

GARY FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

AFFILIATIONS

Indiana State Association of Firefighters
International Association of Firefighters
Indiana State Federation of Labor
Lake County Central Labor Union
National Safety Council



LOCAL 359
INCORPORATED

565 MASSACHUSETTS STREET
GARY, INDIANA 46403
219-885-1245

Mr. Ryan Kitchell
Director of OMB

May 18, 2009

Dear Mr. Kitchell:

The Leadership of Gary Firefighters Local 359, on behalf of our members, would like to express our concerns regarding the effect on public safety due to the financial crisis in the City of Gary.

Over the last eight months, the Gary Fire Department has faced a series of setbacks:

In September 2008, we were forced to take a twenty percent pay cut. After a judge found that it was illegal for Mayor Rudy Clay to do so and the city was ordered to stop the pay cuts, they laid off thirteen of our members for a period of forty-five days. The remaining firefighters reporting for duty would be randomly selected to be sent home due to station closings or apparatus shortfalls.

Our apparatus fleet is besieged by mechanical issues. There have recently been times during which only four pieces of apparatus were in service to protect the whole city: We are supposed to have a total of twelve engines and four trucks in service on a daily basis.

Our fire stations are uninhabitable. These stations, where we are expected to live when we are on duty, have mold problems from leaking roofs and ceilings and walls that are falling in, creating an unhealthy and unsafe living and working environment. Although the administration has repeatedly been approached with these issues, the answer has remained the same: There are never any funds to fix these problems.

Currently, our members are facing rumors that the administration plans on laying off seventy of our firefighters. Our department is already down by thirty-two firefighters as it stands. **In no uncertain terms, cutting the fire department by another seventy firefighters would place the lives of firefighters and the lives of the citizens of Gary in jeopardy.** Our main concern as public safety officers has always been and will continue to be the safety of our citizens.

We understand that the City of Gary has mismanaged funds. We understand that money is a difficult issue and that in these economic times we must all make sacrifices. However, the Gary Fire Department is already made enormous sacrifices. We are running short-handed, with inadequate resources and under appalling living/working conditions. We would ask that in your decision you consider this and the safety of the citizens of Gary.

Sincerely,

Raynard Robinson, President
Gary Firefighters Local 359

Adam Friday, Vice President
Gary Firefighters Local 359

Russo, Stephanie

From: KRISeKRIS00@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2009 2:12 PM
To: Russo, Stephanie
Cc: KRISeKRIS00@aol.com
Subject: DUAB letter 5/19/2009

It doesn't seem that any amount of money can fix this city, at least not as long as this administration -- or any administration that operates in remotely the same fashion as this one does -- is at the helm. The problem is not the amount of money that the city receives. The problem is the management of the money that the city receives. Now, it is like a hole with no bottom.

We're still waiting for the City to make their first substantive budget cut. I'm afraid that we'll wind up waiting a lot longer for this to happen unless you force them to make these cuts -- unless economics force these cuts.

If there is anyplace where the tax rate should be lower than elsewhere in the state, one would expect Gary to be that place. To instead learn that Gary may continue to be the place in the state with the highest tax rate, is simply mindboggling.

The fact that this city is still alive -- although not by much -- speaks volumes about the strength of its people. And I believe that these people have spoken, not just loudly, but very, very clearly. Don't give them a dime!

Just imagine what could happen to Gary with good leadership. If the corruption was driven out -- starved out. If the leaders, instead of continually only helping themselves, began actually helping the citizenry -- like they are supposed to -- like they do nearly everywhere else in the state. With all of the terrible abuses this city has suffered through at the hands of man -- she still survives. That says something!

How can you even consider giving them access to any more of the taxpayers' money than the law allows? You've been to the city. Does it look like a city that has received billions of dollars of tax money, of casino money, of federal money, of numerous grants backed by a panoply of government agencies? Not to me! I would suspect not to you either.

