

CITY ATTORNEY RESIGNS AFTER ALTERING DOCUMENTS TO PROTECT MAYOR

June 20, 2015 – The rest of the story

Brookhaven City Attorney Thomas Kurrie resigned this week after allegations by multiple news agencies that he altered a document, resisted full public record disclosures and made false statements to protect Mayor J. Max Davis. Kurrie's deceptive response and handling of Open Records requests protected Davis from allegations of harassment raised by two employees in the now famous "Lysol spraying incident". But the bigger story is that it also protected Davis from more serious concerns documented in a memo from City Manager Marie Garrett who contended that [Mayor Davis violated the City Charter multiple times](#). Kurrie's actions drew the ire of the city council in a meeting held on Tuesday after Councilman John Park wrote Kurrie and the council members that he believed Kurrie's actions were in violation of Title 45 Chapter 11 Section 1 of the Georgia code.

The [full version](#) of city manager Marie Garrett's email accused Davis forcing the hiring of Belinda Damos, trying to get the city manager to say that she hired her and then lying to her to say that he had full support of the council when he had not told a single council member about the hiring. She went on to say that the Mayor was improperly directing the work of Mike Hassinger, the former Vendor for Communications. In addition, she alleged that the mayor had hired an auditor without the full agreement of the council. All are violations of the Brookhaven City Charter.

The Political Vine was the first to break [the more detailed story](#) that was picked up by the [Brookhaven Post](#) and incorporated into [front page in-depth report](#) in the Atlanta Journal Constitution. Mayor J. Max Davis has also resigned to seek the House District 80 Seat formerly held by Mike Jacobs who was appointed as a judge by Governor Nathan Deal. Davis is running against Republicans Catherine Bernard and Loren Collins as well as Democrat Taylor Bennett. A [debate](#) sponsored by the Brookhaven Chamber of Commerce is scheduled for 7PM on Tuesday June 23 at Oglethorpe University. But there is more.

To assist in fundraising, Davis retained Elizabeth Dewberry the former campaign worker for Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle who was found with Cagle in a [compromising position](#) when a Capitol secretary walked into Cagle's office unexpectedly during August of 2008. Ms. Dewberry left the campaign when the event became public knowledge at the Capitol and a complaint was submitted to former Ethics Chairman, Eric Johnson. Johnson squashed the matter in 2009 and Cagle immediately resigned his 2010 bid for Governor referencing a spinal disorder that would inhibit his campaigning for a statewide office. He then ran for re-election as Lt. Gov., another statewide office and even ran in the 2010 Peachtree Road race. Days after Cagle withdrew his bid, Eric Johnson entered the race for Governor. The Savannah based Johnson is hosting a fundraising event organized by Dewberry in a home he has in Atlanta.

Another fundraiser for Davis is House Speaker David Ralston, [who has a history](#) of using his legislative leadership team to flood Republican primary races with out of district money for a favored candidate thus subverting the will of district voters. In 2012, Ralston flooded House District 22 with about \$17,000, including \$5,000 from the speaker, in attempt to elect candidate Meagan Biello. Mrs. Biello did not win the race despite receiving 97% of her funds from out of district sources. The legislators were more successful in 2010 when they flooded House District 46 with about \$27,000 of out of district money to elect John Carson who received about 93% of his funds from legislators, lobbyists, PACS and corporations. The losing candidates in these races raised 95% or more of their money from individuals. Are we witnessing another attempt to purchase a seat in House District 80? Will the voters and media outlets of Brookhaven, Sandy Springs and Chamblee become informed enough to stop it?

Suppressed Text of Marie Garrett's Email:

"Please accept this memo as my statement of concern regarding recent events by Mayor Davis towards me. Since the publishing of the AJC article wherein I stated that Belinda Demos was hired by the Mayor and the Mayor's statement that he merely suggested she be hired, I have seen retaliatory behavior by the Mayor towards me. During our trip to DC to attend the Mayor's Conference, I told him in a phone call that I would not lie about Belinda and that he did hire her. He continued to coach me to say that he did not hire her which I told him was not true. At the time he hired Belinda, he told me he had the full support of the council of which I learned later not one council member knew about the Mayor's hiring which is a direct violation of the city's Charter.

He has demeaned me in public regarding tourism dollars in an open council meeting on my report as to how they should not be spent for local events (not eligible) which he wanted me to do, to berating me in an executive session over the resignation of [redacted]

When Mike Hassinger was here serving as the Vendor for Communications, he berated me in executive session because I brought to his attention and repeated even what Mike told me that the Mayor was directing his work. This is in direct violation to the city's charter.

On a recent occasion (3/6/15), I was been by a council member that the Mayor told them that I would "be gone very soon". I have been told by a staff member that the Mayor along with Bates Mattison told Trey Benton that I was going to be fired. This was Nov. 2014.

I have also been directed by the Mayor to bid out the batting cages for MC Park of which the consensus of Council was not to pay for batting cages until after the master plan for MC Park. I continue to be pressured to do the wrong thing by the Mayor and when I refuse he steps up his anger towards me.

I received a very positive performance evaluation and this was presented to me by the Mayor and Council on Feb. 10, 2015 (all the elected were present). The Mayor said I was doing an excellent job and that "we want to keep you". Since that evaluation, I have experienced negative behavior towards me.

The Mayor hired an independent auditor and said the full council was in agreement. I have since learned this was not the case. His hiring of this firm which was not budgeted is a violation of the Charter. He has no authority to hire. He asked me to sign their engagement letter for their services and I refused and told him he had to sign it. It is my understanding he signed their engagement letter....." [more](#)