Cleveland County is NOT Going Broke!!! CC is ALREADY Broke!!! But doesn't know it YET!!! OR, won't Admit it!!! Report and conclusions by Robert A

Robert A's career as a Nuclear Engineer often brought him into contact with US Navy ships and those that served in the Navy. Retired early from the Navy and then worked at Navy Shipyards. "Double Dippers", they were called. On one occasion one of those Double Dippers told **Robert A** that he lacked traveling ***"from the Great Lakes Naval Training Center to Norfolk, Virginia to have sailed around the WORLD four times. And the furthest he travelled at every port of call was to the first Bar. Spent all my money there and went back to the ship, BROKE."***

Attending Commissioner's Meetings and School Board meetings, especially around Budget time (in May and early June every year) always reminds **Robert A** of that Double Dipper. Times SIX! Five County Commissioners and the County Manager. Or NINE for the School Board. Eight School Board members (Not Danny Blanton and now Ronnie Grigg) members plus the Superintendent. All **Clueless**, **Wasteful** and **Reckless** too in spending taxpayer's dollars.

A recent article about the January 9th 2023 School Board meeting laid out how CCS, even with millions of dollars of

COVID money pouring in, dug deep into their reserve funds last year. And other such stupid stuff. We will not repeat all of that here. But CCS is already broke, broke big time considering the $120+ millions their high dollar consultants say they need to fix up all the old schools in Cleveland County. And that does NOT include any new schools to replace any of the 57+ year old schools full of mold and asbestos.

Robert A has also noted the County is going broke too. The County is the only governmental agency in Cleveland County that has the authority to tax its citizens. And th3e county is throwing away taxpayers' money too. Just like the "Double Dipper" described at the beginning of this article:

- The County ***illegally***sold the hospitals and other healthcare facilities in Cleveland County several years ago for 2 cents on the dollar.
- The County has wasted around $10 Million (plus) on the American Legion World Series baseball games where ZERO players from Cleveland County have played. Also, the ALWS has never turned a profit or even broke even.
- The County allegedly spent $500,000 on the Foothills Shooting Complex (but only admitted spending $50,000) to host the recent "Glock" two-day shooting match.
- The County spends Hundreds of Thousands of dollars every year to shore up the Shooting Complex that has also never made a profit. Much less even broke even.
- The Earls Scruggs Center has never broken even. And gets $350,000, plus, per year in taxpayer subsidy.
- The LeGrand Center has never broken even. And gets $350,000, plus, per year in taxpayer subsidy.
- **Robert A**is not aware of anything the County has done in the name of travel and tourism that has broken even in its operations. Much less turn a profit.
- Cleveland County is about to build a new Jail and Courthouse Project, a "**Justice Center,**" that is expected

to cost upwards of $250 Million. The State has only provided $59 Million. Taxpayers will be on the “Hook” for about $191 Million-if we are lucky.

- **NO NEW SCHOOLS**are on the County Radar Scope, but Cleveland County Schools project a cost of around $125 to fix up and repair their fleet of aging schools filled with mold and asbestos.
- County Taxpayers voted overwhelmingly rejected this last and the preceding two attempts to raise sales taxes. And, will likely do so again.
- The Commissioners plans to use the Catawba Casino as a “Cash Cow” or as the “Goose” that lays golden eggs has backfired. Mostly because of corrupt commissioner(s) and corrupt county manager(s). The Commissioner’s Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA), negotiated by Commissioner Johnny Hutchins, with the Catawbas appears to be JUST as illegal as the SkyBoat Contract with the Catawba Casino. Making the opening of the Casino highly unlikely.
- The Commissioners recent hostile takeover of the County Rescue Squads has turned out to be more costly than expected. The Commissioners are allegedly planning to take over **ALL**the County Volunteer Fire Departments in another costly and unnecessary endeavor. Also, if the Commissioners are secretly planning to take over the Shelby Fire Department and the Kings Mountain Fire Department, the Shelby and Kings Mountain Property taxes will go **down** and the rest of Cleveland County will absorb those costs. (**Just like the School Merger twenty years ago.)**
- Present County Manager Brian Epley is heading for the hills. His last day at work in Cleveland County is January 31, 2023. It is unclear on whether or not Epley’s leaving is for his career advancement or because of his multiple visits from the FBI has convinced him to “git” while the “gittin’” is good.

And, guess what? Cleveland County doesn't have near enough money already in the bank to cover their losses over time for their shenanigans. Much less the Hundreds of Million of dollars for the **NEW** Justice Center and to only patch up **OLD** Schools. Also, the Commissioners push for revaluations of property tax values have been going full speed ahead. Without any discussion.

Now, the Cleveland Commissioners just held a WORK SESSION this past Friday. No agenda has been prepared for public inspection and no RECORDINGS of that semi-secret meeting have been made available to the public. Even though the Commissioners have previously **VOTED** to record and publish these work sessions. So, who knows what the Commissioners plan to do? Or whether or not the commissioners have an overall plan for anything?

However, several things are totally obvious.

The Commissioners, if they continue on their current path, have:

- Spent Cleveland County into certain Bankruptcy.
- Planned on a "forced" property tax increase all along.
- Lied to the Citizens and VOTERS all along about being Truthful and Transparent.
- Helped cover-up the bribery of a former County Commissioner and former county manager.
- Looked the other way too often and for too long.

Right NOW, it is 11:00 AM Tuesday, January 17, 2023. Just hours before tonight's Commissioner's Meeting at 6:00 PM. And the meeting notice and agenda for tonight's Meeting has not arrived. Note that **Robert A** has formally requested to be placed on the "Notification List" for advance copies of the Commissioners Meeting Agenda and other pertinent documents related to tonight's meeting.

Therefore, there will be NO time to review the agenda and documents before the meeting. Leaving ZERO time to review anything and ZERO opportunity to prepare any comments **Robert A** might want to make during the three minutes allowed per North Carolina Law.

Robert A calculates that such childish shenanigans are coming at the direction of Commissioner Chairman Kevin Gordon and abided by the "sheep" commissioners. Which is worse is the question? As for tonight's Commissioner's Meeting, **Robert A** will attend, take notes and make reports. In the 2024 elections **Robert A** will work to get rid of the Commissioners that have gotten Cleveland County into such a mess. Which is Kevin Gordon, Johnny Hutchins and Ronnie Whetstine. A MAJORITY that needs to be replaced by Cleveland County Residents who care about Cleveland County and NOT themselves.

Stay tuned!!!