note: Remember the Public Participation sign up sheets that Thornburg had brought out before the meeting even started and no one but myself and Kevin Whisnant were present? The sheets that already had names on it? Get ready, the dirty dealing planned scheme I smelt a Rat about is coming to be right now.

Chairman Westmoreland Calls the first name on the list.

Betsy Stach: CCC was such a fine institution, so happy to work there, everything positive, no problems with CCP or anything else.

Next:

Kevin Proctor: : CCC was such a fine institution, so happy to work there, everything positive, no problems with CCP or anything else.

Next:

Betty Taylor: More of the same but stated a little different.

Next:

Jonathan Davis: CCC a beacon of Hope. More of the Same

(Sources report that Jonathan Davis told Exec VP Shannon Kennedy that he was thinking about resigning during all the mess at CCC and Kennedy allegedly responded "No, then we will both look guilty.")

Next:

Susan Ubanski: First speaker to not deliver a preordained positive message that CCC was the best thing since sliced bread. Susan had recently quit CCC in disgust and was speaking

up.

Then, Westmoreland stated the 15 minutes were up.

Editor's Note: From the start the planned scheme was to fill the public participation time up with positive messages about CCC, throw off on anybody who said otherwise and basically make a show for the Board members. Especially the new board members that all the allegations were a hoax perpetrated by just a few disgruntled employees.

But then, Chairman Westmoreland, with many names still on the list , asked the Board if they would extend the time. And they did. The planned scheme had failed, partially anyway.

The next speaker was called:

(?) Zomora: (I did not get the first name.) Stated support for Ginger Bullock and those that were speaking out about the many problems at CCC. Said Bullock was a professional who stood up to CCC leadership and would not support sub-standard teaching. Said Bullock had stood up "when others were not courageous enough" to stand up for fear of retaliation.

Next:

Brendan LeGrand: Stated problems at CCC was not a "family quarrel," that problems were serious and not getting better. Said that there was enough proof two months ago to terminate Thornburg for good cause. Thornburg placed Board of Trustees article in Star, wanted to make better deal for himself. Recommended no deal with Thornburg, hire interim President immediately and move along resolving the rest of the issues and scandals.

Chairman Westmoreland then recognized former CCC Board of Trustee member and former Chairman Ellis Monroe as well as Greg Melton.

The Board Approved the minutes of the June 6, 2017 BOT meeting

unanimously.

Then Allen Langley (No longer a Board member) was asked to provide a status report on the various outstanding allegations to be investigated by a third party investigator.

The report basically was that the Board would need to approve \$1,787 for a third party investigator and \$850 for lie detector tests for President Thornburg and Exec VP Shannon Kennedy. (Outside the meeting discussions indicated these lie detector tests were intended to verify whether or not Thornburg and Kennedy had had an affair.)

Editor's Note: Most would say any government agency is in deep do-do when they have to administer lie detector testing to their two top managers. I am sure this will be explored in other articles.

Then the agenda called for a closed meeting.

Editor's Note: NC law has very strict requirements on what is allowed to be discussed behind closed doors. The law also requires that the motion that must be made to go into closed session is very specific about the purpose of the closed session.

Rev. Dr. Lamont Littlejohn made the motion to go into closed session, which was seconded and passed unanimously. However, that motion appears to be illegal in accordance with North Carolina law, which could make everything agreed upon in the closed session and voted on afterward null and void. This CCC Board of Trustees doesn't seem to get it that NC Law has to be strictly followed in the process and administration of what this board does. Read on, there is much more.

The Board goes into closed session in the original Board room where this meeting started. The meeting included the CCC Board of Trustees, their two lawyers and then Thornburg and his lawyer, Bob Yelton.

This closed session orders pizza around 7:30 PM and comes out of closed session around 9:00 PM. Seven hours in closed session plus two hours for the regular meeting equals nine hours total. This is probably a record in the history of CCC BOT meetings.

Of course nobody waited seven hours for the closed session. Especially the Star whose reporters were not there to cover the meeting in the first place. But the CCC Board of Trustees issues a press release to the Star which basically the Board had come out of the closed session and had agreed to give Thornburg \$150,000 plus around another \$50,000 for time due by July 31, 2017. Thornburg's last official day on the books would be that July 31, 2017 date. Thornburg would agree not to make any more claims against CCC. By the time the vote was taken, Board member Bill Turpish had left the meeting. Wes Westmoreland abstained from voting, Wayne King, Jason Falls and Sheriff Alan Norman voted against giving \$200,000 (or anything) to Thornburg and Board members June Yarboro, Chris Turner, Larry Hamrick, Lamont Littlejohn (all the CCS school board appointments) plus Gordon Hamrick, Plus new Board members Betty Carrigan and Michael Cheng voted for giving Thornburg that \$200,000.

Editor's Note: The \$150,000 that will be given to Thornburg is allegedly going to be misappropriated from county funded allotted to CCC for roof repairs. The whole CCC Board of Trustees have apparently joined in with certain CCC administration people in the misappropriation of money. A criminal enterprise. So, what can we expect not from this crowd in the future. As for Thornburg, his paid time off began early as he left out last week on FMLA paid leave and will not come back to CCC. I would say that Thornburg certainly has more love for money coming into his pocket than the best interest of CCC or any of the students.

