

Mr. Helfenberger,

It is with great regret that I must tender my resignation. Coming to work for the City of Lake City, my home town for the past fifty some odd years was a great honor for me and I took the job with zeal. I was hopeful that I could do well in this position and was looking forward to the challenges that lie ahead. As you know I prayed on this offer and against advice from many, accepted the position. Unfortunately, I was not aware of pitfalls that are associated with working for the City of Lake City.

I was not prepared for the aggressive behavior of some of the departments I was assigned. Known to me now as the Utilities Mafia, I have come to understand that this is a very strong group and, although they would say otherwise, are not loyal to the City of Lake City, but rather to Paul Dyal, the Executive Director of Utilities. After numerous city and county meetings I have seen why this group, of clique, is called the Utilities Mafia. This select group of directors huddle in the back of the rooms. They listen closely for any misstep, whether by myself, Mr. Helfenberger or the council / commission members to use to their advantage. Numerous times I had been warned of Mr. Dyal and his efforts to derail anyone in this position or anyone who would like to build a working relationship with our County counterparts. Although I had heard this and was warned, I tried to build a relationship with him as a team. Mr. Dyal disapproved of my input and my presence and made no effort to hide this. I consider Mr. Dyal to be the master puppeteer and a manipulator of those working for him. I asked about his back (not specifics, but rather how are you feeling type questions) in an effort to build rapport and trust between us, after he told me he had hurt it and was having an issue getting around. I found out later that he reported me to HR for asking about his back, even though he had regularly missed tours of the facilities because he indicated his back was "bad" and he couldn't walk around. His reasoning, although I had never indicated this to him at all, was that he felt I was threatening his job because of his back issue. He also made a comment to HR after I mentioned that my son-in-law was of mixed race. This comment was not made in a bad way at all, but Mr. Dyal said it made him "uncomfortable" because he had grandchildren. Since then, he has leaked this to the so-called media and has used this to attempt to ruin my name in Lake City. He has worked with this media person to request public information requests and has made sure that these requests are in

a time and fashion he has designed. This goes to show that Mr. Dyal is a man of very little integrity

It is only since I have begun working for the City of Lake City and with our county counterparts, that I have come to realize that if there was one person responsible for the ill feelings between them it would have to be Paul Dyal. At every turn I have been informed that Mr. Dyal was the person making the choice to not supply water to the Ellisville exchange and who has had issues with working with Fort White to resolve their water problems. How is that one man has so much power? I thought these were decisions made by the City Council. I have been told repeatedly that Mr. Dyal has issues with Glen Hunter, the County Economic Development Director, and with Chad Williams, the County Engineer. I have been told numerous times that Mr. Dyal was instrumental in running off the last two City of Lake City Assistant Managers, and now this one, as well as making life so difficult for the previous Executive Director of Utilities, that he requested to be moved to City Hall as the Safety Director. I have been told many times that Mr. Dyal is adamant in his refusal to support growth in the city or in the county. Mr. Dyal may be liked at the City of Lake City utility director / customer service director level, but from this seat it seems that is the only area he has support. I know that Mr. Dyal has approached you several times about resigning if he was not reassigned to serve under you. Although you have come close several times to doing this, you did not. I still feel strongly that Mr. Dyal is hopeful that you will change your mind and reassign him so that he may become lost in the weeds because you are too busy to track his whereabouts or work progress.

I would also like to weigh in on the City of Lake City's Public Works Director, Thomas Henry. Mr. Henry threatened to quit the second week I was with the City; stating he had made phone calls to GRU and found out I was a "micromanager". Not surprising to me was the fact that Stool Licker posted this exact comment in his blog the very next week; although he had never spoken to me or anyone from GRU. Mr. Henry's constant whining is well known, both with the City and the County. It seems every time Mr. Henry is assigned a new manager; he becomes aggressive or spends more time in the City Manager's office complaining than at his assigned area. I have come to understand that if a job is difficult at all, Mr. Henry does not want to do this work. It is only when something seems to be in his "wheelhouse" or something he wants to do,

that he is engaged. An example is the ditch along SR 100 that is constantly backing up, near AD Farmer's home. Although I have instructed him to work to investigate why this is backing up, he fails to do so. Mr. Henry has obtained permission from the land owner across the street where the suspected blockage is at, but has failed to set up at a time to send personnel in to determine where the issue is at. It is my belief that he will never find the blockage, because he has no interest to and this is not something he "feels" like doing. But if it is something, say like the Young's Park basketball courts, then Thomas is on it as fast as possible; even if this means he foregoes other projects.

