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This will be the only time that I will indulge my personal feelings concerning the Civil Rights Movement of the Sixties and how it affected me. Maybe, it is because this past Sunday marked the 60th anniversary of the bombing of the Church in Birmingham, Alabama. I was 17 years old in 1963 when the bombing took the lives of four beautiful young Black girls. Maybe it was the wonder of cutting the cord of my great-grandson and realizing all the many people, young and old, Black, White and Jews who would never experience the awe I felt because they died fighting for something that was bigger than they were as individuals.

As individuals, they will never graduate high school, go to a prom, graduate college, attend a big sports event, have a first date, experience the joy of a first love, go to parties, marry, give birth, travel, help to build a community, get their dream job, have family reunions, class reunions, go to public places that they could only see from a distance, fly first class, go to restaurants that they dreamed existed, shop at stores that they could not imagine, become giants in politics- a President, Senators, Congressional Leaders, Governors, Mayors, and most of all live the life that they died for! So, those of us who are fortunate enough to live the life that they died for should make every effort to make sure that their dying was not in vain.

People often confuse Civil Rights with Voting Rights. They are not the same. I believe that Voting Rights is the Foundation of Civil Rights. Without the unhindered right to vote, Civil Rights cannot survive. Every law on the book that supports our Democracy is dependent upon implementing Civil Rights for all Americans. When the foundation of our Civil Rights begins to fracture, our Democracy begins to fracture giving way to mob rule or tyrannical rule by a minority. This happens when Voting Rights are restricted and when people stop believing that their votes can make a difference!

For everyone, especially Black voters, not voting for any reason is a slap in the face to all the people who lost their homes, businesses, jobs, and their lives for those of us to be where we are today. The thought of being a Council Member let alone a Mayor never crossed my mind in 1963. I just wanted to be able to go to college on a scholarship. And now, sixty years later I find myself wondering what those four young Black girls who died in the Church bombing would think of the Blacks who are sitting in positions of power

Page 2

and who are able to enforce and implement laws on the books that ensure that all Americans are living their lives in a just society with equal justice under the law for all? Would they be proud of me? I don't believe that they would be proud of any Black who would seek to do unto anyone, especially other Blacks, what was being done to them, their parents, and other Blacks.

On that Sunday in 1963, I made a promise to those four young, murdered girls that I would continue to fight against the hatred and violence that took their lives because Blacks wanted to live under the laws that protected everyone regardless of race or income. Unfortunately, too many Blacks in positions of power have forgotten what it has taken to put them there. I know that the Mayor and Council of East Point has, and I aim to keep reminding them.

When, I decided to run for my old Council seat in Ward C, it was to remind them that no one died so that they could pick and choose which laws they would follow regardless of the violations and who maybe hurt because of their greed and lawlessness. When I called the City Clerk Office to rent the City Annex Auditorium for a Townhall Meeting, I was told that I could not because I was a Candidate for Office. **I immediately said oh no to the hell no! I was not about to become a second-classed citizen in a City with an all-Black Mayor and Council and with a population that is more than 90% Black! I have been fighting against this kind of crap since I was 17 years old, and I will be fighting against it until I die.**

I have been fighting this Mayor and Council ever since they began using taxpayers' money as if it belonged to them, and using the City's public buildings as if they owned them. For instance, the Mayor and several Council Members use the Council Chambers for their own personal pet events when they want to and without any vote of Council. When I asked to use the Council Chamber for a Townhall Meeting I was told that the Council Chamber was not for rent. On tomorrow, CM Lance Robertson will be using the Council Chamber to have a Chat AI Seminar and to add insult to injury, he is going to pay his former "Chief of Staff" \$1,000 for the Seminar using taxpayers' money! Really!!! NO Mayor and Council has ever voted to create any such position. **The Mayor and all Council Member get money in the Budget to pay for them to "communicate with their constituents" not to help a "friend" using taxpayers' money!**

Two weeks ago, CM Robertson had a "Love Thou Neighbor Cookout" in Sumner Park with fewer than forty people present spending \$2,400 for meats, \$1,000 for a Chef, rented transportation to bring a few senior citizens to the park using taxpayers' money. The receipts for this Cookout are up to almost \$6,000. CM Robertson's need to stop spending taxpayers' money loving his neighbors. You can bet your last dollar that I will be making sure that he pays this money back. Why isn't the Mayor and Council, Atty Antavious Weems demanding that he reimburses the City for the checks signed by the should be fired City Manager for signing off on these outrageous expenditures. **Where is the outrage from all the other Candidates running for Office in the November Election?**

On July 15, 2023, CM Josette Bailey used the same City Annex Auditorium for a two-hour meeting with HOAs Presidents and Neighborhood Association Presidents without paying one cent. Now, here I come asking to RENT the Auditorium and I am told “NO” because I am a Candidate for Office. Did I mention that both CM Roberston and Bailey are also Candidates for Office? Well, they are. I have pointed out time and time again to Mayor and Council ,and Atty Weems the following provision in our City Charter and they keep violating the Charter.

Sec. 2-504. Use of public property.

No elected official, appointed officer, or employee of the city or any agency or entity to which this charter applies shall use property owned by such governmental entity for personal benefit, convenience, or profit except in accordance with policies promulgated by the city council or the governing body of such agency or entity.

There is no policy “promulgated” by the City Council that gives the Mayor or any Council Member the right to use the Council Chamber or the Auditorium that is denied to any resident. The City’s Rental Facility Policy does not make a difference between Resident and Elected or Appointed Officials. So, who is allowing these violations and discrimination against me? None other than our esteemed Mayor and Council, and Atty Weems. Am I going to stand for it? HELL NO!

Atty Weems is basing his assertion that Georgia Code forbids any Candidate for Office to rent public meeting spaces, such as the Auditorium because of gratuity concerns. Please note item (2) in the Code:

TI 2010 Georgia Code

TLE 21 - ELECTIONS
CHAPTER 5 - ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT
ARTICLE 2 - CAMPAIGN CONTRIBUTIONS
§ 21-5-30.2 - Contributions by public agencies

(2) "Contribution" means a gift, subscription, membership, loan, forgiveness of debt, advance or deposit of money, or anything of value conveyed or transferred by or on behalf of an agency, **without receipt of payment** therefor, to any campaign committee, political action committee, or political organization or to any **candidate** for campaign purpose

Please look at the highlighted phrase (my highlight). When I pay the rent, I will have a **“receipt of payment”**.

IF the City keeps denying my right to rent the Auditorium, I will have no choice but to file for an EMERGENCY COURT INJUNCTION”. I will do so because of a promise that I made on a Sunday sixty years ago to four Black girls.