

Part 4. Gossip Report—Republican Commissioners Discriminating Against WOMEN!!! Twice in One Day!! Three in this series!! Commissioner Deb Hardin & Asst. County Manager Kerri Melton!! Former Commissioner Susan Allen too!!! Report and Commentary by Robert A

Monday, December 5, 2022 was a *“day that will live in infamy.”* At least in Cleveland County. AND, if you are a woman.

Let's start with the 2020 Commissioner's elections. Commissioner Susan Allen (a Debbie Clary ally) was up for Reelection. As was Johnny Hutchins and Ronnie Whetstine. The three commissioners were challenged in the Republican Primary by Robbie Morgan, Dennis Davis and Tommy McNeilly. Morgan, a former County Coroner and Davis, a former State Senator. McNeilly was an EMS person who had been passed over for a position that he had wanted. There were three Commissioner seats available. Only one Democrat, Shawn Murphy (a Black Man, allegedly gay) was the only Democrat opponent against three

Republicans.

About this time Commissioner Susan Allen was recovering from a bout of cancer that had re-occurred. Commissioner Allen had received debilitating cancer treatments that had sapped her strength. So, when signup for re-election time came up, Ms. Allen decided not to run for re-election. The winners in the Republican Primary for Commissioner were Johnny Hutchins, Ronnie Whetstine and Tommy McNeilly. Who would then face Shawn Murphy in the 2020 General Elections for those three open Commissioner seats.

But the Commissioners then learned that the EMS person from Iredell County, that they had hired instead of promoting Tommy McNeilly, had baggage. Like School Board Member Robert "Luke" Queen and his XYZ Affair, he had put his "hot dog" in the wrong "bun" over in Iredell County. An Iredell County Commissioner's daughter as the gossip went. And allegedly was trying to do similar things here in Cleveland County. Or something along those lines.

So, somehow the Commissioners were able to get rid of the Iredell County "Romeo."

Then the Commissioners hired Commissioner Candidate, Tommy McNeilly, for that high paying EMS position in Cleveland County. So, McNeilly had to drop out of the Commissioner's race because of a conflict of interest, which created a vacancy in the Republican Candidates for Commissioner. A vacancy that should have gone to either Robbie Morgan or Dennis Davis. However, the Cleveland County GOP Executive Board would be the ones that decided who to appoint to that vacancy. But there was division.

First, Commissioner Susan Allen, who was still serving out her term as Commissioner, had recovered sufficient to change her mind that SHE wanted for run for reelection. And Susan Allen had supporters on the CCGOP Executive Board. Others on the CCGOP Executive Board; like Dennis Bailey, Kevin Whisnant, David Allen and others (the precursors to the Rogue Republicans who have causes such conflict, controversy and dispute as the Robert "Luke" Queen reappointment to the CCC BoTs and in the 2022 School Board Republican Elections, wanted to appoint their buddy, Kevin Gordon (who helped them push the first and second and third sales tax increase referendum). In the first vote of the CCGOP Executive Committee between Susan Allen and Kevin Gordon for appointment to fill the McNeilly vacancy, the vote was a tie.

Then, there was a period of discussion and argument, that the scheming and conniving faction-that became the Rogue Republicans of 2022 (the Dennis Bailey, Kevin Whisnant and David Allen crowd) won over a few votes. On a second vote, Kevin Gordon was selected as the Candidate to take Tommy McNeilly's vacancy in the 2020 General Election for Commissioner.

Since the single Democrat candidate was so weak, this slate of Republicans; Kevin Gordon, Johnny Hutchins and Ronnie Whetstine were virtually running unopposed.

All of this political maneuvering against Susan Allen in the 2020 Elections was mostly kept quiet. But, as more stuff (gossip) has come out, the bottom line appears to be that Susan Allen was a victim of misogyny type prejudice. Or

Misogynist generated discrimination. ***Note that the definition of a misogynist is “a person who dislikes, despises, or is strongly prejudiced against women.”***

Other relatively recent “events” tend to prove this hypothesis!