Another issue I have with Mr. Henry is his total and complete disregard for the safety of his employees. After listening to Mr. Henry at several meetings, it has become clear that he has no desire to do anything new, regardless of whether it could save a person's life or not. A prime example is the use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED). I have asked each department to determine whether an AED was at their site; all said no. When I informed Mr. Henry that we would be purchasing them in the near future and installing them at each site his comment was "these things aren't ever going to be used. I've told my people that if I have a heart attack to not touch me and if they have one, I won't touch them either. Just call 911 and wait on them. I've had two heart attacks and didn't need one." Even after I informed Mr. Henry that individuals experiencing a heart attack have an 80% increase in survivability if they receive aid from an AED, he did not change his mind.

Another example occurred recently. One of Mr. Henry's employees was injured on the job. Mr. Henry participated in the Event Causal / Root Cause Analysis following this accident. It was during this meeting that a recommendation was made to install / place nearby a boot brush allowing employees to clean their boots off before attempting to step onto a trailer and to install a handle on the trailer to give hand support when attempting to step onto a trailer. Later that afternoon, after the meeting was over, Mr. Henry indicated that he had spoken with FDOT about these recommendations and agreed that, according to Mr. Henry, that these ideas were "stupid". Mr. Henry commented that someone slipped getting onto a trailer about every five years and that it would happen again; it's just part of life. I strongly disagree with this and do not feel that it should happen every five years or ever again, if we can mitigate it.

I would like to discuss the grievances filed against me for a moment. Not only was a grievance filed against me for attacking Christians and people who are struggling with weight issues, but in addition to this a grievance was filed upon the delivery of a cake to the Utilities group to celebrate 200 safe work days. This grievance was filed because the person was diabetic. Seriously? So, because this person is diabetic, I am supposed to make special arrangements for him. This is ludicrous! Especially since the cake and cupcakes were paid partially out of my pocket. Add to this I took time out of my day to not only deliver them, but also thanked the employees at the Utility Annex, the airport, at Public Works, Growth Management, and IT. It seems the only employees who have had an issue with this are the ones who are attempting to railroad me out of town.

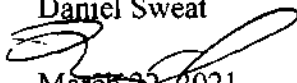
I would also like to point out the way City Council meetings have become since my time with the City of Lake City. Where does it say that citizens are allowed to bully and harass employees of the City of Lake City? Being an employee with the City of Lake City does not mean you are open game for everyone to take pot shots at. Nor does it say anywhere that we have to put up with a Mayor who seems to be oblivious to what is going on around him or chooses to let citizens devolve into animals! I take offense to the way they treated Mr. Jefferson and feel that someone should have intervened in his defense. Allowing them to attack him and afterwards Chief Gilmore is not how these meetings are supposed to be run. Now add to this the little Hobbit, Stool Licker, running around during the Council meetings; interfering with everyone's ability to concentrate on what is being said and placing himself between the Council and those in the audience. Why is this man allowed to roam unabated throughout the meeting? Who in their right mind would allow someone to step behind the City Council dais while in session? I cannot express how dangerous this could be if he decided to do something terrible. It is up to the Council members to stop this and put Stool in his place. If Stool feels led to inject himself into the conversation, then Stool has chosen to step down from his role as a "Press" member and should be treated as such. Showing up to meetings late should be an embarrassment to a person. Stool on the other hand wears this as a badge of honor and does not seem to mind that he is disrupting the entire meeting with his movements.

I would like to thank those employees though that have made my short time with the City of Lake City a good experience. Ms. Sikes is a gem for this city and I for one am glad she received

her long overdue increase in pay. I think she has languished in the back for some time without being compensated. I would like to express my thanks to the men working at the airport, both present and past, who have been so kind to me and aided me during my learning curve. To the individuals working at Distribution and Collections and those with waste water I would like to express my thanks for your hard work and dedication to your job. I have seen how hard you work and how much pride you take in a job well done. I would like to say thank you to Terry Phillips as well for her kindness and support for me, as she has first hand seen the issues I have had to deal with since I came to this position. She does a wonderful job in all that she touches and should be commended for her hard work. I would like to say thank you to the IT department who does a wonderful job in all aspects and works to ensure the security of the City's assets.

Finally, I would like to say thank you for this opportunity, but I am afraid this is not a good fit. The good people with the City of Lake City are far outweighed by the bad personnel who are in charge. Maybe at another time and culture I could have been successful in this role, but with the way it is now, there is no way. I wish you luck with your time at the City of Lake City and hope you are able to withstand the onslaught after I leave.

Daniel Sweat



March 22, 2021