

PASSING THE TRASH!!??? Part III of many parts! A Dubious Economic Development Project or a Publicity Stunt!!!

Editor's Note: This Part III article provides an additional number of legitimate reasons that Robert A has labeled CC Commissioners Kevin Gordon and Johnny Hutchins as "Skunks." As well as "Crooks" and "Liars!!!" ETC. It is up to all us voters to make some necessary changes on November 5, 2024!!! Note that Part I provides the basic definitions for Robert A's terms, "Skunks", "Crooks", "Liars" and "Schemers."

Folks, most of the 100% true information that Robert A has provided to you in this series of articles is about previous incidents that are perfect examples of why Commissioners Kevin Gordon and Johnny Hutchins (et. al.) should never serve another term in office, or even one minute in office has happened weeks, months and even h=just a few years ago. This article will provide three or four perfect examples that happened just last night at the October 15, 2024 CC Commissioner's Meeting. It is all captured on the CC Commissioners meeting video broadcast of that same meeting. "Skunks," "Crooks" "Liars," "Schemers" and "Scoundrels" in action!!! All Marching in lockstep!!!m All acts noted below show with 100% clarity, the points that Robert A is making in this series of Articles:

Cleveland County has No CC Emergency Plan–Hurricane Helene:

Cleveland County was declared a DISASTER ZONE. 95 % OF CC Citizens were put in the dark, hungry and offline because of electrical power outages due to downed power lines. Some for many days. Now, fast forward to the October 15, 2024 CC

Commissioner's Meeting. The first \commissioner's meeting since CC was hit by Hurricane Helene.

The very first order of business in a CC Commissioner's Meeting, or any meeting for that matter, right behind Bringing the Meeting to Order, is to Adopt the Agenda for that particular meeting. By law and parliamentary procedure, the Commissioner Chairman, Kevin Gordon, is responsible for putting the meeting Agenda together for approval. Note that any Commissioner can make a motion to amend the meeting agenda to add or subtract, or modify the meeting agenda. The vote to adopt the agenda as provided by KG without modification was 5-0 to adopt the Agenda as provided.

Note that this October 15, 2024 CC Commissioner's Meeting was the very first CC Commissioner's Meeting since the devastation caused by Hurricane Helene. Just two weeks before. Also note that providing for the Safety and Welfare of the citizens and taxpayers of Cleveland County is the NUMBER ONE Function and Priority of ALL Cleveland County Commissioners. The very first "real" action in this October 15, 2024 Commissioner's Meeting SHOULD HAVE BEEN a complete report on how the Cleveland County Emergency Plan performed in protecting the citizens of Cleveland County and provided disaster relief. And all in great detail. Especially since Hurricane Helene caused much property damage, blocked most roads, caused long and confused gas lines and traffic jams. Some for only days. Most for many days, and submerged 95 % of CC Citizens into darkness by the associated electrical power outages.

Instead, at the October 15, 2024 Commissioner's Meeting, Not one word of providing updates, news or plan effectiveness about the Hurricane Helene CC Emergency Plan was noted in the agenda nor even spoken of or commented on. Making it abundantly clear that Cleveland County, under Commissioners Kevin Gordan, Johnny Hutchins, et. al. had NO Emergency Plan. Or what-ever Emergency Plan there was, was a 100% complete failure. And Kevin Gordan and Johnny Hutchins wanted this

failure kept HUSH-HUSH for their upcoming re-election just days away. And that Hush-Hush cover-up mentality includes ALL of the CC Commissioners. Basically, All the CC Commissioners chose to ignore their sworn duty and official lawfully required functions. Kevin Gordon, Johnny Hutchins and the other commissioners were either totally asleep at the wheel or basically and totally incompetent in their job functions. And, then, refused to talk about it.