So, the taxpayers beg of you; don't give them access to any more of OUR hard-earned money. If you feel sorry for them, and feel the need to help them, then give them some of the State's money. If for some reason, you've developed a soft spot for them, then let them keep some of the State's share of the casino money. Let them keep some of the State's share of the fuel tax. Let them keep some of the State's share of the sales tax. Let them get a piece of the State's income tax. There are surely numerous ways by which the State can direct funding their way without letting them stick their hands deeper into the pockets of the taxpayers than the law allows. So if you think that they have been good stewards of the funds they've been receiving, then by all means...give them more money. Just not ours!

The taxpayers, the good citizens of Gary, the businesses, the employees of businesses, the children, the families, and every single individual living in or nearby the city has paid some price for the horrible fiscal mismanagement which this city has suffered under for the last several decades. But now you sit, in the enviable position to change all of that -- to set the course right. Will you? We can only hope that you do. We can only hope that you have the stomach to make this weighty decision, and to make it properly. We can only hope that you do this job right. Without emotion, without politics, without sympathy. Just numbers. Just obey the numbers, just like the rest of us must.

The taxpayers have already made their position clear -- of how we want you to rule. You have received a mountain of evidence, certainly enough with which to make a just decision -- a mandate no less. Just carry it out on our behalf. While the citizens sent you hard evidence, the City sent you on wild-goose chases. Where the citizens sent you hard facts, the City gave you a hard time. When the citizens told you the truth, the City made up lies and excuses. The answer is quite straightforward. Only the City's plan is laced with deception.

There is not one man, woman, or child that has not somehow been affected by the heinous and deleterious actions of the relative few that mismange the purse strings of this city. They act with regularity and with singularity to effect policy and commit actions which serve only to enrich themselves, but are to the severe detriment of those they took oaths to serve. Stop this madness now! Stop it dead in its tracks -- while you have the chance!

For years and years, we've been forced to submit to double-digit tax rates. You can easily see the effect this has had on this city. The rate still hovers above 8%, but this is after trending and reassessments. Our net rate as compared to before is higher yet. The result of this? Destabilization. Evaporating tax base. Loss of population. Loss of businesses. No local economy. No jobs. Increased unemployment. Increasing crime. The bad parts of the city aren't getting better, the good parts are getting worse!

Give no compromise, as they have earned none. Just do what you know to do. What you must do. You are our last line of defense, well at least until such a time as the majority of the taxpayers become voters, or until such a time that the majority of voters become taxpayers. The city can't wait that long. By then it will be too late! Get it right the first time, you may not get a second chance!

So now we wait. We wait for you to do this -- to do this right. All of our faith has been placed in the system -- the system that was put in place to protect the people from tyranny, not the one which has developed in Gary which instead seems quite effective at sheltering the tyrants from the reforms desired by the people. (This de facto one-party system operates without the slightest hint of any checks or balances.) We sure hope that the real system works the way it is supposed to -- the way it was intended to! The decision would appear to be so clear. Say NO!

Just do it by the numbers...they never lie!

Kris Edwards

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Russo, Stephanie

From: AYoung7550@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2009 7:09 AM
To: Russo, Stephanie
Cc: AYoung7550@aol.com
Subject: He hasn't cut a penny.

Clay Jr. still being paid for videos

*** Two months after mayor's son is taken off payroll, Gary gets bills.**

Comments

May 20, 2009

By JON SEIDEL Post-Tribune staff writer

GARY -- The son of Mayor Rudy Clay kept billing the Gary Sanitary District for video and editing services nearly two months after his father said the contract would be rescinded.

Records released Tuesday show Rudy Clay Jr. banked \$13,132 of his \$39,960 contract at GSD this year. That contract officially ended May 13, one month after Clay Jr. submitted a termination letter to GSD Director Luci Horton.

That was also seven weeks after Mayor Clay caved to criticism by Gov. Mitch Daniels and said his son's contract would be rescinded.

"The people of Gary come first," Mayor Clay, who is also GSD's special administrator, said that day. "My son feels the same way."

