

OP GRAND

Tuesday, 22 November 2005

EXHIBIT No. 284
Cheney CLERK

Cr Ted Shepherd
Gold Coast City Council
Nerang Chambers

Delivered by Hand

Hi Ted

I'm writing in relation to the comments attributed to me in Cr Young's dossier and to apologise for not having raised this matter with you sooner.

I only became aware the week before last on reviewing the Cr Peter Young's dossier and the CMC's record of interview with him that references been made of me in relation to your campaign fund raising event at Woodchoppers Inn earlier this year.

I do not deny expressing concern about the alleged success of your campaign function in what were passing comments to Councillors Sarroff and Young. I now understand that there was a substantial difference between it's rumoured success and reality.

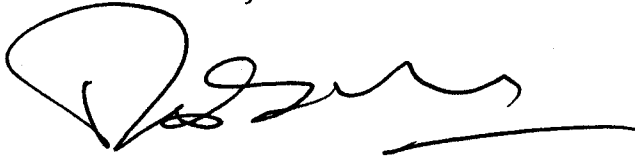
I was surprised to discover that Cr Young may have relied on my unsubstantiated comments as evidence in his dossier to the CMC. In regard to Councillor Young's statements I wish to clarify the following points:

1. I have never had a formal conversation with Councillor Young about your function.
2. I have never knowingly spoken with any guest or guests at the function or for that matter any developers who may have been in attendance.
3. A day or two after your function the office was buzzing with gossip about it, there was a lot of speculation about it's success, the information I had was only ever based on Chinese whispers among Council Officer's around the Bundall Chamber Building at best.
4. On the day I heard the first of these rumours Councillor Sarroff invited me into his office for a chat, he expressed concern over the tension in Council, he said something like it's not nice coming in here at the moment, inquired as to how I was handling the environment and expressed the desire to see things settle down. I expressed similar views about Council life not being quite what I expected. We also spoke about the rumours related to your function. It would be fair to say we were both a little concerned about the alleged success of the event and shared the view it was difficult to believe so much could have been raised.

5. Several days later Councillor Sarroff approached me to ask if I had been able to substantiate any of the information regarding the function. I indicated that I had not spoken to anyone directly involved but believed there may be some substance to the rumours but had no evidence to substantiate the information. The information I had was based only on office scuttlebutt and rumours. At no time did Cr Sarroff suggest he was seeking to verify the information on behalf of Cr. Young or that it was to be the basis of any submission to the CMC. It was nothing more than a fleeting inquiry as we passed each other on the balcony in the Civic Focus Building outside his office. Had he been clear about his motivation in seeking to clarify the information I would have cautioned him about its legitimacy. I may have indicated I was trying to get a copy or had received a copy of the invitation.
6. I did make a passing unsubstantiated comment to Councillor Young during debate in a Council meeting when he made some aside about you. I think you may have had the floor in the meeting and where in the midst of debating a planning issue. I said something like, I hear you had raised somewhere in the order of \$50,000 and rumour had it \$30,000 came from a single donor or auction item.
7. I am concerned that Cr Young seems to be suggesting I am the person who "*reliably advised*" him as this would be an exaggeration of the passing comment made by myself to him during Council.
8. I did manage to obtain a copy of the invitation a week or two after the function from a Council Officer and attached a copy to my submission to the CMC.

If Councillors Young or Sarroff have relied only on my conversations with them in regard to this matter then I am sincerely sorry. This issue like so many others that do the rounds of Council was in my mind nothing more than another rumour enjoying a moment or two in the sun. When I first read about the action between you and Cr Young over the allegations in the Gold Coast Bulletin I assumed he must have some reliable information or done significant research on the function.

Yours sincerely



Cr Rob Molhoek
Division 4 - Gold Coast City Council