



Margaret Blank <margaret.h.blank@gmail.com>

state of the county part 2

3 messages

Margaret Blank <margaret.h.blank@gmail.com>

Fri, May 1, 2015 at 11:00 AM

To: Danny Kolhage <boccdis1@monroecounty-fl.gov>, George Neugent <boccdis2@monroecounty-fl.gov>, boccdis3@monroecounty-fl.gov, boccdis4@monroecounty-fl.gov, boccdis5@monroecounty-fl.gov

Dear Commissioners;

As I scanned the state of the county report, I noticed this little gem on page 30 in the Legislative Affairs section:

Obtained \$2 million federal appropriation from the U.S. Army Corp for the Florida Keys Water Quality Improvement Program (FKWQIP).

We all know very well what really happened with that. The county's federal lobbyist snuck language into the WRRRA to exclude Key Largo from funding and jump ahead of Islamorada and Marathon. When confronted, your staff claimed to know nothing about it. When that didn't fly, they claimed they didn't propose the language, they simply asked committee staff to include the county. Both claims have been contradicted by Washington DC staff, who have absolutely no reason to lie.

What makes this incident even more disturbing is the fact that your staff attempted to divert funding away from the very people who help pay their salaries - Key Largo taxpayers. It is well known that Key Largo unjustifiably pays more for its sewer project than citizens in the other unincorporated areas. This federal money is one way to help balance out that inequity. Yet your staff thought it appropriate to interfere with that funding source, potentially jeopardizing it altogether. What does this say about their priorities? And yours?

Despite your staff's unacceptable conduct, they are giving themselves sole credit for bringing in \$2 million of Army Corps money. It's one thing to try and sweep this under the rug. It's quite another to consciously and deliberately continue to mislead the public.

Your taxpayers deserve much better, especially those in Key Largo. For the sake of the taxpayers and your own credibility, please hold your staff to some minimum ethical standard. At the very least the false statement should be removed from the report. Public statements should be truthful and accurate. Fairness and transparency should be front and center.

I know that the county has taken preliminary steps to repair the inequity using state money. You certainly deserve some credit for finally addressing the issue. However, given past events, it is still unclear whether this is a sincere effort or just another money grab. Including false statements in your report does not inspire confidence. Please know that I will be paying very close attention.

Sincerely,

Margaret H. Blank, PE
Unmuzzled Key Largo Taxpayer

Schreck-Carol <Schreck-Carol@monroecounty-fl.gov>

Fri, May 1, 2015 at 11:04 AM

To: Margaret Blank <margaret.h.blank@gmail.com>

Dear Ms. Blank,

Thank you for your comments regarding the State of the County report. If required, the Commissioner will get back to you as soon as possible. Otherwise, please know your email has been received and will be considered.

Thank you, and if I may be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to call.

Carol A. Schreck

Aide to Monroe County Mayor Pro Tem Heather Carruthers

County Commission District 3

500 Whitehead Street – Suite 102

Key West, FL 33040

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All correspondence is subject to the State of Florida's Public Information Act.

From: Margaret Blank [mailto:margaret.h.blank@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, May 01, 2015 11:00 AM

To: Kolhage-Danny; BOCCDIS2; BOCCDIS3; BOCCDIS4; BOCCDIS5

Subject: [BULK] state of the county part 2

Importance: Low

[Quoted text hidden]

Margaret Blank <margaret.h.blank@gmail.com>
To: Schreck-Carol <Schreck-Carol@monroecounty-fl.gov>

Fri, May 1, 2015 at 11:29 AM

Thank you.

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