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## Statement of Christopher and James Walters

Christopher and James Walters desire to issue a statement concerning the recent audit by the State Board of Accounts with regard to the Town of Chesterfield.

The Town of Chesterfield was the victim of an elaborate and complicated scheme by the former Clerk Treasurer Christopher Parrish and the Town Marshal, James Kem to defraud and bilk the citizens of their tax money. James and Christopher Walters were also victims of this scheme and have been blamed by the Town Board and the State Board of Accounts as part of the entire plot. Christopher and James Walters have dedicated their lives to serving the people of Chesterfield and were duped into this entire matter by Christopher Parrish.

The Town Board wants to blame both of the Walters for their "role" in the program to defraud the citizens, but in reality, Christopher Parrish designed a plan and convinced the Town Board to consolidate power into his office to further his own financial interest. The Town Board abdicated their own oversight responsibility and gave that to Christopher Parrish instead of performing their job at their meetings. Christopher Parrish controlled the budget, the bank accounts and directed the work of the employees as well as required them to submit their work records on documents that he knew were not proper just so that he could profit from this plot. Christopher Parrish then manipulated the financial records to try and deflect the blame from him and onto Christopher and James Walters.

When the conspiracy was uncovered, both Christopher and James Walters cooperated fully and completely with all investigating agencies and provided truthful information as to their activities and work. They performed services and purchased items at the sole direction of Christopher Parrish and believed that the Town Board had granted these powers to Parrish.

A review of audits before this matter came to light did provide some clues that a crisis was in the making. The State Board of Accounts identified some problems in the 2005 and 2006 audit, which, had the Town Board bothered to understand, could have averted this financial disaster. Specifically the audit report noted that the:

1. The Fund balances did not reconcile with the bank balances.
2. The financial records submitted to the Auditors were incomplete.
3. The Clerk Treasurer was maintaining separate accounts for funds of the Town.
4. Meter Deposit Fund control ledger was less than the detail of the individual consumer balances.
5. The Town paid penalties in excess of \$2,000.00 for late filing of tax documents.

Christopher and James Walters lost their jobs and became victims, just as the residents of Town of Chesterfield. Instead of looking at their procedures and past actions, the Town Board determined that they would shirk their responsibility and blame the Walters.

Both Christopher and James Walters deny that they ever billed the town for any overtime or wages that were not due and owing from their efforts. They also performed their job as directed by Christopher Parrish. James Walters was ordered by Christopher Parrish to purchase tools from Parrish's brother-in-law as a way Parrish could assist the Parrish family with Town funds.

Both Christopher and James Walters performed all of the work demanded by Parrish. The Town Board granted to Parrish the power to direct work and Parrish demanded that records be kept in a specific manner. Parrish then lost those same records to help minimize his own culpability. James and Christopher categorically deny any wrong doing.

The Town Board should have conducted a more thorough investigation prior to the discharge of James and Christopher Walters and they would have seen that the level of corruption and fraud was being conducted by their fellow elected official and not the Town's employees.

James and Christopher Walters appealed their dismissal and through arbitration were awarded their jobs back along with all lost pay from the date of discharge of their improper discharge. The Arbitrator found that the Town did not have good cause to fire the Walters.

Christopher and James Walters will fight the allegations of the State and insist that the Town Council return them to their rightful employment. James and Christopher Walters have a deep and abiding respect for Chesterfield and its citizens. The Town was the victim of a calculated and organized plan of activity designed to profit the Clerk Treasurer, Police Chief and his half brother. The Walters were not part of that plan.

For further comment:

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