Then the CCC Board of Trustees took one more illegal action before they adjourned. They decided to hold a meeting at 7:00

PM July 17, 2017 to interview an interim president brought forward by the personnel committee. I would recommend the “good” board members demand a thorough search with many candidates. I recommend this for one specific reason. With Thornburg gone, this crowd may say all the problems are solved and Shannon Kennedy is the next President of the Cleveland Community College. Some might laugh at that suggestion, but I would bet that thought (and goal) is raging through the minds of the high level bureaucracy at CCC.

Also note that sources indicate Dr. Shannon Kennedy is scheduled, in the very near future to represent, CCC at a meeting of Presidents of NC Community Colleges.

The meeting was adjourned.

More Cleveland Community College Scandals- –What Others Are Saying: Palmetto News-Opinion –” CCC – New board a lot like the old board”– –“CCC-Self Inflicted Nonsense”– Forwarded by Robert A. Williams

Editor's Note: The following two editorials are also from our friends across the border to the South who are keeping up with

stupidity in government. I will state again that Cleveland Community College and their gridlocked Board of Trustees have risen to the top of the stupidity list for a large part of the English speaking world.

Cleveland Community College – New board a lot like the old board

Shelby, NC – It looks like the new board members of the Cleveland Community College Board of Trustees that were selected, haven't been paying attention to anything that has been going on. Last night, when the Board of Trustees ended their meeting, they had decided that President Thornburg would be leaving, as of July 31, 2017 and that he would receive a severance package of \$150,000, and another \$50,000 for accrued time. That figure is not too far below his annual salary of \$218,400. This will not go over well with the citizens of Cleveland County. Especially after witnessing, through the president's own words, revealing how calloused he is towards his misdeeds, by suggesting, if a donor wanted their name(s) removed from a building(s), then they just go after more people with more money. No big deal. No, remarks such as that are really dumb, from someone that is supposed to be so intelligent.

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Voting against this package were: Jason Falls, Wayne King and Alan Norman.

Voting in favor of it were Larry Hamrick, Chris Turner, Rev. Lamont Littlejohn, Gordon Hamrick, Betty Carrigan, Michael Cheng, and June Yarboro.

Trustee Bill Turpish *left the meeting early*. And newly appointed chairman Wes Westmoreland *did not vote*.

I was told that the new chairman, Mr. Westmoreland suggested

that all the board members should support the college financially. That's all well and good, but let's not openly start selling the seats just yet. How much are some of these trustees benefiting financially, from doing business with the college, whether directly or indirectly? That would be worth looking into. But why would a chairman of a board not vote? A chairman is supposed to be the leader, no? Not much leadership shown in not voting. Maybe one could suppose in a situation as this that the vote would have been meaningless, as it was already 7-3. But it can make a difference in how the public perceives such acts, when judging a leader.

Many people feel this is only the beginning. A good analogy would be that the band aid has just been pulled back. Now, a dose of antibiotics needs to be administered in order to rid the campus of the germs that are responsible for this infection that has spread much too far into the body of the college. Next, a decision needs to be made, before the new president is brought on board, to treat this infection quickly, so that the body can heal, and be healthy and strong once again. And lastly, make sure the board assures the body that they will generously apply an apt dosage of integrity, along with an economy sized portion of transparency, on a regular basis, as long as needed. Rinse. Repeat. And keep that prescription updated.

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CCC-Self Inflicted Nonsense

Shelby, NC – At the last Board of Trustees meeting on July 11, 2017, the trustees had a golden opportunity to bring about change, some healing and maybe evening taken a giant step forward, but no, instead, they suffered from a self inflicted, boneheaded decision. They gave away \$200,000 of money belonging to the taxpayers. They let their mouths/votes write a check that their keisters couldn't cash. Instead of taking a step forward, the trustees, at that moment, set themselves up for ridicule, by becoming an addition to this ugly story. Not

only an addition to the story, but an addition that highlighted how out of touch this group is.

Think about this. Finally, after much wrangling and rambling, the board voted to terminate Dr. Thornburg and have him out of office by July 31, 2017. Good move. But after allowing him to bring shame and disgrace, amongst a host of other issues and problems, they also felt that they needed to award him with parting gifts, as if this were some sort of game show, and he was the champion contestant. The majority of the trustees, voted to award Thornburg, \$18,400 less than his salary for a full year. And for what? And to add insult to injury, the board also , in claiming to charge Thornburg with a stiff fine, for using inappropriate language in a password. The fine would be the equivalent of a week's pay, \$5,000...but, Thornburg would be able to claim it as a gift to the school, and it would be tax deductible. And I've heard that it hasn't been paid (donated) yet. Could this board be any dumber? It would have been about as effective if they had made Thornburg go stand in the corner for an hour or so. And the board can't understand why the public has so much disdain for them.

Come Monday evening, people again, will have the opportunity to see this mess, up close and personal. If you attend, be sure and keep those who cannot attend informed, via social media, websites, or text messages, etc. While there, be sure to thank the 3 trustees who did not vote to waste the money of the citizens. The three are: Jason Falls, Wayne Kings and Sheriff Alan Norman.

