Investigation Requested on Shelby Mayor Stan Anthony!!! Criminal and Unethical Conflicts of Interest, Self-Dealing Abound At all Levels in Cleveland County Governmental Agencies!!! –Report, gossip and arguendo provided by Robert A. Williams

Introduction:

Most folks in Cleveland County consider "conflicts of interest" to be what Webster's Dictionary says it is: **"a conflict between the private interests and the official responsibilities of a person in a position of trust."** An elected officer or an officer appointed by elected officers is considered a position of trust.

For example, Commissioner Doug Bridges is an elected official in a position of trust to best represent the interests of ALL the citizens of Cleveland County. However, Commissioner Doug Bridges allowed himself to be appointed to the Fair Association, Inc. Board of Directors. The Fair Board of Directors has the responsibility to maximize profits from the Cleveland County Fair so as to pay the Fair Association stockholders the maximum dividend.

So, Doug Bridges the commissioner has a responsibility to minimize costs of government for the citizens and taxpayers of

Cleveland County. (I received my tax bill in the mail today and you probably did too.) And Doug Bridges, a Director on the Fair Board has the responsibility to maximize profits for the Fair Association Stockholders.

Now consider the situation of the new fence building project at the Cleveland County Fairgrounds that is budgeted for $303,000.

There is no conflict of interest for Doug Bridges in this situation as long as the Fair Association is paying for the fence 100%. But what happens when the Fair Association comes to the Cleveland County Commissioners for $150,000 to pay half the cost for the new fence project. Now Bridges, the Commissioner and Bridges the Fair Board of Directors member is in a direct conflict of interest. His first responsibility is to the taxpayers so Bridges should vote NO. Instead, Bridges votes yes as do all the other commissioners.

By rights, the citizens of Cleveland County pay for the fence and everything else related to the Fair when they attend the Fair, buy their tickets and pay for their food and rides. For the Commissioners, the $150,000 is an unbudgeted county expense for a private entity, not the citizens. So, Bridges the Commissioner should have voted against the commissioners chipping in the $150,000 in taxpayer’s money to the Fair. For Bridges the Fair Association Director, obtaining the $150,000 for the Fair fence is like obtaining a big present from Santa Claus. A present to the Fair stockholders, not the citizens of Cleveland County. For a self-proclaimed fiscal conservative Republican Commissioner, Doug Bridges fails the test.

Doug Bridges and the rest of the Commissioners can avoid such conflicts of interest by doing just one simple thing. Refuse to allow themselves to be appointed to any other Board while they are actively serving as an elected member of the Cleveland County Board of Commissioners.

But, is Commissioner Doug Bridges doing anything unethical or even illegal by serving as a commissioner and the Fair Board at the same time when the Commissioners voted 5-0 to approve the $150,000 to the Fair Board or giving away taxpayer money for any private entity that cannot pay for itself. Like the Fair or the American Legion World Series.

There are also other things to consider here. The biggest thing is that no commissioner or other county government official has ever been investigated and prosecuted for conflicts of interest or any other crimes related to their official duties in Cleveland County for the past 178 years- that I know of. Even the fraudulent use of Cleveland County Schools credit cards that was investigated by the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation (SBI) but was not prosecuted by the Cleveland County District Attorney's Office. That will be the topic of other conversations, but this fact clearly shows that eliminating conflicts of interest in Cleveland County must be accomplished at the ballot box and NOT the jury box as the DA will not prosecute even the most egregious of white color crime as committed by county officials.

Therefore, let's talk about the ballot box then as the only way unethical and criminal activity.by our elected so-called leadership Cleveland County will ever be cleaned up.

Despite no prosecutions of elected officials in Cleveland County for Conflicts of Interest/Self-Dealing, North Carolina law is very specific and obviously applies in many circumstances. And the Elections of 2019 for the Mayor of Shelby is upon us. So, the following message involving Conflicts of Interest/ Self-Dealing was sent to Shelby Mayor Stan Anthony on July 11, 2019. Mayor Anthony, three weeks later, has refused to respond to this message. So, now it is time to bring out this situation for voters to decide just how they vote in the Mayor of Shelby Primary and General Elections:

From: Robert A. Williams-Sent July 11, 2019

To: Shelby Mayor Stan Anthony

Mayor Anthony,

Back in early 2017 you provided me a copy of a letter (attached) that you wrote to the Cleveland Community College Board of Trustees regarding an obvious conflict of interest between a CCC BoT member in regard to the CCC BoT awarding an architectural contract for the new Advanced Manufacturing Center building at CCC to Holland and Hamrick Architects. In your letter you requested the CCC BoT to reconsider their award to H&H. And, to my knowledge, the CCC BoTs never responded with any logical explanation or basis to your letter and just carried on with Holland And Hamrick without comment. I considered that a miscarriage of justice on CCC's part, then as I do now.

Very recently I happened to drive down Earl Road in Shelby and saw a sign on the Willie Green property stating this was the future site for his planned sports complex that is now in dispute with the City of Shelby that is presently in Federal Court. Mr. Green's sign had a logo on it from your architectural firm that caught my eye. A call to Mr. Green indicated that your firm was paid to do some preliminary architectural work on the planned sports complex, that included the sign, but Mr. Green did not select your firm to do the main body of the architectural work on the complex.

All this caused me to raise several issues in my mind:

1. Does not your firm's work and potential work on Mr. Green's Sports Complex represent the exact same conflict of interest that your letter to the CCC BoTs raised back in late 2016 and early 2017? Are you, as Mayor of Shelby, not in an identical situation as Greg Melton was in regard to the CCC Advanced Manufacturing Center architectural contract award?