The mayor made his comments on March 25. By then, his son had already collected \$7,250 in 2009 at the Sanitary District.

Four weeks later, Clay Jr. billed GSD for \$1,560 for 24 hours spent preparing opening and closing credits for videos of future board meetings.

On the last day of his contract, May 13, Clay Jr. submitted an invoice for \$4,322 for 66.5 hours spent preparing an informational video about the waste-water treatment process in Gary.

The Post-Tribune requested the invoices the next day, but they weren't released until Tuesday.

Mayor Clay pointed out that his son's contract, as written, could only be terminated with a 30-day notice.

However, his contract also states that had GSD terminated the contract, Clay Jr. would have had to cease all activity upon receipt of the notice.

Attempts Tuesday to reach Clay Jr. through his father and City Hall were unsuccessful.

Daniels blasted the contract for Clay Jr. in March because the city and the Gary Sanitary District are asking the Indiana Distressed Unit Appeals Board to relieve it from the state's new property tax caps.

The governor, who appoints the board's members, has said the city will have to show it has done all it can to help itself in order to qualify for relief. The board is expected to render its verdict today in Indianapolis.

Russo, Stephanie

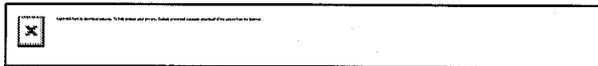
From: AYoung7550@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, May 19, 2009 5:55 PM
To: Russo, Stephanie
Cc: AYoung7550@aol.com
Subject: Genesis Center in Gary

Report: \$20K missing at Gary arena

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By Christine Kraly
christine.kraly@nwi.com, (219) 662-5335 | Tuesday, May 19, 2009 | [\(15 comment\(s\)\)](#)



JOHN J. WATKINS | THE TIMES (File) A state agency conducted an audit of Gary's Genesis Conventional Center, finding more than \$20,000 missing from event and bar sales between January 2007 and December 2008. [NWI Photo Store](#)

GARY | The Indiana Attorney General's office is reviewing an audit of Gary's Genesis Convention Center that found more than \$20,000 missing from event and bar sales.

The State Board of Accounts released a recent review of the arena, which auditors say is fraught with managerial and accounting deficiencies, including a massive shortage of receipts and other supporting documents.

Attorney General Greg Zoeller's office is looking over the report, Zoeller spokesman Bryan Corbin said Monday. Zoeller's office is expected to send a letter to the center's insurance carrier, seeking any missing funds, Corbin said.

Gary Mayor Rudy Clay did not return a call from The Times on Monday seeking comment.

In analyzing center records dated between Jan. 1, 2007 and Dec. 10, 2008, auditors said they could not verify 112 receipts totaling \$20,317 in bar, ticket and concession sales at basketball games.

Among the problems auditors noted: staff misuse of petty cash; error-riddled lease agreements; inadequate or nonexistent oversight of ticket sales made by credit cards; and incoming cash from center events.

In one example, a concert promoter was paid \$12,000 for a July 2007 concert that was rescheduled due to a power outage. But auditors were unable to determine the source of the promoter's payment because tally sheets from ticket sales showed insufficient cash to pay him.

A recent Times review of the center revealed the arena does not turn a profit and cost the city \$2.23 million to operate last year.

Staff paid for event disc jockeys through multiple sources, including petty cash and checks from the city controller's office, the report said. The confusion resulted in redundant payments to DJs totaling \$700.

The center also failed to include such cash payments to DJs on IRS income forms.

State officials also say the complicated, record-deficient audit cost more than \$5,000 to complete. Audit Supervisor Charles Pride said additional costs typically are paid by the audited unit, and are added for particularly problematic reviews.

Center officials acknowledged several issues in their response to auditors, including that "record keeping is lacking."

Officials told auditors they plan to shape up, in part by enlisting the help of a city auditor. Management and board members vowed to come down hard on staff who do not follow proper accounting procedures, noting that, "In the past, employees have ignored procedural memos and directives."

