

“Closets and Dungeons” at Cleveland Community College!!! New President admits to Problems at CCC – The first step to fixing them!!! If the BoT “crooks” will just stay out of the way!!! Report and evaluation by Robert A. Williams

Everyone that has read my articles on a regular basis for the past several years knows I have been very critical of the various governmental entities in Cleveland County, including Cleveland Community College. I have made a large effort to identify problems and bring them to the attention of the citizens and taxpayers. As well as the CCC Board of Trustees. Many of the in-crowd say I am crazy! Why don't you just write about the good stuff so everybody will be your friend?; they might think and a very few will tell me to my face.

Well, I always say, The Shelby Star writes about the so-called “Good Stuff” much better than I could ever do. Besides, to fix a problem you have to admit you have a problem and then identify what that problem is. Then the fix is usually easy. Although carrying out the “fix” is often very hard. Like getting rid of the former CCC President Steve Thornburg. And now Eddie Holbrook. The number 1 and Number 3 on the CCC Salary Chart.

But, to have any kind of continuous improvement program,

finding problems and fixing them is a necessary part of doing business efficiently and effectively. And I have not heard a peep from anybody in high level positions in Cleveland County about having problems. Until now.

In a recent Shelby Star “Hip-Hip-Hurray” article about the new President of the North Carolina Community College System in visiting CCC and bragging about how good things are at CCC in the article the new CCC President Dr. Jason Hurst replied that we have our “Closets and Dungeons” too. Although this statement was way back on the third page continuation of the front-page article, I recognized it for what it was. It was a clear signal that Dr. Hurst was in the process of finding problems and identifying the problems. I knew that he knows the next step will be fixing the problems that he has identified. Maybe not today or tomorrow. But as soon as possible under a Board of Trustees that are stuck with their heads in the sand. Some anyway. Maybe most.

So, hey you CCC BoTs! Meet every February 29th and let Dr. Jason Hurst handle things in the meantime. Do whatever, just stay out of his way. Give him a raise and make him and his family happy enough that they will never leave.

Editor’s Note: The first CCC BoT meeting for 2019 was held today (January 8, 2019) at 11:00 AM. Unfortunately, I was not able to attend because of a previous commitment. However, I have a few comments before I review the minutes of this meeting:

All previous regularly scheduled meetings in recent years have been scheduled for 12 noon in the President’s Conference room. They weren’t really business meeting but more of a fancy “meet and greet” over a fancy catered meal with fancy place settings, china plates, fancy utensils, crystal glasses and such. All that stopped when people like me and started attending the meetings with many wanting to speak, as allowed-no required to be allowed-by NC law. The meeting was moved to

a bigger room without the fancy meals.

My first and biggest problem with this change to 11:00 AM for the BoT meeting is that nowhere in open session public meetings have the BoT's discussed or voted to change their "regular scheduled" meeting time from 12 Noon to 11:00 AM. This change, in and of itself is a prima facie evidence that something changed somewhere and at some time and that "something" was not discussed in an open session public meeting as required by North Carolina Law. And when you willfully do not abide by the law, you are a lawbreaker. A crook!!! By any other name a lawbreaker is still a crook!!!

What this shows is the Cleveland Community College BoT's just don't get it. If they want the citizens of Cleveland County and the community in general to trust them, then they must be trustworthy. And since they are crooks, they are obviously not trustworthy. If they will ignore the little laws, things like illegally changing their meeting schedule, how can we trust them not to break bigger laws. Such things as nepotism, conflicts of interests or even fraud.

There is no end to this except for scrupulous adherence to the laws that apply to the Cleveland Community College and the way the Board of Trustees are required to do the people's business. No more is required and NO LESS is expected or tolerated.

Now, in my opinion, I think this change of meeting times from 12 noon to 11:00 AM is just a petty and childish display of greed and uppity behavior by the BoTs. They want their catered meal at noon time. So they conspired to get that meal by illegally changing their usual one hour meeting time to an hour earlier. They can have their meeting where they have to, by law, allow the people to attend. And, after the public meeting is over, they can go to the President's Conference Room and have their fancy meal.

But that raises legal questions too. If they close their 11:00 AM meeting and then reassemble, with a quorum, somewhere else, for whatever purpose, they also run afoul of the law.

Under this scenario they would do it and just not tell anyone. Then they would double up on being crooks. Sneaky crooks at that.

BoTs, this speculation is what you get when you change things for no apparent reason. Especially when you change things and break the law. Informed speculation based on long term observations. If I had been in attendance, I would have stuck around to observe where the BoTs go after their public meeting is over, just to find out. I will make the effort to do this at the next so-called "regularly scheduled" BoT Meeting.

Folks, before you think this is overkill. Remember the CCC BoTs had their first ever "Retreat" this past October. A "Retreat" that was never planned or discussed during an open meeting. Obviously, an ill-informed and dumb-assed attempt to get around public meeting laws.

Perhaps this is where the BoTs decided to change their meeting time. And who knows what else they plan to do without telling anybody. Like I said before, the CCC BoT "crooks" just don't get it.