Conclusion: If Commissioners Kevin Gordon and Johnny Hutchins refuse to ensure the public safety/welfare of CC citizens and inform and TRUST us Cleveland County citizens; then us Cleveland County VOTERS must REFUSE to TRUST and RE-ELECT Kevin Gordon and Johnny Hutchins as Commissioners on Election Day in 2024!! Then, in 2026, us CC voters must also rid ourselves of Commissioners Doug Bridges and Deb Hardin.

2. Cleveland County Drinking Water supply and quality is not protected:

Item 9 on the Regular October 15, 2024 Commissioners Meeting Agenda was titled Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance Program (STRAP). The information was provided by Jamie Bridges, the Director of the CC Soil and Water District. The program was relatively simple. Over years of heavy rain and flooding, especially after Hurricane Helene, Cleveland County rivers, creeks and streams had become clogged with uprooted trees, branches and other debris that had caused excessive erosion (mud) and other runoff into the water supplies of Cleveland County. Pictures were shown of some of the worst areas.

The local Cleveland County Soil and Water District had applied for a \$500,000 Grant from the State to clean up most of the many problem areas and were awarded \$100,000 under the STRAP Program. And, due to this reduced amount, The CC Soil and Water District narrowed the scope of their work down to two of the biggest problem areas, The First Broad River upstream of the County Water plant intake and an area on Hinton Creek. It

appeared to Robert A, that since both the County Water System and the Shelby water plant take their water from the First Broad, that was an obvious choice. Robert A was not familiar with the Hinton Creek location or situation.

As Robert A had paid close attention (as usual to this and other presentations), he immediately remembered a similar situation around 20 years ago when a wet season of many rainstorms had similarly washed uprooted trees and other brush and debris onto the supports of a roadway bridge over a Cleveland County stream. Basically, turning the bridge into a dam. Which caused the bridge to wash away. Early the next morning, before daylight, a person going to work came upon the washed-out bridge and ran off into the abyss. Instantly killing the driver. Upon hearing of this, then CC Commissioner Chairman Willie B. McIntosh organized a team of volunteers to go around Cleveland County, armed with chainsaws, looking for other such situations to clean up. Perhaps Commissioner Johnny Hutchins may also remember this happening. However, the Commissioners at this October 15, 2024 Commissioners meeting; Kevin Gordon, Johnny Hutchins, Ronnie Whetstine, Deb Hardin and Doug Bridges were NOT so civic minded or concerned about Public Safety and Welfare. Read on!!

After the Soil and Water Presentation was finished, all Commissioner Chairman Kevin Gordon, Commissioners Johnny Hutchins, et. al. were worried about was this \$100,000 Grant from the State REQUIRED NO COUNTY MATCHES. Not even a dollar, a dime or even a penny was offered by these phony County Commissioners to help provide and maintain clean and safe drinking water for the citizens of Cleveland County. Much less for the public safety and the welfare of CC citizens driving down the streets and roads of Cleveland County.

Editor's Note: During this last term in office (four years) for Commissioners Kevin Gordon, Johnny Hutchins, Ronnie Whetstine, Deb Hardin and Doug Bridges, the commissioners have:

- Given the American Legion World Series well over \$1,000,000.00
- Given the Earl Scruggs Center well over \$1,000,000.00
- Given the LeGrand Center (Operations) well over \$1,000,000.00
- Given the Earl Scruggs Center well over \$1,000,000.00
- Given the CC FAIR well over \$1,000,000.00
- Given the City of Shelby well over \$1,000,000.00 on Economic Development Projects
- Given the CC Shooting Range well over \$1,000,000.00 for overhead
- Spent well over \$9,000,000.00 to just close-down the CC Rescue Squads
- *Obligate Cleveland County to over \$400,000,000.00 in debt on the new Justice Center*
- *Refused to correctly pay over 100 CC EMS workers the legally required pay for overtime dating back to 2018. Note that a Lawsuit has been filed in Federal Court and a Trial is likely within two years*
- *The CC Commissioners have refused to provide public record documents on any of this.*
- *And plenty more of YOU need more proof*

