

2019 APR 26 AM 9:31

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Section 1. Complainant			
Your Name Steve Buckner		Daytime Telephone Number 616-802-8583	
Mailing Address 223 N Main Street			
City Kent City		State MI	Zip 49330

Section 3. Alleged Violations (Use additional sheet if more space is needed.)

Unsure of the section - Using Village Equipment to help a campaign.

Just Prior to the actual November 2018 Election Date (Saturday) a letter was delivered by mail and a similar letter was hand delivered to many of the village residents. This letter condemned the current President and myself (Trustee running for Clerk). Bert Rose (while running for President hand delivered sever copies of a letter to residents of the village. Recently I discussed with Bert Rose (New Village President) about several village items and questions I had. At the end of the conversation, we discussed the letter. I asked Bert if he wrote either of the letters which he denied. I asked where he got the letter, and he indicated that he found it on the copy machine in the village office and that someone in the office must have written it and made copies. In a separate conversation with the Ex village president (John Petruska), he mentioned that there were labels and envelopes on the treasures desk the Sunday prior to the election.

- 1) It appears that the letter originated in the village office by village employees. (Clerk - Treasure - Zoning Admin and Trustee Bert Rose)
- 2) The mailing list used appears to be from the Sewer Bill List. (I have a resident who came to me after the election and her name only appears on the Sewer bill as listed on the letter she received.)
- 3) The letter was copied on the Village Copy Machine. (This copier has a hard drive and was proposed at the March 2019 meeting to get a new one. - This was put off until next year - Office computers were also requested to have the hard drives replaced - which is currently happening... However Greg Goss Trustee is in charge of IT and told me these drives will be preserved. (as he indicated he thought election violations were broken and someone may request them someday))
- 4) Labels were on the treasure's desk which we do not use in the village office.
- 5) Greg Goss - Current Trustee - Indicated knowledge that office personnel may have run some of the letters on the copy machine.

Evidence included:

- Item A: Letter handed out during the election by Bert Rose
Item B: Letter Mailed to residents
Items C: Envelope used to mail the letter to residents
Item D: Affidavit from concern resident on mailing label content.
Item E: Text message from Bert after our meeting admitting to handing out the letter.

Section 4. Certification (Required)

I certify that to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, formed after a reasonable inquiry under the circumstances, each factual contention of this complaint is supported by evidence.

X

Signature of Complainant

4-23-19

Date

Section 5. Certification without Evidence (Supplemental to Section 4)

Section 15(6) of the MCFA (MCL 169.215) requires that the signed certification found in section 4 of this form be included in every complaint. However, if, after a reasonable inquiry under the circumstances, you are unable to certify that certain factual contentions are supported by evidence, you may also make the following certification:

I certify that to the best of my knowledge, information, or belief, there are grounds to conclude that the following specifically identified factual contentions are likely to be supported by evidence after a reasonable opportunity for further inquiry. Those specific contentions are:

ALTHOUGH I HAVE BEEN TOLD
BY GREG GOSS (TRUSTEE) IN CHARGE
OF IT DEPARTMENT AT THE VILLAGE
THAT HE KNOWS OF COPIES BEING MADE
ON THE COPY MACHINE IN THE OFFICES
AND HE FEELS LAWS WERE BROKEN.
I HAVE NO PROOF WITHOUT REVIEWING THE COPIER
HARD DRIVE.

X

Signature of Complainant

4-23-19

Date

Section 15(8) of the MCFA provides that a person who files a complaint with a false certification is responsible for a civil violation of the MCFA. The person may be required to pay a civil fine of up to \$1,000.00 and some or all of the expenses incurred by the Michigan Department of State and the alleged violator as a direct result of the filing of the complaint.

Mail or deliver the completed complaint form with an original signature and evidence to the following address:

Michigan Department of State
Bureau of Elections
Richard H. Austin Building – 1st Floor
430 West Allegan Street
Lansing, Michigan 48918

Exhibit: A
Letter Bert Rose
handed out to village
residents.

JUST THE FACTS!

