

**Part 2 of June 20th, 2023
Commissioner's Meeting-Full
of Fiascos!!! Second Item,
Conflicts of Interest on
Board Appointments!!
Commissioners voted
unanimously to Appoint
Chairman's Brother to the
Rural Fire Commission!!
Report, commentary and
recommendations by Robert A**

Editor's Note: Cleveland County is in dire straits and the head screw-up cover-ups are the Cleveland County Commissioners. Everything from biting dogs to wasted taxdollars. And the Commissioners never seem to be able to do anything right. The June 20, 2023 Commissioner's meeting was no exception. The Commissioners voted unanimously to appoint Chairman Kevin Gordon's Brother, Brent Gordon, to the Cleveland County Rural Fire Commission.

Right between the Board Appointments and the Closed Session at the end the June 20, 2023 Commissioner's meeting Agenda was an item where the Commissioners would appoint two members to the **Cleveland County Rural Fire Commission**. Then, strange stuff started to happen.

But first, what is the Cleveland County Rural Fire Commission? **Robert A**, who has attended almost all of the Commissioners Meetings for years, had never heard of any such Rural Fire Commission, ever! **Robert A** has “heard it through the grapevine” that certain factions want to bring ALL fire departments in Cleveland County under one big umbrella. To do a “hostile takeover” just like the Commissioners did with the Cleveland County Rescue Squads last year at a cost to taxpayers of over \$9 Million.

It is noted that such a plan to consolidate Emergency Management Services (EMS) and all Fire Departments was recently accomplished over in Gaston County under the “leadership” of then Director of EMS and Fire Services Director Kevin Gordon. This so called “consolidation” now costs the citizens of Gaston County 15 cents per \$100 valuation on their property tax bill. ***For comparison, Cleveland County charges .14 cents property tax rate for ALL the operations of Cleveland County Schools. Another comparison is this 15 cents fire tax in Gaston County is almost double what the existing “fire tax is here in Cleveland County.***

It is not known exactly what caused Gaston County to recently get rid of Kevin Gordon under suspicious circumstances. And Kevin Gordon refuses to tell. But it is known that Kevin Gordon has actively pushed the last three Referendum attempts to raise property tax rates here in Cleveland County. And tigers can’t change their stripes.

Now, back to the strange stuff regarding the two appointments to the CC Rural Fire Commission.

When this item came up on the June 20th, 2023 Commissioner’s Meeting Agenda, Chairman Kevin Gordon immediately “recused” himself due to a “conflict of interest” and turned the meeting over to the Co-Chairman Ronnie Whetstine. Two names went into nomination to serve on the CC Rural Fire Commission. One of those names was Brent Gordon, Commissioner Chairman Kevin

Gordon's **BROTHER**. The vote was unanimous to approve Chairman Kevin Gordon's brother and the other person to the CC Rural Fire Commission. The Cleveland County Commissioner's Lawyer sat there and didn't say a word.

So, folks, ALL the Commissioners KNEW Kevin Gordon had a personal conflict of interest here and recused himself. Yet they ALL voted to institutionalize that conflict of interest for ALL of Cleveland County by voting to APPROVE that KNOWN conflict of interest. If you folks have any questions, call Ronnie Whetstine, Johnny Hutchins, Doug Bridges and Deb Harding and see what kind of pack of lies that they will be telling.

Commissioner Chairman Kevin Gordon then took back control of the meeting for the rest of the meeting, including the Closed Session and all the DSS issues previously reported in the first article of this series. Also, Folks, this is not the end of the fiascoes at this June 20th, 2023 meeting. Stay tuned, you have plenty more news to hear about how your present slate of Commissioners operate. What a stroke of luck it is that we have the 2024 election that are not that far away. If Cleveland County can last that long.

Also, after digging deep into the Cleveland County Government website, **Robert A** found this about the Rural Fire Commission. The task description seems simple enough, but that is very often the cover story for what corruption they will actually end up doing.

Rural Fire Commission: Ensures that Cleveland County Fire Departments' buildings and equipment meet North Carolina statues by visual inspection annually.

Again, **STAY TUNED**. There is more to come.