

Cleveland County Citizens are Tired of being Lied to!!! By Commissioners and the Shelby Star Report by Robert A. Williams

It has been the standard practice for the Cleveland County Governmental Agencies to cover up the truth of the matter by issuing press releases to the Shelby Star; who, in turn, release the phony press releases as actual news articles. A good example is the American League World Series attendance. The Star reports that records are set every year at over 100,000 people in attendance when the stadium will only hold 6,000-7,000.

Now, DSS is embroiled in lawsuits; in particular Dorene Ross vs. Cleveland County DSS (Case number 17-CVS-000637)_ that is going on right now and the case file is not under control of the Clerk of Court. The out of town Judge (Robert C. Ervin from Burke County) has the file I am told.

Where does the Judge have this file I wonder? In Burke County at his house or somewhere else. All I know is Court Files are supposed to be kept at the Courthouse. And the public has the right to inspect those files when the case is not going on.

I am also told that the Cleveland County Commissioners have already decided to merge the DSS and Health Department under Commissioner oversight even before their Public Hearing on the matter has occurred-totally leaving the citizens of Cleveland County out of the loop.

Now Commissioner Chairman and DSS Board Chairman Susan Allen says (letter attached) the county has decided to only take

over the DSS and not the Health Department, etc. I wonder where they decided all of this. I don't recall reading any minutes of meetings or seeing anything on meeting agendas. Perhaps they decided all of this in a secret meeting at the LeGrand Center over a beer or a glass or two of wine. All I know is they did NOT discuss or decide this in public, that I am aware of. And I try hard to be aware of what they are up to. Especially after they sold the hospital at pawnshop prices. But whatever they have decided to do, I see an opportunity for the NEW Commissioners to get control of the situation at DSS. Sooner than later.

More DSS news is the Director, Karen Prichard, is being "fired" for cause under the guise of retiring. A whole different story than what the Shelby Star is telling.

Most recent news from the Shelby Star is how good DSS Director Karen Prichard was and that she received the "Order of the Long Leaf Pine" at her so-called "retirement party" November 30, 2018. An obvious misapplication of an honor bestowed on somebody somewhere that is totally contrary to the regards the general public holds for the honoree's time in service. Another example is former Commissioner Chairman Eddie Holbrook was also presented the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, yet voters recently voted to rid themselves of Eddie Holbrook as a Commissioner in last month's election. Even though Holbrook spent record amounts on his re-election campaign and had his "whispering campaign" pedal to the metal. So much for the credibility of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine in Cleveland County.

And so much for the credibility of the new Commissioners, especially the ones who ran on "more transparency." Just after only three days they too are presiding over the same cover-ups that they swore not to let happen only days before the election. But, Hey, 2020 is another Election year and three Commissioners are up for election. If the Commissioners won't get it right on their own, and soon, the voters will get rid

of three more in 2020.

In the meantime, I have sent the Commissioners a Freedom of Information Act request as shown below. Stay tuned folks, getting our government "right" and keeping it "right" is a never-ending process. And you citizens that vote have the final word.

The following request for information was sent to the Commissioners December 6, 2018.

To: Cleveland County Commissioners

From: Robert A. Williams

Subject Freedom of Information Act and NC Public Records law
Request submittal

Chairman Susan Allen, All,

A recent press release in the Shelby Star Titled Cleveland County DSS director earns Long Leaf Pine contains the following quoted statements from Cleveland County Manager Brian Epley:

"In the past 10 years that Karen has served as director, DSS has provided services to more than 632,000 individuals, collected over \$100 million in child support payments for families, supervised the care of more than 1,000 children in foster care, and facilitated adoptions of 178 children," said Cleveland County Manager Brian Epley.

As such statements, especially regarding 632,000 individuals served, appear to be enormously, falsely and intentionally inflated for Cleveland County with an officially recorded population of less than 100,000. Therefore, Under the Freedom of Information Act as well as North Carolina Public Records laws, please provide the following:

1. Documents and records that were used by County Manager Brian Epley in preparing all the figures noted in his quoted statements.

2. Documents and records that actually and conclusively confirm whether or not County Manager Brian Epley's stated figures are correct.

3. All original work sheets, notes, calculations and tabulations that confirm whether or not County Manager Brian Epley's statements are confirmed to be factually correct.

4. All documents from County Commissioners, the Shelby Star or others that commissioned County Manager Brian Epley to take his valuable time to develop the quoted statistics.

If there are any questions please contact me immediately.

Also note that this article is very recent and the information requested would be readily available.

Thanks,

Robert A. Williams

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