John Petruska has not been in the Village office during office hours in well over a year. After the October Village Council meeting, John stated he was unable to work during office hours because he has a full time job that makes it impossible. Bert Rose is retired. He does not have a job conflict that would prevent him from doing his job during Village office hours.

Steve Buckner would like to be the Village Clerk. Does he have any experience with the position? Steve also has a full time job that would prevent him from being in the Village office during normal office hours. In order for Steve to accept the position, the Village would have to hire additional staff just to cover the hours that Mary Portell puts in.

For the past 2 years, John and Steve have been spending your tax dollars on attorney fees. Here are a few examples of their spending.

- Over \$3,000.00 harassing Bert Rose, Dennis Kaminski, Mary Portell. They call the attorney over and over trying to find reasons for their dismissal. Thankfully, they haven't had much luck!
- Without Council consent, they spent over \$3,000 on a private sale between Kent City Baptist Church and a potential buyer. That deal did not go through. Tyrone Township ended up purchasing the property to use for the new library.

That is over \$6,000 needlessly spent on attorney fees that could have been spent on items the Village needs, such as new playground equipment, handicap picnic tables or water and restrooms for Ball Creek Park.

John Petruska and Steve Buckner would like to fire the Zoning Administrator based on a list that they have personally compiled of violations here in the Village. The Zoning Administrator does not feel that such trivial violations should result in a ticket being issued. Is your address on this list?

Do you want to live Your life in Your Village, or Their life, in Their Village?

Vote No to John Petruska and Steve Buckner!

Vote Rose for President

Vote Portell for Clerk

Dear Fellow Residents and Voters of the Village of Kent City,

As you know, November 6 is fast approaching, and you have the opportunity to make a difference in YOUR village. It is time to "Flush the John and Bag the Buck!" Your vote really does matter, and as concerned and informed citizens of this great village, we've put together some of the reasons another term in office for John Petruska and Steve Buckner would continue to harm our growth and forward momentum.

Bert Rose is a lifetime local with the wellbeing of this village as his highest priority. His years of experience on the council and various other boards have given him the insight and experience needed to lead our village.

Mary Portell has been the village clerk for 35 years. Chances are you've talked with her, and chances are her long time experience as the "brain" of the village has shown through. Mary knows the day to day operations, has general knowledge that speeds up the answering of questions and has made it her mission to improve public relations within the village.

What has happened with John and Steve in office over the last decade plus, let's take a drive into the village from M37, where much of our visitors (opposing schools etc.) enter our village and get their first impression. The first thing they see is a vacant Dr's office as they approach the old O&M lot, which still sits empty. A small used auto lot was proposed, but blocked, leaving the land still vacant. As our visitors cross the tracks, the old Junk shop sits vacant, providing too many hoops for a new owner to quickly set up shop. Next to that sits another vacant building, owned by Steve Buckner. This building was turned over to the village by Tyrone Township with the intent of creating some funding in the village through its sale; a sale the township "highly discouraged" to a sitting village trustee. Has it even been brought to code since changing ownership and why would a "pro-growth" village trustee let a great commercial building sit vacant? Next door, the newly remodeled building struggled to find and maintain tenants until Kent City Baptist church moved offices there; it's great to see it finally getting used after the owner's hard work and investment. Approaching the stop sign, what was once a hardware store now sits as yet another vacant building, where the hardware store was basically forced out because of alleged violations reported by John and Steve. That's 5 vacant prime commercial sites in less than 3/4 mile. What's more? Kent City Ford is no more, bought out by Betten Baker and converted to a used car lot; this is a lot of real estate that could have been compromised over within village ranks. The Jerky shop on Ball Creek is no longer open to the public because of signage and the lack of ability to bring in retail customers. Red Rock Grille has a new sign, but is continuously harassed for efforts made to draw attention to their business....but hey, we got another national box store in town, didn't we? We understand that there are multiple mitigating factors in all these business growth snafu's, but we also know that a little more fighting and compromising with business owners and prospective investors in our village WOULD HAVE gone a long way. Both John and Steve tout their extensive business management experience, but why did John's store in Sparta close? And what is Steve's management experience? Turn this over for a list of shocking facts:

Vote Rose for President

Vote Portell for Clerk

DID YOU KNOW...???