2. Are you aware of any CCC BoT investigation or any legal decisions from anyone into the basis of the violations of State Laws that you raised in your November 15, 2016 letter to CCC?

3. If nobody in Cleveland County cared about the State law defined contract of interest violation regarding the CCC AMC building, did you just consider that it was OK for your firm to do the same thing?

4. Last, but not least, did the fact that Mr. Green chose another architect firm to do the main body of the architectural work on his proposed Sports Complex have any bearing on the City of Shelby's cooling of interest in such a Sports Complex Partnership with Mr. Green as Mr. Green had proposed to the City of Shelby in response to the City of Shelby's 10-Year Master Plan that called for just such a Sports Complex Partnership relationship.

I would appreciate any enlightenment on the questions noted above as soon as possible.

Also, I am certain that you are aware of the several articles I have written regarding Mr. Willie Green's Federal Lawsuit against the City of Shelby and Rick Howell, where I have publicly stated that my opinion is Mr. Green should prevail in his lawsuit against the City of Shelby based on the merits of that lawsuit as described in his complaint, which the City of Shelby has not answered-that I am presently aware of. I am also fairly certain that you are aware that I attended a recent City of Shelby Council meeting where several speakers from a large gathering spoke in no uncertain terms in favor of Mr. Green's sports complex proposal.

All this is said to acknowledge that perhaps you might not want to answer these questions that I have posed as noted above. However, according to the Cleveland County Board of Elections, you have filed for re-election as the Mayor of

Shelby. And, as of yesterday, a Ms. Tanzy Wallace has also filed for that very same office.

Such a challenge for the office of the Mayor of the City of Shelby in this 2019 Election year will bring a lot of discussion, political forums, etc. where issues such as described herein would be of interest to a lot of people and a lot of voters. And, you know Shelby and their "whispering campaigns" where the truth is not much of a consequence. Also, a pending Federal lawsuit will generate much interest in this matter.

Therefore, I am requesting that you be as forthcoming with answering the above noted questions as possible. And you can rest assured that I will also be questioning your opponent's position on issues as well.

Thanks,

Robert A. Williams
Citizens For Good Government

PS: Also, at the Shelby City Council Meeting I attended as noted above, the report on the very poor condition of the Shelby City sewer system alarmed me in regard to the obvious large cost to upgrade the system. Also, the fact that the Cleveland County Commissioners "gave" the City of Shelby $11.5 Million, supposedly half of the $23 million projected cost to run water and sewer to the new Clearwater Paper Expansion Project. Since Shelby Sewer lines run in front of my home in Fallston and I am paying sewer rates to the City of Shelby that have steadily increased (although I am not connected to the system), I suspect something "secret" has gone on between Shelby and the Commissioners in this regard.

Now, based on my message to Mayor Anthony, a request from Rev. Dante Murphy of SCEPUL (Southern Coalition for Equal Protection Under the Law) was made to Mayor Anthony on July 13, 2019 to specifically confirm or deny the issues I had

raised to Mayor Anthony. And when no response was provided, Rev. Murphy made a formal request for an investigation of Mayor Anthony's potential conflict and Self-Dealing Violations to both Shelby Police Chief Jeff Ledford as well as Cleveland County Sheriff Alan Norman bn July 15, 2019

Rev. Murphy's messages stated:

> *Mayor Stan Anthony,*
> *Please confirm or deny the validity of this email produced by Robert Williams, specifically, that you have business dealings with the development of the proposed sports complex by Mr. Green. If so, SCEPUL will ask law enforcement to open a criminal investigation that will likely end up in the hands of the SBI due to conflicts of interest in the matter. It is only fair that you be notified of this action as to avoid any unwarranted actions against you. I have copied both Mr. Green and Mr. Williams on this email to avoid any misunderstandings. I will also forward this message to North Carolina Attorney Josh Stein as his office will have a say in this matter should it arise to that level.*
>
> *Rev. Dante Murphy*
> *SCEPUL*
>
> *Chief Ledford or Sheriff Norman,*
>
> *Please indicate the law enforcement agency that will accept this complaint for investigation. Based on the information provided Mayor Stan Anthony would have committed a crime if he was profiting or seeking to profit from his elected position. The sign on Mr. Green's property indicate that Mayor Anthony is seeking to engage in a "pay to play" scheme. Aside from profiting from his elected position, is the potential that he has engaged in bribery, in that, he is offering his influence with expedited permits, etc. in exchange for being the designer for Mr. Green's complex. In the event I do not hear from you by tomorrow I will contact*

the Attorney General's Office.

If this email is valid for a complaint, I would ask that you send me the file number.

Rev. Dante Murphy

So far Chief Ledford and Sheriff Norman have NOT replied to Rev. Murphy's request and Rev. Murphy, to my knowledge, has forwarded his concerns to NC Attorney General Josh Stein. An no reply has been made by the NC Attorney General. Just another reason why citizens should inform themselves of what is going on in their governmental agencies and make their wishes known at the ballot box come election time.

So, Shelby residents that are registered to vote in the 2019 Primary and General Elections, what will be your conclusion on who you cast your vote for in the election for the Mayor of Shelby???

But maybe you Shelby city voters shouldn't decide too quickly. At least not until you read my next several articles. And hopefully you will ask some questions of your own to the candidates for Mayor. And don't be surprised if there is a last-minute Write-In Candidate for the Mayor of Shelby in the November 2019 General Election!!

Loading...

Taking too long?

Reload document

| Open in new tab