To all of those who have kept the people informed, via your blogs, websites, news portals, etc...thank you so much. Keep up the good work. When this is over, don't let up. There is still a big fight ahead and much work to be done.

Cleveland Community College Scandals- –What Others Are Saying: Palmetto News-Opinion “CCC-Wait, there’s More” –Forwarded by Robert A. Williams

Editor’s Note: The following editorial is from our friends across the border to the South who are keeping up with stupidity in government. Cleveland Community College and their gridlocked Board of Trustees has risen to the top of the stupidity list for a large part of the English speaking world.

One clarification: We cannot confirm yet that the CCC Board of Trustees did in fact come back into open session to vote to give away \$200,000 to disgraced CCC outgoing President Dr. Steve Thornburg, who many say should have been simply fired on the spot. What seems to be a fact is that no member of the public witnessed what happened around 9:00 PM July 11, 2017 when the CCC Board came out of what was probably an illegal closed session. This is a total fact: the CCC Board saw fit to send a conflicting news release to the Shelby Star (who was not in attendance earlier in the meeting) but the CCC Board did not see fit to send me such a press release and I was present for four hours of the nine hour total meeting.

Shelby, NC – Cleveland Community College has a new board of trustees chairman. The new chairman went directly into closed session and began making plans to give money away that belongs

to the taxpayers. But he would not vote on it in the open session. Why is that, Mr. Chairman? I heard this morning that Dr. Thornburg has not paid his fine as of yet. So, maybe when the board goes back into closed session when they meet on the 17th of July, they can lay out another fine of \$5,000 per day, until the fine is paid.

Dr. Williamson addressed the previously mentioned subject of Dr. Thornburg's pay. He said, "State funds cannot be used to pay an individual who is not working."

So, exactly, Mr. Chairman, where will you get this \$150K plus another \$50K to give Dr. Thornburg these parting gifts? I have an idea, Mr. Chairman. As the new chairman, you spoke about how the trustees should support the college financially and all that, remember? Put your money where your mouth is, along with the 7 board members who were not opposed to this large sum of money, and contribute \$25K each to Dr. Thornburg, since it was your idea!

Again, who will be responsible for Dr. Thornburg's compensation? What entity will be left holding the proverbial bag? The taxpayers of Cleveland County will foot this bill. If you will look at the statutes below, you will actually see that the trustees who arranged this severance package, are actually on shaky ground. If it goes to the county commissioners to bring it to a vote to pay Dr. Thornburg, it would be a good time to bring it to a halt, and tell Thornburg to go ahead and sue the taxpayers, as they would be delighted in going through discovery with him, along with several other employees, if they so desire.

It's way past time for the leaders of Cleveland County, along with the Cleveland Community College Board of Trustees, to stop this practice of patronizing such acts in order to save face. There is no face to save. The people know that these leaders have been weak and are weak, in looking after the

needs of the people. The results of the vote from the trustees regarding compensation prove that. Look at who appointed these people to the board. Sure, the governor supposedly did some appointing, but do you think the governor has a clue as to who these folks actually are? Hardly. Someone within the powers that be that choose, had the governor's ear, and made a suggestion and the governor made the choice. So it all points back home.

Now, speaking of choices. Maybe this method in which the commissioners and others choose who will serve as a trustee, should be a little more thought out and much more research required. It appears that as someone is appointed, they are indebted to their appointer. When a new appointee doesn't know that he or she has been selected to be a trustee, until the night before a meeting is taking place, well, that's not a good sign. That is a result of incompetence, and the incompetence comes from above those who were appointed. Just as a reminder, the word Trustee does not mean one who bears gifts.

There are many disgruntled tax payers in Cleveland County today, due to this mess that was made with this pay out. How in the world could these 8 people be so patently blind, as to what they were doing, and the consequences that would occur? How about the other mess that awaits the attention of the trustees? Will they even address this?

It's a bad sign to see that citizens and employees are more informed of what's going on than some of the trustees!

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Breaking News!!!– School Board Election for Unaffiliated Candidates Resolved!!! Research and Report by Robert A. Williams

If you have been confused by all the whooping and hollering by School Board Member Kathy Falls on TV, in the Star and on Facebook about the Republicans in Raleigh passing laws without reading them, about mistakes in the law, how she and all unaffiliated candidates are being picked on and who knows what else, Read on. Pulling up the law and calling the Cleveland County Board of Elections filled me in on the facts. Which I am sharing with you, Kathy Falls and the world.

First of all:

1. Any citizen duly registered to vote in North Carolina, no matter what party or unaffiliated, can run for office and have their name placed on the ballot in the General Election by a petition process that has been in effect for many, many years. This allows any of the over 60,000 registered voters in Cleveland County to run for any partisan office. For a countywide office such as the County Commissioners, and now the School Board it takes a petition signed by 4% of registered voters in Cleveland County (2,535 valid signatures) on a petition to run for these offices which places your name on the General Election ballot avoiding all party primary elections.

