



VOICE FOR THE PEOPLE

Knowledge is Power; and Elections have Consequences!

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TIME FOR ACTION! PART 1

East Point needs insightful, knowledgeable, capable, truthful, and honest leadership from the Mayor, each Council Member, the City Manager, Deputy City Manager, every Department Head, all appointed positions, every employee, and finally YOU, the Residents. There is a rottenness in our Government that needs to be gotten rid of NOW.

This article is about the **“THE AUDIT’S DISTRACTION COVER-UP”**. It is about a lawless culture that is pervasive and is constantly growing to the detriment of everyone. In order to rid the City of this lawless culture, we need to know who is responsible and the extent of the rot.

The AUDIT REPORT provides an invaluable assessment of the City’s Financial Infrastructure which in turn defines the strength of the City. Mayor and Council hurriedly called a Special Call Meeting (failing to give three days’ notice as required) to discuss the Audit Report and get to the bottom of the **“missing \$1.2 million that was allegedly hacked in August 2021 via wire transfers”**. That was the news’ headlined for the Meeting. The Mayor and Council along with the Finance Director, City Manager, IT staff members, and the Police Chief spent over two hours trying to convince the Residents and the public that:

1. Mayor and Council had no idea of what was going on and if they were guilty of anything it was a slight weakness in oversight.
2. The City Manager (who was the Deputy City Manager at the time) had no idea of what was happening because he was not the City Manager.
3. The Finance Director was new in her position.
4. IT had outdated systems at the time that have since been updated.
5. The Police Chief has been working with the GBI and the FBI to track the “hackers” and trying to get the City’s money back.

This is all poppycock idiocy. THIS IS NOT WHAT THE AUDIT REPORT STATES.

On page 23, the Auditor stated:

1. “4 invoice sent to COEP for Professionals Services/Other services for an amount of \$1,219,287. None of these invoices were recorded in the Accounting System but were somehow approved by the Finance and Accounting Department.”
2. “These 4 invoices were real payments made by the COEP to Fictitious Vendors. They were requested by the City Manager, Approved by the Chief Accountant, and disbursed by an accountant.”

On Page 24, emails between the Deputy City Manager Deron King, Finance Director Shirley Williams and former Internal Auditor Francis Harley discuss the wire transfers that began on August 18, 2021. They were approved by them.

1. Deputy City Manager Deron King emailed Finance Director Williams saying, “I approve the attached invoice, it is for an ongoing project. I will send you back up documents tomorrow, please set up payment today and have Francis approve.” The Subject line of the email stated “Wire Payment for Approved invoice #2103941”.
2. Ms. Williams then emailed Mr. Harley telling him, “When you get a moment you need to go to Regions and approve the setup for the wire templet. There is no money but Deron ask me to set it up at some point there is an invoice that was due August 16, 2021 for \$198,250. I just spoke to Deron and he said he wants it paid ASAP. Let me know when you approve it and I will go back and attach the money to the templet”.

Information in the email to Mr. Harley contained the following:

Templet Submitted

Templet Code TDB

To ROMANO THE KNOW INC (can't make out all the numbers)

From EAST POINT GENERAL ACCOUNT 6910103952

Payment Type Wire-Domestic

The emails and invoices continue from Page 24 to Page 36.

Page 30 contains an email that clearly states what the wire transfers were for.

1. Deputy City Manager King emailed Ms. Williams saying: “We just received news on the ongoing project ROMANO. Apparently, the project is going to bring in more profit than we thought so we are advised to invest more on this project. The attached invoice is the 40% payment for the Phase 2 of the project. Please set up payment with today's value date and Francis will approve.”
2. Page 33 contains an email that states: “Attached is the approved 60% balance on the Romano Phase 2 project that was due yesterday, please set up payment with today's value date and Francis should approve. Thank you.”

Residents, this is not what was discussed at the Special Call Meeting. That Meeting was a poorly disguised smoke screen for misappropriation of funds that backfired, and City Manager King had to come up with some plausible excuse, hence “wire hackers”. This only highlight either the disconnect between Mayor and Council and Management OR the complicity between Mayor and Council and Management. The Auditor recommended that the City hire an Independent Fraud Examiner. I totally agree.

In my next article, I will discuss the other equally important findings of the Auditor.