Conclusion No, 1 Folks, in this situation with Water Quality and Public Safety, CC Commissioners Kevin Gordon and Johnny Hutchins are clearly putting CC Citizens at serious risk and with a reckless disregard for the duties of their office. And YOU can see for yourself by watching the CC Commissioners Video of the October 15, 2024 Commissioners Meeting. The link is as follows: Please watch the whole thing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4qsoz6RhDWI>

Conclusion: If Commissioners Kevin Gordon and Johnny Hutchins refuse to ensure the public safety and welfare of CC citizens and inform and TRUST us Cleveland County citizens; then us

Cleveland County VOTERS must REFUSE to TRUST and RE-ELECT Kevin Gordon and Johnny Hutchins as Commissioners on Election Day in 2024!! Then, in 2026, us CC voters must also rid ourselves of Commissioners Doug Bridges and Deb Hardin.

Folks, this ain't all.

3 CC Economic Development-\$6 Million *Shell Building Number 4* ended up costing CC \$8.5 Million\$ to build. Sold for \$10 Million\$

Agenda Item No 8 of the October 15, 2024 CC Commissioner's Meeting was a Public Hearing on an Economic Development Project codenamed *GUI*. According to the presentation by the CC Economic Development Director Courtney Ashley, the owners of *Project GUI* will purchase the *Shell Building Number 4* for \$10,000 for the building that CC paid \$8,500,000 to build. Provide 133 jobs over 5 years at an average wage of \$61,984 (\$45,515 is the current average salary for Cleveland County, NC) and invest \$286,506,000 in capital investment. CC will also pay incentives to *Project GUI* over those 5 years. Which is 20% of the present property tax rate, totaling \$1, 086,187 over five years. Note that this \$286,506,000 capital investment was claimed to be the *SECOND* highest capital investment in Cleveland County History.

Folks, Ordinarily Robert A would say tat this was a good deal for Cleveland County. No, an EXCELLENT deal for Cleveland County.

But Robert A smells a rat. A big, fat, juicy and stinking RAT. For the following reasons:

1. It is right before the 2024 election where Commissioner Chairman Kevin Gordon and Commissioner Johnny Hutchins are DESPARATELY seeking re-election amongst all their other MANY failures.
2. The presentation for *Project GUI* was long on numbers but short on facts. Facts like Just what would *Project GUI*

produce, manufacture or provide services for what customer??? Would toxic or poisonous or explosives or highly flammable or radioactive or other dangerous substances be involved with any part of Project GUI's products, storage or activities. What skills did Project GUI need to justify the high average salary. It seemed apparent that such high paying jobs would not be available in a Cleveland County trained workforce. Would Project GUI have to bring their own trained workforce into Cleveland County? Where would they stay? Where would they spend their money? What special services or utilities would be required to serve Project GUI, if any. Not one word about any of these questions were asked or discussed. It is clearly obvious that this whole Project GUI stuff was intended to just get Kevin Gordon and Johnny Hutchins Re-elected. And, then the whole Project GUI stuff would just simply disappear.

- 3. NOT ONE SINGLE PERSON HAD SIGNED UP TO SPEAK, FOR or AGAINST THIS PROJECT???*
- 4. NOT ONE SINGLE COMMISSIONER ASKED THE BRAND NEW ECD Director a SINGLE PERTINENT QUESTION during or after her presentation.*
- 5. When Commissioner Kevin Gordon called for questions or comments before the vote to accept the deal, not one commissioner asked a pertinent question or made a pertinent comment prior to the vote.*
- 6. The vote was 5-0 to accept without question such a deal with so many unasked and unanswered questions.*
- 7. After the vote, Commissioner Chairman made the statement that this deal was a blessing for Cleveland County and Commissioner Johnny Hutchins agreed.*
- 8. And, that was that. Until NOW!!!*

Now, Robert A has just finished doing some related research on Project GUI.

First, Robert A punched up the word GUI on Google Search. Was

GUI a word in another language? Yes it was, GUI appears to be a French word, a noun, for “Mistletoe” the plant usually known for encouraging a “Kiss” while standing under the Mistletoe around Christmas time. So, Robert A looked elsewhere.