Political Parties such as the Republicans, Democrats and

Libertarians have beforehand petitioned the State of North Carolina for their Party candidates to register and run for office without having to file petitions, but the candidates have to submit to a Political Party Primary Election process that they have to win in order to have their name placed on the General Election Ballot. Any voter registered as Unaffiliated, as Kathy Falls is, who have decided, for their own reasons, that they do not want any political party affiliation, cannot simply decide at the last minute to run for a Partisan Election as Unaffiliated and expect to have her name placed on the General Election Ballot. No matter how unfair they think that is or how self important they think they are. That is the process. That is the law. That is the way it is.

2. The NC General Assembly passed a law (Sessions Law 2017-78) effective June 29, 2017 that makes School Board elections partisan, instead of non-partisan, in certain NC counties, including Cleveland County. The reason this law was passed was to make these counties, including Cleveland County, the same as all other counties in North Carolina. This process started way back in March and went through much debate in Raleigh between the NC House and NC Senate before becoming law. Any School Board incumbent, responsible for knowing the laws regarding schools, educating children, etc. as Kathy Falls is, should have been aware of the progress of Sessions Law 2017-78 and made their political decisions accordingly. For example, Cleveland County School Board member Danny Blanton was previously registered Unaffiliated, became aware of the change in law that was in progress, and changed his registration to Republican. Now there are five Republicans either signed up or going to sign up for the four seats open on the Cleveland County Board of Education. These five Republican candidates running for four offices will have a Primary Election to determine which four will have their names on the General Election Ballot. On the Democrat side, School Board Chairman Phillip "Bully" Glover is the only Democrat that has signed up

(as of now that I know of) and at the end of the filing period if there are four or less Democrats signed up, there will be no Primary Election for them. If that is the case, their names will be placed on the General Election Ballot.

3. Of the counties included in Sessions Law 2017-78 all the counties except Cleveland County have their School Board elections in even numbered years. That means the election schedules in those counties in the next election cycle will occur in their 2018 Election cycle. So any 2017 Election year issues regarding the Cleveland County School Board are in Cleveland County only.

4. Sessions Law 2017-78 as it applies to Cleveland County only affects the Cleveland County election cycle because the law came into effect June 29, 2017 and the well established election year filing schedule requires any candidate who plans to run as Unaffiliated has file their petitions by noon, the last Friday in June-Which is June 30, 2017 in the 2017 election cycle.

5. The State Board of Elections at the present does not exist because the terms of office for that Board have expires and Governor Roy Cooper has failed to appoint the New State Board members. Therefore, the State Board of Elections staff are operating without Board leadership. The State Board of Elections staff, by themselves, decided that they will not "officially" allow the Cleveland County Board of Elections to change their filing dates to dates different from all the other 99 counties. The State BOE lawyers decided they worked for the State BOE and not an aberrant county like Cleveland County in their local school board elections. So, the petition filers for the Cleveland County School Board were stuck with the June 30, 2017 date that Kathy Falls is squalling and bawling so much about.

6. The Cleveland County Board of Elections hired their own Election Law specialist Attorney, Brian King, to set this

situation right and allow petition filers, such as Kathy Falls, to have sufficient time to file her petition, The petition filing date deadline for the school board elections in Cleveland County has now been determined to be September 22, 2017. The State BOE staff have decided to allow (by not disallowing) this September 22, 2017 petition filing date for only Cleveland County for only the 2017 election cycle. This means that any Unaffiliated registered voter, like Kathy Falls, and any other voter in Cleveland County who wants to file as a candidate, under the petition process, for the school board can file their petition with at least 2,535 duly registered Cleveland County voter signatures and have their name placed directly on the 2017 General Election Ballot.

7. A draft Bill is being or has been drawn up by Cleveland County representatives to the General Assembly to further accommodate petition filing candidates to allow the number of duly registered petition signers to be reduced from 2,535 voters to 500 for only the 2017 General Election. This draft bill can only be submitted to the General Assembly on August 3, 2017 or later when the General Assembly goes back into session. Since this draft bill only applies to Cleveland County, 1 of 100 counties, who has worked their way into being different from everybody else, it is not certain this bill will pass. I am expecting the draft bill to pass because the other 99 county representatives could care less about what we do here in Cleveland County.

The bottom line for all of this is:

1. Kathy Falls, as an Unaffiliated voter by her own choice, can still legally file and run for the Cleveland County School Board by submitting 2,535 duly registered Cleveland County voters on a petition that must be filed by Noon-September 22, 2017.
2. Any duly registered voter (of the 60,000+ voters in Cleveland County) who wants to run for the school board, whether or not they are affiliated with any political party,

can also file their petitions by September 22, 2017 and have their names put on the 2017 General Election Ballot without going through any Political Party Primary Election process.

In a long and detailed discussion this afternoon with Dayna Causby, Director of the Cleveland County Board of Elections, Mrs. Causby has provided the following suggestions to anyone wanting to run for the School Board using the petition process:

1. Since the signatures on every petition will have to be verified, candidates are encouraged to get their petition papers from the County Board of Elections as early as possible, start getting the petition signatures and realize that some people may sign the petition without being a duly registered voter in Cleveland County.

