

No-Nonsense Lawyer Tames School Board Rogue Republicans!!! At January 10, 2022 CCS School Board Meeting!!! Eye Witness Report by Robert A. Williams

The January 10th, 2022 CCS school board meeting was better attended than most. Many from Kings Mountain were there to see about the KM Elementary School Closings that have been proposed by the School Board's hired consultants. We will talk about that in later articles.

Public Participation usually comes first on the School Board Agenda's business items. The Number One speaker signed up was Gastonia Attorney Doug Arthurs.

Mr. Arthurs, who had a no-nonsense manner about him, went straight to the point. He represented Mike Brown from Kings Mountain in the matter of purchasing of the Central School in Kings Mountain, which had been declared surplus by the school board. Mr. Arthur, who did not "mince" even one word, told the school board that his client had responded to the advertisement to bid on the surplus property (that Kings Mountain and the Commissioners had already declined to purchase), had submitted a bid for \$750,000, had been declared the top bid and ordered to pay the 5% (\$37,500) down-pending upset bids and had hand-delivered to CCS a Cashiers Check for \$37,500. Only to have that \$37,500 Cashiers Check returned to him without explanation.

Attorney Arthurs declared that his client, Mike Brown, had not "cashed" that Cashiers's Check and expected the School Board

to live up to the purchasing practices according to State law and consummate the sale process of the Central School. And, then sat down.

I was the Number TWO speaker and the first words out of my mouth were about how strange it was for CCS to decline that \$750,000. All the while knowing CCS was strapped for cash. I knew something corrupt was going on as I was in attendance at the School Board meeting a couple of meetings before when that sale was tabled until the January 10, 2022 Meeting. Now Mr. Mike Brown had brought his lawyer to the meeting.

I will speak to the other things I spoke about and others spoke about in later articles.

As for the School Board, they spoke not a word to Attorney Arthurs. But, Attorney Arthurs, his client Mike Brown and other friends and family did not leave the meeting. A meeting that lasted for several more hours.

A closer examination of the Meeting Agenda showed a Closed Session the second to the last item on the business end of the agenda. The last item, before adjournment, was an item that simply stated "Central School Surplus Property." An item that took well over two hours to get to in the meeting. With travel time, I am sure, Mr. Mike Brown had to pay his lawyer, I would expect, well over \$1,000.

But that was not the worst of the situation.

Closed Sessions in governmental meetings are highly regulated by State law. Specifically, North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11. According to Chairman Luke Queen, this closed session would be in according to that Statute, para (a)3 and (a)6, for a "personnel matter."

State law also prohibits a school board from going into a closed session for one reason and then discussing things that are not allowed to be discussed in a Closed session. Also, no

final action can be voted on in Closed sessions, The School Board has to come out of the Closed session and vote on the action in Open Session. But, violating state law was exactly what the Cleveland County School Board did.

When the School Board came back into Open session from the Closed Session, Chairman Luke Queen stated the School Board had voted in Closed Session to go ahead with the sale of the Kings Mountain Central School to Mr. Mike Brown for \$750,000. A discussion that was NOT a "personnel matter" and which violated state law because it should NOT have been discussed in Closed Session to begin with.

Then the school board voted to continue with the sale to Mr. Brown, subject to the Upset Bidding process. Meaning that someone else could come along and offer 10% more (\$75,000 more) for the school property and take the property away from Mr. Brown unless he offered another 10% more on top of that.

Nowhere did the school board explain why the sale of the KM Central School property had not proceeded as specified by State Law, to begin with.

In short, there were at least two State Law violations in this simple sale of surplus school property. First, the break in the sale process to begin with. Second, the violation of State Open meeting laws as previously described.

Unfortunately, it has to be concluded that blatant corruption by the school board, of some sort, had entered into the process and only Mr. Brown's No-Nonsense Attorney's presence had convinced the School Board that they had better right their wrong before they found themselves prosecuted in Court.

But corruption breeds more corruption. Whatever "payoff" to the School Board or to Luke Queen that had convinced the School Board to "screw over" Mr. Mike Brown in the first place, may not yet be over with. Often such a tactical retreat as this by the school board may be followed by a repeated

attack in another fashion. If so, I suspect Attorney Doug Arthurs will teach a foolish Cleveland County School Board, led by Rogue Republicans, another hard lesson.

Stay tuned folks, you are just beginning to hear about the crimes, corruption, and just plain old stupidity coming from the Cleveland County School Board at their January 10, 2022 meeting. I am breaking them down into smaller pieces so you won't be overwhelmed by one big long article.