Next, Robert A asked Google Search, “Is there a company anywhere named “GUI???” Then interesting things began to happen.

Google immediately displayed a company in COMMUNIST CHINA that apparently redesigns, in some small quasi “legal” way electrical components for customers to produce and get around Patent Infringement lawsuits.

This immediately reminded Robert A of the last failed economic development Project that broke apart the old CC Economic Development Partnership that allegedly caused the last ECD Director, Kristin Reese, to resign in disgust. And, until now, there has been ZERO Economic Development projects for Cleveland County.

In that previous project, Project Sunrise, Smoke or something, Robert A spoke up during the Public Hearing advising the Commissioners to NOT get involved with this Chinese Communist owned Company that had “stolen” a patented product design from the German Company Siemens that was used to insulate high voltage electrical distribution power lines in a cheaper and more effective manner. This Communist China Owned company wanted to manufacture the product, stolen design and all, on the County owned property next to the Clearwater Paper plant.

The Commissioners (Kevin Gordon, Johnny Hutchins, et. al.) were totally PO’d that Robert A had embarrassed them with pertinent facts and figures. So, they approved the project anyway. Only to have the Communist Chinese crooks and liars out-crook and out lie the CC Commissioner Crooks and liars in such a fashion that the CC Commissioners had to pull out of the deal and hide the paperwork and action in the Consent

Agenda of a later Commissioner's meeting.

So, folks, it is YOUR right to vote for two "fools" and "incompetents" for Commissioners, if that is what you choose to do. This is Still America, but Robert A recommends getting rid of Kevin Gordon and Johnny Hutchins in the 2024 Elections as noted later in this article.

But, HEY! There is more!! The whole industrial Park Shell Building Process arrangement is questionable and unfair to most CC taxpayers.

The CC Shell Building Process is an arrangement between the CC Commissioners and only the City of Shelby, vs the whole of Cleveland County.

In this process, the land for the proposed Shell Building construction is owned by the City of Shelby. The County will finance \$6 Million for the Shell Building construction 100% and then split any profit on the sale of the Shell Building 50'/50. Basically, County taxpayers assume 100% of the risk involved if the shell buildings are not sold within one year. But any profit is split 50/50 with the City of Shelby.

In the case of Shell Building Number 4, that is to be sold to Project GUI, the construction cost for the \$6 Million building actually cost \$8.5 Million (a 42 percent cost increase) plus the finance charges will be borne by the County taxpayers. While the City of Shelby will get half of profit. And, the City of Shelby will get the 100% of the water and sewer sales.

Also, in other such Economic Development Projects such as the NTE Electric Plant and Clearwater Paper deals, the properties were located in the County Water District, but Shelby and Kings Mountain were allowed to spot "District" the water and sewer services there at the expense of Cleveland County Water. And, Cleveland County Water was "devalued" from the Cleveland

County Sanitary District to Cleveland County Water (Only).

Such doings by the Cleveland County Commissioners has profited the CC Citizens residing in the Cities of Shelby and Kings Mountain at the expense of everybody else in Cleveland County.

Remember that when YOU might be foolish enough to think about voting to re-elect Kevin Gordon and Johnny Hutchins as CC Commissioners.

Robert A recommends voting in the 2024 General Elections for the Commissioner and the CCS School Board Candidates as follows:

(Please vote for ALL of the Candidates listed below on your ballot to provide the maximum Ballot Security!!)

Cleveland County Commissioners Candidate recommendations: Vote for these three!

XXXX Tony Berry

XXXX Stormy Mongiello

XXXX David Peace

Cleveland County School Board Candidate recommendations: Vote for these five!

XXXX Kenneth A. Ledford

XXXX David Fisher

XXXX Gloria Sherman

XXXX Rod Powell

XXXX Tracy Ross

Stay Tuned for Part IV of this series of articles.

—