2. Allow for this by getting more total signatures than necessary and submitting them early before the September 22, 2017 deadline to allow for the verification process to certify that enough valid signatures have been provided. Mrs. Causby states that any petition that ends up with not enough verified signatures will be disallowed. This is the same as with any petition filed in any election. Nothing is new about this.

3. Remember that the reduction of verified signatures from 2,535 to 500 is only a draft bill and may not pass in the August session of the General Assembly. Mrs. Causby recommends starting NOW with obtaining your petition signatures, plan on obtaining more than 2,535 signatures and file early, just in case there are signatures that are disqualified so you can go out and get more signatures.

Folks, we encourage all duly registered voters in Cleveland County to sign any potential candidate's petition whether or not you plan on voting for that candidate. We need good qualified candidates to run for office in Cleveland County and many potentially good candidates are unfortunately weeded out during Party Primary Elections, which favor Party Hacks over

good candidates who are running for the best interests of the citizens instead of the best interests of a political party. Also, remember that, besides you not having to vote for the candidate whose petition you signed, you may also sign your name to as many petitions as you want to. I recommend signing every petition that you come across. A person running under the petition process is much more likely, in my opinion, to be independent of special political party interests than not.

We also recommend citizens who are fed up with all the scandals swirling around Cleveland County to sign up for elected office and every body else vote for them in the Primary Elections and especially in the General Election.

Lastly, If you are considering running for office in 2017, plan on the petition process and have questions, immediately call the Cleveland County Board of Elections at 704-484-4858 or drop by their office located at 215 Patton Drive in Shelby.

Also thank Dayna Causby, Wayne King, Allen Langley, Tim Moore, Kelly Hastings, Warren Daniel and Brian King for their excellent work in resolving this important issue in a short period of time.

Also note that I recommend signing candidate's petitions, even Kathy Falls' petition, but I do not recommend actually voting for Kathy Falls or Bully Glover in any Primary or General Election.

Breaking News!!! –Cleveland

Community College President to Leave July 31, 2017 To get \$150,000 Severance Pay + \$50,000 for accrued time!!! –Cleveland County School Board Member Donnie Thurman, Jr. Announces he will NOT run for re-election!!! –Reports by Robert A. Williams

The Cleveland Community College Board of Trustee Meeting today (July 11, 2017) was a marathon lasting over seven hours, including over five hours in a closed session with three lawyers. Lots of discussion and lots of gridlock too during the open session as well as in the closed session. Lie Detector Testing for CCC President Steve Thornburg and CCC Executive

VP Shannon Kennedy Approved. Wes Westmoreland elected new Chairman of the Board and Jason Falls as Vice Chairman amid contentious split votes. That and more that later.

But the biggest news from the closed session was CCC President Steve Thornburg will be separated from his duties at CCC no later than July 31, 2017 and will be paid \$150,000 severance pay with an additional \$50,000 for accrued time.

Also, Cleveland County School Board member Donnie Thurman, Jr. has made a 15 minute taped announcement on Facebook that he will not seek reelection in 2017 so he can have more time with his family. This means one of the four incumbent CCS

Board members will not be running for reelection. Maybe two if School Board member Kathy Falls loses her bid to have election laws changed to suit her. More on that later.

Also note that School Board candidate Kevin Whisnant attended the contentious CCC Board meeting today. This is totally appropriate as the dual enrollment (CCP) scandal at CCC also includes a scandal at CCS that has not yet been talked about very much. But it will as the CCC Board voted to approve money to hire an investigator regarding the allegations of dumbed down courses involved with the CCC and CCS programs as well as allegations of mis-spent grant money.

Stay tuned for these forthcoming reports regarding CCC, CCS and other issues.

What Others are Saying about the Scandals at Cleveland Community College!!! Forwarded by Robert A. Williams

Folks, People from everywhere are talking about the scandals at the Cleveland Community College. An article from the James G. Martin Center for Academic Renewal, a Raleigh "Think Tank" and non-profit group seeking to improve education, was the first outsider to blow the whistle on CCC. Just a bit later a group from Rutherford County joined in with the whistleblowing, just about the same time that we started sounding the alarm too that things were bad wrong at the

Community College.

Now, from our website alone readers (over 107,000 readers per week per our most recent check) from around the state, around the country and even around the planet-including Australia-have tuned in to the scandalous mess at Cleveland Community College, fully expecting that the Board of Trustees or the state Agency over North Carolina community colleges would be doing something by now. But NOooo. Any kind of appropriate disciplinary action at CCC, even a third party investigation, has been gridlocked by a do nothing Board of Trustees and a do nothing state agency.

But we are doing our part on letting the public know about the goings on at CCC. Another [local blog](#) started by a CCC person has been gaining traction as well as our Spartanburg area friends Palmetto News-Opinion.

We have attached the most recent opinion article from Palmetto News-Opinion titled "Cleveland Community College-See How They Run", regarding the coming Tuesday July 11, 2017 CCC Board of Trustees meeting for your convenience.

