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Broward
Hallandale Commissioner Asks for Public Records, Gets Kicked Out of City Office

By Thomas Francis, Fri., Apr. 23 2010 @ 12:42PM
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Hallandale Beach Commissioner Keith London appears to be the only city official bothered by the ethics of doing land deals with Joe Kessel, a realtor who's also under contract as a consultant to the city. The other officials, it seems, are bothered by how much London cares about this.



Photo: City of Hallandale Beach
London, far left, is at odds with the other commissioners about the city's dealings with a local realtor.

Yet those officials don't seem willing to do the one thing that will make London stop making demands: give him public records.

Since December, he's been waiting to receive documentation of payments made by the city to Kessel and services Kessel performed under the terms of the consultant's contract. In the fifth month of that request, London finally received his record during Wednesday's meeting: a single piece of paper.

But that one two-sided piece of paper looked funny to London. For one thing, it didn't have a date stamp, like every other city document he's seen. For another, the invoice numbers were 101 and 102, which also seemed a little odd.

So London says that during a break, he visited the deputy city manager's office to ask for the original document. As the deputy city manager pulled it from the file, London asked if he could simply view the whole file, then request copies. "And then she told me to get out of her office," says London.

One invoice for Kessel that London provided to Juice made reference to Kessel's having done a "short sale property analysis and report." London asked for that; thus far, the city hasn't produced it.

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During the commission meeting, London and City Manager Mike Good staged their own version of an Abbott and Costello routine. London asked whether Good signed Kessel to a new contract when the term for the first one ended last July. Good said that there was no "executed" contract. "So there was a *draft* contract?" London asked. Good told the commissioner he wasn't sure, according to London.

At that point, London says, the other commissioners came to Good's defense. "They're saying 'You got everything you wanted,'" says London. "I said, 'Are you kidding? It's been five months!'"

Good and Mayor Joy Cooper have not returned calls for comment on the Kessel contract.

Tags:
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Heidi Rose says:

This is so stupid. Give the guy the requested paper work. It doesn't look good.

Posted On: [Friday, Apr. 23 2010 @ 2:48PM](#)

South Ocean says:

If there is nothing improper in the documents relating to Kessel, why won't they release all such documents? The simple fact of their reluctance to provide the paperwork seems to indicate they know there is something incriminating.

Such internecine squabbling seems so stupid, when it all could be resolved by the release of any and all documents relating to Kessel. Public record requests should be honored, not only because it is the law to do so, but just because it's the right thing to do.

Maybe, in addition to a City Manager and a City Attorney, Hallandale Beach should hire a City Public Relations expert. The more the City stonewalls this issue, the more it looks as if they've something to hide.

Posted On: [Friday, Apr. 23 2010 @ 3:35PM](#)

Heidi Rose says:

I'd request the records myself, but I'm afraid the mayor will hire a lawyer at taxpayers expense and try to sue me like that poor blogger.

I wish Chaz would move to Hallandale.

Posted On: [Friday, Apr. 23 2010 @ 3:55PM](#)

Charlotte Greenbarg says:

A PR expert is the least of HB's problems. What does it take to get law enforcement to investigate this situation? We all need to write to our friends and urge them to work with us and get it corrected.

The Broward Coalition, for whom I speak as president, urges all good citizens to speak

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Posted On: Friday, Apr. 23 2010 @ 4:33PM

heidi Rose says:

They already have PR...The Sun Times our local weekly paper. Everybody that I know in Hallandale reads that paper. I've been waiting for weeks for them to write about what I've reading on the web and watching on cable 78.

This last televised meeting was pathetic. I saw an elected gentleman respectfully request to ask for pubic information and was ridiculed by Mayor Cooper, another man & I believe a clerk. What's with that?

Mayor, give the guy the file. Put it out there and then move on and figure out how to lower our taxes.

That's what I'm looking for in a politician. Reduce costs just like every business owner is doing. Skim it off girl, make me proud.

Posted On: Friday, Apr. 23 2010 @ 5:35PM

imjustbeachy says:

Mr. London appears to be an articulate, caring, professional politician, and I use that TERM in the best, not worst, sense of the word, who continues to strive to represent the common person, the struggling resident, the people who need someone that does not forget those who stood in long lines to vote to elect him. He is quite a rarity now a-days. I believe Keith London deserves our support.

We must hold our authorities responsible and ask them to comply with the law, as they expect of us.

Help Mr. London gain access and have HIS rights upheld.

NOTIFY THE AUTHORITIES,TELL THE COMMISSIONERS YOUR THOUGHTS ON THIS IMPORTANT MATTER, LEND YOUR SUPPORT. TRACK THIS TILL IT IS DONE correctly, legally.

IT IS RIGHT AND IT IS UP TO EACH OF US TO DO.

Posted On: Friday, Apr. 23 2010 @ 9:41PM

Chaz Stevens, Genius says:

Heidi Rose says:

I wish Chaz would move to Hallandale.

Butler and Smith have it as much under control as possible... Those gents are more than up to the task. HB is well served by them. Also, London is no slouch himself...

Besides, if I left Deerfield Beach, who would I HEART SYLVIA?

Posted On: Friday, Apr. 23 2010 @ 10:14PM

Chaz Stevens, Genius says:

PS. Wbo is that dude (2nd from right) in the picture? Looks like George Constanza.

Posted On: Friday, Apr. 23 2010 @ 10:15PM

Heidi Rose says:

I believe that man is Vice-Mayor Julian. He's much cuter in person....

Gotta go email my public officials now.....

Posted On: Saturday, Apr. 24 2010 @ 10:16AM

Jimmy Wheeler says:

When will all this end in Hallandale Beach????

Posted On: Tuesday, Apr. 27 2010 @ 5:00PM

Jimmy Wheeler says:

Will this ever end???

Posted On: Tuesday, Apr. 27 2010 @ 5:02PM

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Jimmy Wheeler says:

When you listen to commission meetings, notice how often the city manager, Mike Good cannot answer a simple question. I often wonder why Joy Cooper supports him. It's time for a change. Has anyone driven by the city cemetery lately. It's a disaster. Mayor Cooper should be ashamed of herself.

Posted On: **Tuesday, Apr. 27 2010 @ 5:07PM**

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Posted On: **Tuesday, Apr. 27 2010 @ 5:09PM**

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