

Cleveland County—Four Months without a Coroner!!! Now, who is going to fix the problems??? Report and two cents worth by Robert A. Williams

Dead bodies are not piling up in Cleveland County—yet. But the paperwork is!!

Around two years ago the now disgraced and defeated Commissioner Chairman Eddie “Massa Eddie” Holbrook led all the Cleveland County Commissioners, and some staff as well, on a boondoggle trip to Washington, DC. A real junket at Taxpayer expense. Wives, significant others and all. Maybe kids too. But I don’t know about that. Hey, to Holbrook’s thinking, Cleveland County had money to burn and Massa Eddie was the one willing to burn it. Especially after that \$1,000,000 County Check plus many other smaller checks got turned over to him—many millions and maybe still counting?

So-what if Massa Eddie did burn taxpayer dollars on a cozy little trip to DC. They ALL Did. Holbrook, Allen, Hutchins, Whetstine, the loser Jason Falls and more. The Shelby Star even wrote about it, like wasting tax dollars is a good thing. Spending other people’s money is always more fun when you have a large dollop of corruption in your heart. To the Commissioners, it was Christmas-time. And the Taxpayer was Santa Clause!!!

But not all taxpayers were happy about it. One taxpayer, Coroner Robbie Morgan’s wife, Mrs. Robbie Morgan, made a comment on Commissioner Jason Falls’ wife’s Facebook page

about the wasted tax dollars. This PO'd Mrs. Jason Falls. Who, in turn, PO'd Mr. Jason Falls. Who decided to retaliate against Mr. Robbie Morgan-the County Coroner, an elected official. Let me say this in another way. Mrs. Robbie Morgan got PO'd about the Commissioners wasting tax dollars. Lots of tax dollars. And put a comment on Mrs. Jason Falls's Facebook Page that PO'd Mrs. Jason Falls. Then Mrs. Jason Falls PO'd Mr. Jason Falls who goes to the rest of the Commissioners and PO'd them too. So, the PO'd Commissioners decide to retaliate against Mr. Robbie Morgan, thus completing the circle of PO'd people. Ain't that a hell of a way do official Cleveland County Business??? But that was what sparked this business of doing away with the Office of the Cleveland County Coroner, although Mr. Robbie Morgan was doing a fine job. By the book top to bottom and side to side.

Like the old saying goes, "if it ain't broke-don't fix it!" The Commissioners should have let well enough alone.

But, then Massa Eddie tasks County Manager Jeff Richardson (who, with Mrs. Richardson, also went on the junket to Washington, DC) and County Attorney Tim Moore to abolish the office of the Coroner for Cleveland County. An elected position that has been around since the founding of the USA, North Carolina and Cleveland County. Which Jeff Richardson and Tim Moore set out to do. And did. Effective at the end of Robbie Morgan's term of Office last December 2018. A little over four months ago.

Editor's Note: There was a lot of corrupt mess in getting all this abolishing the Coroner stuff done that I will leave out here as I covered it at the time. Scroll way back if you want to get that story.

So, what Cleveland County did was abolish the efficient local Office of Coroner in favor of an inefficient Medical Examiner system that is run out of Raleigh. A sure sign you are going backwards.

On top of that, the Chief Medical Examiner in Raleigh received around \$4 Million to upgrade stuff in Raleigh, including computers; that either didn't get updated properly or in some way appears to be incompatible with the various computers that the local Medical Examiners use in Counties across the state that have also gone to the Medical Examiner system-only to regret it. On top of that, the State Medical Examiner in Raleigh got herself removed from office and nobody is in charge in Cleveland County that knows what to do.

All this has resulted in many Medical Examiner's reports, each involving the death of an individual person, has been in some way not properly working their way through the system. Whatever that system is.

The most immediate result of the logjam of paperwork is the local Medical Examiners are often not getting paid for the work they have done. Sooner or later a life insurance policy won't get paid and a widow's home may be repossessed and her and her children will be on the street. Or maybe a murderer will get off because of a paperwork problem. Maybe that murderer will get off and live to kill again? Who knows where this will end?

But right now, much of the paperwork is log-jammed and my sources tell me that calls to the County Manager's Office are not being returned. Calls to County Commissioners are not being returned. Even calls to newly elected Commissioners Doug Bridges and Deb Hardin are not being returned. But who can blame Bridges and Hardin for staying out of a cesspool of corruption that was created by Massa Eddie and Jason Falls? Bridges and Hardin did not create this mess. And now the loser Jason Falls is still milking the county for big bucks over at the LeGrand Center, which, like Jason Falls, has been and always will be a money loser. Also, something that Bridges and Hardin did not create.

The problem with that idea is there are lots of problems in

Cleveland County Government that Commissioners Doug Bridges and Deb Hardin did not create, but they will have to take charge of sooner or later. And fix as necessary. That is why we elected them.

To me, this fix appears logical. Direct the County Manager's Office to immediately return all phone calls from Medical Examiners (and everybody else) who are having problems getting paid for their services already rendered. Do what is necessary to get the local Medical Examiners paid for their services. Evaluate, without being biased against those who are against boondoggles that waste tax dollars, the Coroner vs. Medical Examiner system and, if the evaluation says the Coroner system worked better, go back to the Coroner system. Hey, it worked for centuries.

Do this because it is the right thing to do. And remember, it is NEVER wrong to do the right thing.

And do it soon before you find yourselves in lawsuits that you will not win. Like Cleveland Community College, the City of Shelby and Rick Howell have trapped themselves into.

Just my two cents, take it or leave it. At your own risk.