Cleveland Community College – See how they run

Shelby, NC – The trustees of Cleveland Community College will meet again at noon, Tuesday, July 11, 2017. The meeting could be a very interesting event, especially if the trustees do what they alluded to doing in their last meeting. If so, then look for some drama from the administration, and maybe a couple of others. According to what I've read on a blog, that addresses some of the issues going on at the college, I see some holier than thou attitudes and remarks coming from those who claim the blog owner and some commenters are nothing less than disgruntled employees who are wanting to cause trouble. Isn't that what the admin has been claiming all along? So, that leads me to believe that those who make these particular comments, are indeed, some higher ups in the administration.

And, to show their true character (or lack of) they resort to making fun of a persons hair, appearance, dating habits, etc. I pity the new President that will take this job, if all of the administrative personnel are still around. Instead of the dreaded purge that the employees fear, maybe it's time to begin the purge at the top, and work downward. The trustees should make it as seamless as possible, for the new hire to come in with a clean slate not only for himself, but for the students and instructors as well. Everyone will benefit if all problems are addressed and dealt with. Some, I'm sure, will be dealt with in a court of law.

The administration is solely to blame for the atmosphere they created. And the trustees are to blame for turning a deaf ear and ignoring these problems for as long as they have. It's true, the trustees cannot right all wrongs, but they can right the wrongs that are still there. Public records show that some people who have poured their lives and dollars into this school, are now saying, "no more", because of not only the action that has been going on, but also the inaction from those whom were chosen to do such. It's a known fact that many people who serve on different boards in Cleveland County, have scratched, clawed, begged and pleaded to be placed there. Yet, once they're on the board, they become afraid to go against those to whom they are tasked to be held into account. Too many of them are always ready and willing to sit around, laugh and slap backs with one another, and even lie, if necessary, in order to protect their "friend", the boss. What so many of them fail to realize, the boss serves at the pleasure of the trustees. The trustees do not serve in order to pleasure the boss. Is that too hard to remember? When the going gets tough...see how they run?

[Ed. note: It would be a great service to the people if someone at the meeting Tuesday could use your phone and share the meeting with everyone via Facebook Live from your page, and pass the word as to how to find it.]

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Part XVI: Cleveland Community College Board of Trustees –June 9, 2017 Meeting Report–July 11, 2017 Meeting Agenda– Board Attorney to Attend Closed Session-Most likely to Discuss Thornburg’s threatened Lawsuit!!! -- Report by Robert A. Williams

“Perhaps it is time to just pull the plug on Cleveland Community College and Cleveland County students go to Gaston College, Isothermal or Catawba Valley Tech in Hickory.”...Robert A. Williams

Editor’s Note No 1.: The minutes of this June 9, 2017 CCC Board of Trustees Meeting has not been “officially” posted yet. This is an old trick to delay the public from knowing what transpired in the meeting for at least a month, usually two months, under the guise of not putting out the minutes until they are approved by the Board. I often wait on reporting what happened in the various Board meetings taken

from my own notes in order to “catch” the Board if they try to change the minutes to cover-up what really happened. Both the Commissioners and the School Board often do this, especially if someone speaks up in the Public Participation part of the Agenda with a complaint. The minutes, an official record, often leaves off much of what the speaker has to say. During this first CCC Board of Trustees Meeting that allowed citizens to speak, three people spoke up during the Public Participation and I want to see if the CCC Board Meeting minutes have left anything out regarding what these citizens had to say. This article will generally describe this June 9, 2017 CCC Board meeting, the first that I have attended, and note the general actions that transpired. Another article, when the minutes are approved and posted, will be forthcoming.

Editor’s Note No 2.: While writing this article a colleague discovered while “searching” the Community College website records and found , in a secret file of draft public records, the draft minutes of the June 9, 2017 Board of Trustees meeting as well as a draft agenda of the July 11, 2017 Trustees meeting. I suppose some would accuse us of “hacking” the CCC Computer system and “interfering” and “meddling” with the CCC administration. I say we discovered an illegal secret hiding place of CCC public records and are publishing the truth to citizens and taxpayers. I say we found a public document that should have been properly addressed in the first place.

Editor’s Note No 3: The draft minutes actually are pretty accurate, although some of former CCC Board member Patsy Rose’s statements are wrong. Especially the so called “historical note” the CCC Board is putting out about Patsy Rose’s service on the CCC Board of Trustees. This Historical Note, obviously intended to case a doubt on Mrs. Rose’s service, did not include the fact that Mrs. Rose had resigned with two years left on her last term on the CCC Board. Also, if you go back to one of my previous article, I included the

exact text of Mrs. Rose's prepared document, all of which was not read because her time was out.

Editor's Note No 5,: CCC "surrogates" are spreading false statements around

Cleveland County and elsewhere that the donors to CCC are not ashamed of the mess at CCC and do not want their names taken off any buildings and I am making that all up. Read for yourself Mrs. Rose's prepared statement AND included in the draft minutes that I will attach at the end of this article, which clearly shows that Mrs. Rose has publicly stated and officially noted in public records that, due to the mess at CCC, she would like to have her name removed from the building at CCC. Folks, read this for yourself. Do not believe ANYBODY that defends ANYTHING that has gone wrong at CCC. The actions by high level CCC administration that have been discovered to be unethical, immoral, probably illegal and just plain wrong dictate that some heads need to roll. And roll soon. Read on.