- John has not been in the village office during office hours for over a year.
- Both John and Steve held Mary Portell Captive in her office against her will after the June 2017 meeting (this is verified on the official July 2017 meeting minutes available on the village website) resulting in the removal of her office door for her safety.
- Have you gotten an ordinance ticket? Chances are John or Steve were on your property after dark looking for a reason to cite you.
- They spread multiple rumors-like the one about a village resident harassing women at Papa P's and the Village Pavilion- this was false as the accused was actually away at basic training during this time.
- Did you know that Steve Buckner owns a business called Airsource, LLC (also known as Fabworks)? A quick visit to the Michigan Entity Search online will verify not only he is the sole owner, but that his business has been listed as "not in good standing" since 2010. Is that really who you want as clerk, someone who fails to comply in HIS OWN business?
- John has spent thousands of taxpayer dollars in discussions with the village attorney on topics of personal vendettas and matters the public should have a voice in; Multiple phone calls over individuals property and new construction-even after zoning approvals; He wants to make the clerk and treasurer positions appointed by the president NOT elected by voters; He wants to eradicate the board of zoning appeals. The village also "sits on" nearly \$200,000.00 of taxpayer monies that should be going to improve and promote our village(why not put it into parks, put restrooms at the ball creek park).
- Neither believe in due process-instead of due process, our zoning administrator receives texts, emails and phone calls all hours of the day demanding citations be issued. In 2018, John demanded a citation be given to the township clerk and a neighbor in the village for "violations" that indeed were not ordinance violations (zoning administrator Kaminski verified the residents were not in violation and refused to write the tickets).
- John runs the Kent City Fall festival with no accountability. As a matter of fact, revisit the Michigan Entity Search, Kent City Fall Festival does not exist. All the banking is done on the Kent City Chamber of Commerce account, although the chamber officially and legally dissolved in 2006. This means there is NO TAX ID number for the fall festival (another nonprofit entity cannot "transfer" a tax ID to another nonexistent entity). This also means that without the Festival being a legal entity, soliciting donations for the fall festival is illegal as there is clearly no tax ID number. Tax fraud, check fraud, illegal solicitation, operating a nonprofit organization that DOES NOT EXIST Where does the money go? Paid in cash? Where does that cash come from, it should at a minimum flow through the bank account.-This is a matter that has actually caught the investigative attention of the Kent County Sheriff's office and Michigan Attorney General's office.

Vote Rose for President

Vote Portell for Clerk

- Steve Buckner doesn't actually want the clerk's position. His intent is to get elected, resign his seat, statutorily making it open for appointment by the president, at which time he'll attempt to regain his seat on the council, all while undermining the voters confidence.

- At the October 2018 Council Meeting, Steve Buckner (on record) read a political statement slandering Mary Portell, Bert Rose, Dennis Kaminski and Jill Krikke in promotion of his own campaign for village clerk. Under election law this is illegal and is actually a misdemeanor. A report has been filed and Steve Buckner is currently under investigation by the election bureau for this misdemeanor violation.

- Both have made unfounded and unverifiable accusations towards multiple residents of the village, including council members who oppose them. This is a "good ole boys" club, if you want to live YOUR life in YOUR village, it's time to Flush the John and get the Buck out. If they get reelected, you will find yourself living YOUR life in THEIR village.

Kent County has no record of this complaint. They stated possibly it was investigated by campaign finance. (Do you have a record of this? Is this true?)

Remember, November 6th, you have the power to make a difference. Vote Rose for President and Portell for Clerk and help put an end to the harassment, threats, slander and intimidation. Help stop the illegal, immoral and unethical practices that are slowly damaging our once vibrant and growing village on the ridge.

Sincerely,

Kent City Voters for Transparency

This communication was compiled with verifiable fact finding by a group of active concerned Kent City residents. We are eager to see honesty and transparency in the village office and that cannot happen with Petruska and Buckner "running the show." Mary has proved, over 35 years, her level of integrity, as has Bert.

Notice: This letter has been compiled by private citizens within the village and is not endorsed or approved by the candidates supported herein.