Kerri Melton:

The friendly and attractive **Kerri Melton** came on the scene in Cleveland County Government as the Cleveland County Clerk. Working under several County Managers as the County Clerk. Then County Manager Eddie Bailes walked out of his office for lunch on day, never to return. Shortly thereafter, Kerri Melton was promoted to Assistant County Manager. After a number of years later and serving as Assistant County Manager all this time, Kerri Melton is presently making a salary of \$124,485 plus benefits. The fifth highest paid Cleveland County Employee. According to County Documents, only County Manager Brian Epley, Sheriff Alan Norman and two pharmacists make more than Kerri Melton. DSS Director Katie Swanson, County Attorney Martha Thompson, Economic Development Director Kristin Reese, Health Department Tiffany Hansen and County Attorney Chuck Wilson are all paid less than Kerri Melton.

Now that County Manager Brian Epley has submitted his resignation, the Commissioner Chairman Kevin “Mad Dog” Gordon and Commissioners Johnny Hutchins, Ronnie Whetstine and Doug Bridges all have their panties in a wad looking for an Interim County Manager to take over for Brian Epley when he finally leaves.

Robert A wonders, **What about Assistant County Manager Kerri Melton???** Isn't that what an Assistant County Manager is supposed to do?? Take over when the regular County manager is absent? Lots of questions immediately arise with what is going on here. Lots of Speculation and gossip too. Latent Misogynist prejudices and tendencies from the four male Commissioners have to be strongly considered here. Especially since County Manager pay is \$185, 214 plus benefits. Commissioner pay is much, much, much less-\$12,000 or so.

The side rumors and gossip are that Commissioner Chairman Kevin "Mad Dog" Gordon wants this position. And that pay to supplement his coming early retirement. Stranger things than that have happened right here in Cleveland County. Like Former Commissioner Eddie Holbrook with the Kings Mountain Casino as well as the American Legion World Series, Baseball, Inc. And Eddie's motel and his wife's "Moose Putter Butter" Casino payoff, etc.

Commissioner Deb Hardin:

Commissioner Deb Hardin was elected Vice Chairman of the Commissioner's Board in 2022 as part of the Rogue Republican's scheme of political maneuvering to make Kevin "Mad Dog" Gordon the Chairman. Deb Hardin has generally gone along with the men on the County Commissioner Board. Except for recently. Deb has now started to ask pertinent questions about the taxpayers funding going to Eddie Holbrook's ALWS related activities. Deb even voted against funding Holbrook's ALWS Baseball monopoly \$425,000 in this year's budget. Stating, "We are giving the ALWS so much and everybody else so little," was the comment Deb Hardin made about that vote.

But Deb had recently gone against the men on the Commissioner's Board who were going against the will of Cleveland County taxpayers. Deb had openly defied them. Therefore, Deb Hardin was an "uppity bitch" woman that had to be taught a lesson. At the December 5th, 2022 illegally called Commissioner's Meeting Deb Hardin was dumped as the Commissioner's Vice-Chairman in favor of Commissioner Ronnie Whetstine, who is more willing to go along with the Rogue Republicans than Deb Hardin is.

Even though the Commissioner's Vice-Chairman position is largely ceremonial, the men on the County Commissioner's Board had to show Deb Hardin the facts of life. That she was the Vice-Chairman because THEY allowed her to be Vice-Chairman. Therefore, THEY expected Deb Hardin to do what they tell her to do. Immediately and without question. Especially since SHE is a woman and THEY are men.

Folks, **Robert A** believes such behavior by the men on the Commissioner's Board is MORE than just misogynist prejudice. But Retaliation against Deb Hardin's **No vote** to throw \$425,000 to Eddie Holbrook. With NO strings attached. The men wanted a unanimous YES vote and THEY didn't get what they wanted. WAHHH. WAHHH, WAHHH. WAHHH. Just like a bunch of babies. But corrupt babies with their own agendas.

The real question Folks, especially you women folks. Is, what do YOU think??? Are these Rogue Republican misogynist, women hating, so-called MEN going to keep on bossing you around? Or what?? The 2024 Elections are closer than you think!!! **NOW is the time to START planning to make the changes that need to be**

made.

—