Prior to this June 9, 2017 CCC Board of Trustees meeting the Trustees had passed a motion to allow citizens to speak to the Board for a maximum of three minutes. The Board made a big deal out of this like they were doing something great for the citizens of Cleveland County. State Law requires all such board meeting to have a Public Participation session on their agenda and provide minimum requirements. The CCC Board of Trustees had finally decided to obey that law and adopted a MINIMUM standard for Cleveland County Citizens. Same as the Commissioners and the School Board. ("Minimum standards" are the key words here. All in all the CCC Board of Trustees obviously regret the fact that the longstanding shenanigans that they overlooked for years have been discovered. The gridlock on the CCC Board is just an attempt to hang on until Cleveland County citizens get tired of hearing about this mess and turn their attention to something else.)

So, I decided I would attend this meeting for the first time on June 9, 2017. Other citizens also decided to attend. To the

best of my knowledge, this June 9, 2017 CCC Board meeting was the first time ever to have members of the public attend their meeting-much less speak. It was totally obvious the CCC Board of Trustees were not prepared to have witnesses, members of the public, in attendance.

The meeting was shown on the CCC Website as beginning at 12:00 PM in the Schenck Board Meeting Room in the Jack Hunt Building. Since I didn't know exactly where this room was, I got there around 11:30 AM and scouted around a bit. I found a map of the Jack Hunt Building and found the Board Meeting Room was on the second floor. I climbed the stairs to the second floor. School was out so not many people were around. I walked up to two ladies I saw through an open door and asked for directions. They gave me directions and I introduced myself to these ladies and they introduced themselves to me. From the conversation that followed it became obvious that both of these ladies were very disappointed in the way CCC was being ran.

Then I walked a little further and found the Schenck Board Meeting Room area and walked into what was an anteroom (reception room) for the main Boardroom. I was still early and nobody was sitting at what I thought was the receptionists desk. So, I looked around a bit, saw the Board Room door was open and walked toward that open door and saw some folks milling around. I walked past a fancy food serving area where steam was coming out of a number of covered serving trays. The food smelled good and I thought "these guys and gals are treating themselves to a nice catered meal at taxpayers expense."

Then I entered the Boardroom proper. It was a relatively small room that surely was NOT intended for members of the public to attend. Then I saw the big fancy elongated oval Board Room table. The table was highly polished, set with fine china, spotless lily white cloth napkins, fine silverware and what appeared to be crystal water glasses. All being set and

arranged by a number of waitresses who had CCC ID tags around their necks. Everything was first class. No box lunches, plastic utensils and a bottle of water for this Board of Trustees crowd.

Also there, but still early, were several Board members that I recognized, Dr. Thornburg, Dr. Kennedy (all attractive in her little black dress), CCC staff members, the waitresses still setting the table, and a few others that I did not recognize. I had entered one side of the Boardroom and exited out the other end, circled back around to the reception area where others were coming in for the meeting. I met Ginger Bullock, Mike Falls, Patsy Rose, Dr. Dale Guffey and others as they were coming in to attend the Board meeting.

It was totally obvious that nobody at CCC was expecting "visitors" to their Board Meeting. It was obvious that there was not enough seating in the Board Room for many visitors in the first place. It was obvious that the 12 Noon time scheduled for the Board meeting was actually the time the Board was going to sit down for their fancy, almost formal, meal.

All us visitors got to watch the straggler Board members come in and get ready for their fancy meal. The covers were taken off the serving trays and I got a first hand view of what was on the menu. Large round and thick meat loaf cakes, broccoli casserole, mashed potatoes with gravy, rolls and peach cobbler for dessert. The meeting was scheduled for exactly 12 noon, but exactly at 12 noon the Board of Trustees, Thornburg, Kennedy, other CCC Staff and an invited visitor from the State Community College Agency began their meal. All us lowly citizens and taxpayers got to wait outside. But we were polite and nobody wanted to be rude and go inside while the muckedy-mucks were eating their fine meal. For a bit anyway.

I got to thinking about all this. State law clearly states that all public business must be conducted in the open. It is

called The Sunshine Law. And when a majority of agency board members get together to conduct business, members of the public are allowed to attend. So I thought, what, besides the law, was to stop this Board of Trustees from conducting their business during this fancy meal? Nothing!!! And this Board didn't much follow state law anyway in the way they conduct their business. If they had, all the mess at CCC would have been cleared up years ago.

So, at 12:20pm and the mucks were still eating, I quietly went into the Board Room and took a seat at the far end of the room. And sure enough, just a few minutes later, I hear the meeting being called to order at the other end of the table. To hear better I take my folding chair to the other end of the room in an obvious display that I intended to hear what was going on. About that time, Board Member Allen Langley, to his credit, suggested to Chairman Greg Melton that all the other visitors (members of the public) be invited into the Board Room. About 15 people file in, more seats were brought in and the meeting resumed.