Solutions may include limiting the people with access to the center's receipt book to two from four, as well as eliminating waitresses on certain nights at the center's lounge.

The center no longer will pay for drinks, food, rental equipment or DJs from daily cash collections, the report states.



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- It accused someone of being guilty of a crime.
- It promoted violence or illegal acts.
- It contained telephone numbers or street addresses, or e-mail addresses and links to Web sites other than nwi.com or government agencies.

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Neighbor wrote on May 19, 2009 4:17 PM:

"I am sure the cops will find it not?"

NICK GERZ wrote on May 19, 2009 4:02 PM:

" I BEES THINKIN GARY AINT BE GOTTEN THAT MUCH MONEYISMS. "

Bob Abouy wrote on May 19, 2009 3:43 PM:

" HEY WOW

Way to butcher the english language. Iam pretty sure your computer has spell check. Duh? "

Say it aint so wrote on May 19, 2009 3:31 PM:

" I truly hope the Distressed Unit Appeals Board knew about this waste of taxpayer money. I'm sure this would sway their decision regarding whether they'll allow Gary to continue raping the taxpayers. \$2.23 million????????? "

Greenize wrote on May 19, 2009 3:24 PM:

" I've got the perfect solution. Close the waste of \$\$\$ down. And flush Rudy's silent mouth down with it. "

Public safety wrote on May 19, 2009 10:23 AM:

" Wow if the police or fire Department runs out of funds they lay off. Why doesn't someone wise up and get rid of the corrupt mayor there's fire equipment running around the city of Gary that is unsafe and there is not enough police but I'm glad to hear the arena lounge is still open "

NO WAY wrote on May 19, 2009 9:47 AM:

" THERES NO WAY RUDY KNOWS ANYTHING ABOUT IT.....HA HA "

DREAM JOB wrote on May 19, 2009 8:51 AM:

" WHAT COULD BE FINER THEN A JOB AT GENESIS CENTER BEING A TICKET OR CONCESSION WORKER.ONE FOR THEM TWO FOR ME CLOSE TO BEING A LAKE COUNTY POLITICAN.IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?? "

wow wrote on May 19, 2009 8:51 AM:

" 20K? that is the teenager employees geting their training, the mayor sure have fun looking at this newbies, but they will grow up and become a mayor some day, they will know how to pocket larger amounts, and rip off the city found in mayor amounts, not this ridiculous penny pinching practices.

Good lock my boys, keep the good work, sure you ae learning for good sample. "

gee wrote on May 19, 2009 8:33 AM:

" Im not surprised. Gary is ran by slugs that dont care about anything, just themselves. I guess there are thieves everywhere though. But the slugs in Gary are part of the reason why you dont want to be walking around Gary once it starts getting dark. They steal from the citizens and those people feel they have nothing to lose, so they just do what they got to survive. "

The sewer city wrote on May 19, 2009 8:28 AM:

" Controlled tsunami "

SURPRISE wrote on May 19, 2009 8:10 AM:

" Actually I would be surprised if the audit accounted for all funds. After all, it's Gary and it's run by a guy who was paying his kid \$60,000 per year to take a few photos. "

Harley O Whatley wrote on May 19, 2009 8:06 AM:

" A sad indicator of what some people, that are put into a trusting position, will do when they think no one is watching them, or they just do not care, and greed steps up to the plate.
Lack of self esteem, disregard for the law, their fellow man, the Lord, and any resulting consequences are their motivations. Obviously their parent(s) did not possess any parenting skills.
The missing \$20,000 is a big concern, however, the fact that the Genesis center is costing the poor Gary taxpayers over \$2 million a year is a very sad indication of the mind set of the Gary city fathers. How many streets could get paved, how many police and firefighters could be paid, how many abandoned buildings could be razed with over \$2 million dollars.
WOW
PS How many Hummers will \$2 million buy? I am sorry, I couldn't resist that. The devil made me do it. "

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