At this point, since I have reviewed the attached draft meeting minutes and found them relatively accurate regarding what was said, I suggest readers be sure to read those minutes that are found at the end of this article. But first, before you read the draft minutes, there are a few things that were left out of the minutes and a few things to remember:

1. Comment. Notice that some of the public participants words appear to be improperly transcribed. Patsy Rose's statements included words "weld, weld" and other examples where Mrs. Rose did not say "weld, weld." Something is amiss there. And in a few other places. Please go back and read my previous article that included Mrs. Rose's prepared remarks. Also, other speakers words were also misused or misrepresented. Most likely to confuse the record of what they said.

2. The minutes leave out a critical point from the statements

Mr. Williamson, the State Community College invited visitor. Mr. Williamson stated if need be an "interim President could be appointed in one day." This omission was most likely left out so the record will show that replacing Thornburg could be done immediately if the CCC Board really wanted to move that fast. Also note that in a previous article I presented an email between the CCC Board Attorney and the Board that Dr. Thornburg had retained attorney Bob Yelton and a lawsuit was threatened. Also note that the agenda for the July 11, 2017 includes a closed session where Attorney Meekins will be addressing the CCC Board. I predict this closed session will be about Thornburg's threatened lawsuit. I would also not be surprised if the CCC Board pays off Thornburg in a big settlement. Taxpayers will be screwed again because the CCC Board has refused to do their duty in effective manner. So much for gridlock.

3. The June 9, 2017 CCC Board meeting did not include any changes to the time, date or schedule of any future meeting that is required by law before making such changes. The draft agenda for the July 11, 2017 shows the meeting starts at 12:30 PM, which would be an illegal change of meeting time. This again shows that the CCC Board does what they want in spite of what state law says. Obviously the CCC Board wants their meal and eat the meal in private. As for me, the law allows me (and the public) to attend meeting when a quorum of Board members are present and I intend to be in that Board Room at 12:00 PM (noon) sharp. If the Board just sits there and eats their fancy meal, I will bring a brown bag lunch consisting of a can of Beanie-Wienies and a bottle of water and just join in. I suggest others do the same.

The "discovered" minutes of the June 9, 2017 meeting as well as the "discovered" agenda for the July 11, 2017 CCC Board meeting are attached below for your convenience. Come on out to the July 11, 2017 meeting and join us.

PS: If the CCC Board of Trustees ever wises up they will stop

their fancy meals at taxpayer expense; eat their meals somewhere else, separately, and before they come together to conduct CCC business; start following the law regarding open meetings, start following the law in scheduling of rescheduling meetings, stop gathering in private, and move their meetings to another room where it is convenient for public attendance. Otherwise, they should all resign and let those that appoint them appoint someone who will conduct proper and legal meetings.

PS 2: Right now the CCC Board of Trustees have elevated themselves to become the major scandal at CCC. Information has come to me that some of the issues and scandals of today were problems 12 years ago. I don't expect the citizens of Cleveland County have the patience to allow CCC problems, issues and scandals to go for another 12 years before the Board takes action. Perhaps it is time to just pull the plug on Cleveland Community College and Cleveland County students go to Gaston College, Isothermal or Catawba Valley Tech in Hickory.

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County Commissioners Turn Off

Email Service???— To Hide From Public Document Requests regarding them Running Off Sam Lockridge???—I smell a Rat!!! Report and evaluation by Robert A. Williams

The silly Cleveland County Commissioners think they can run and hide from the North Carolina laws requiring them to produce public documents for inspection regarding the forced retirement of Sam Lockridge, former Director over the Landfill, Animal Control and the Shooting Range. They may think they can run. They may think they can just lay low and keep their mouths shut. But I assure them they can NOT hide from their legal responsibilities as Cleveland County Commissioners in this particular matter.

This is what has happened.

On Friday, June 30, 2017 and the last day of Sam Lockridge's forced Administrative Leave-With Pay-information came to me that caused me to make two requests for public documents from Cleveland County. One request was for Sam Lockridge's employment contract-if there is one. The other request was for documents related to any legal actions Cleveland County has taken against Sam Lockridge. I emailed these two public document requests to all five Commissioners, the County Clerk, the County Manager, the Assistant County Manager, the County Attorney and the Assistant County Attorney.

The next day I received two messages, both saying both requests for documents had been "delayed" for everyone except for the County Attorney, Tim Moore. The next day after that I

received two more messages saying the same thing.

As a long time observer of the shady ways these Commissioners operate and being one to believe things like this don't just happen by accident, I smelled a rat. (Or maybe I was smelling a dead cat.)

The thing is County Attorney Tim Moore did receive my requests and that is enough to set into motion my requests for these public documents. I also suspect Tim Moore received my emails because I emailed him at his own business email account while all the others were emailed to the Cleveland County email account-which, I also suspect, was turned off for the purpose of delaying the receipt of my emails. Which makes me even more determined to get access to those public documents.

No matter folks what tricks the Commissioners try to play to cover up whatever mess there is in regard to Sam Lockridge or the Landfill or the Animal Control or the Shooting Range or all of the above, Sam is probably just the fall guy here, relative to the Commissioners, and I intend to find out and report what is really going on.

Stay Tuned!!!