

OP GRAND

EXHIBIT No. 137
de Koning CLERK

Queensland Crime & Misconduct Commission

Notice No: 05 -0091

File Ref: MI -05-2481 & 2482

Re: GCCC 2004 Local Body Elections

Quadrant

Correspondence File for

Lionel Barden

Chris Morgan

From: Chris Morgan
Sent: Monday, 15 March 2004 5:58 PM
To: Lionel Barden (lionel@innovationshowcase.net)
Cc: bray@raygroup.com.au; Cr David Power (davles@optusnet.com.au)
Subject: FW: THE LIONEL BARDEN CAMPAIGN FUND - ATTENTION MR CHRIS MORGAN

Hi Lionel,

Need you assistance once more please. Could you please drop Tony a line as he has requested below. I'd suggest that the initial amount should be \$45,000 with the balance to follow as it becomes available. There are still further contributions to come as discussed with Brian and David to cover the balance of planned expenditure.

As clearly indicated on all statements and invoices that you signed off on last week, all costs have been incurred by Quadrant to whom the cheque(s) should be made payable. If you could forward a fax to him with hard copy to follow we'd be most obliged.

For the record we will be providing each candidate with copies of all their accounts required to allow them to complete their post election declarations to the Returning Officer.

Re the Booth Captains night next week - I've had a positive response. How does next Wednesday at Lakelands Golf Club from say 5.30 through 7.30pm suit you? If OK I'll set it up tomorrow and distribute the invites through the candidates. I have some hard copy pointers for booth workers which I can bring along as well.

Regards

Chris M.

-----Original Message-----

From: Kelly Standing
Sent: Monday, 15 March 2004 4:13 PM
To: Chris Morgan
Subject: FW: THE LIONEL BARDEN CAMPAIGN FUND - ATTENTION MR CHRIS MORGAN

-----Original Message-----

From: Sandra Wild [mailto:WildS@hickeylawyers.com.au] On Behalf Of Anthony William Hickey
Sent: Monday, 15 March 2004 3:56 PM
To: Kelly Standing
Cc: 'BRIAN RAY (bray@raygroup.com.au)'; 'dgates@goldcoast.qld.gov.au'
Subject: THE LIONEL BARDEN CAMPAIGN FUND - ATTENTION MR CHRIS MORGAN

Chris,

I have received your invoices which total \$60,248.71.

Could you please confirm that our calculation is correct.

At this moment we have in trust \$45,300.00 (including a donation from Villa World received today).

I need a clear authority signed by Lionel Barden as to what should be paid. This should be done by a simple letter referring to a total amount of funds and authorised payment to the relevant party.

Regards
Tony Hickey

15 March 2004

Chris Morgan

From: Chris Morgan
Sent: Friday, 26 March 2004 12:19 PM
To: Lionel Barden (lionel@innovationshowcase.net)
Subject: Payment Authority
Contacts: Lionel Barden

Hi Lionel,

Attached is a draft letter of authority to Tony Hickey to draw on funds for current work in progress. If you could fax it through to him today with hard copy to follow, it would be greatly appreciated.

There are still contributions to come to cover the remainder of expenses and I'll provide you with a complete summary of expenditure and receipts per candidate next week.

Look forward to reading your letter.

Regards

Chris M.

Lionel Barden letterhead

26 March 2004

Mr A Hickey
Hickey Lawyers
Level 6. Corporate Centre
Cnr Bundall & Slatyer Sts
BUNDALL Q 4217

Per fax: 07 5574 1130

Dear Tony,

Re: The Lionel Barden Trust

Please make available for collection, a cheque to the value of \$20,000 payable to Quadrant for work in progress.

Chris Morgan of Quadrant will make arrangements for collection immediately it is available. Could your office please advise him accordingly on 5578 9433.

Thank you.

Kind regards

Lionel Barden

Letter to the Editor

Att. Bob.Gordon

26th March 2004

Bob, please note I am sad that I had to write this letter. I am dissapointed in your paper's representation of the facts over the last few days.

Hilights:

You wrote I have been "identified as the unofficial chairman" of the "power block"
Not true - I am not official or unofficial chairman of any group of people and I told your reporter that. I have met with some candidates only once a few days ago in the capacity of a consultant. You wrote "On Wednesday he denied involvement in the fund saying I promise on my heart, cross my heart I have not."

Not true - The " I promise on my heart" expression was in answer to a question regarding a meeting with Brian Ray to which I answered honestly that I had not met Brian in probably four years

On Wednesday I answered all questions put to me honestly.

The Facts.

Back on Friday the 26th December your newspaper ran a front page article on a "power block" made up of Wayne Skuthorpe, Don Magin, Guy Jones, Linda Browne Irene Wareing Dr. Karen Coates supported by Peter Young and Dawn Critchlow.

Many members of the Combined Chamber of Commerce of which I was one were worried about their policies and the impact on the future direction of the Gold Coast if they were successful. We discussed at a number of Combined Chamber meetings our involvement in the upcoming Council elections to counter what appeared to be a well funded political machine.

In December I retired from the Robina Chamber Presidency as my business interests were all now at Coolangatta. I had no further involvement in the Combined Chamber decisions.

Once the campaign commenced I was invited to a number of meet-the-candidates meetings. I was personally still worried regarding a radical group of candidates and their association with certain incumbents.

I was approached by a number of my former colleagues and friends to put my name to a Trust to which people from a broad business spectrum could donate to support a counter group of like minded candidates who united would make positive and cohesive decisions for the good of the City.

I was asked because :

- 1) My involvement in the Cities economic development strategies
- 2) My support for Council and the City in representation including the Melbourne-Sydney and the two Canberra trips.
- 3) My business cannot gain from Council decisions even being outside of Council bylaws on Gold Coast Airport property.
- 4) I no longer represented any business group
- 5) I made no personal investment

I was seen to be neutral.

The Trust fund which your paper provocatively called a slush fund was put in place **to diffuse direct donations to candidates, negating the opportunity of implication and influence later. The candidates were not aware of donation sources and the donors had no direct access to candidates**

Even I do not know the amount of dollars received until after the election when I sign off on the Trust books for exposure in line with legislation. I do not sign the cheques.

All of the monies are handled by a legal firm and distributed against invoices submitted by professional and commercial companies involved in the production of printing and media etc.

There are no slush funds provided to any candidate and this implication that I would be involved in such activity I take as a personal slur.

Your editorial asks "Why the secrecy". Well if you had not named two of the people providing donations the candidates would not know the source of funds. (Not even I know all the donors) We wished to keep the funding mechanism as clean as possible to reduce the opportunity of influence. This is still our policy yet we still stand accused.

When we provided this information in detail yesterday your paper decided not to print any of the explanation but only to imply through provocative language and untruths some sinister backroom plotting by so called "developers" some councillors and myself.

All this and not one word for the duration of the campaign on the other **secret** power block, also it would appear, well funded . But today your paper donates the whole of page seven to the majority of these people to decry and insult our group.

I have many friends who work at the Bulletin and have campaigned alongside the newspaper on many occasions. I have always defended the Bulletin even when colleagues have considered there was one sided reporting. I am sorry that I needed to write this letter when we should be working together but your reporting on this occasion is incorrect and unfair.

Best Regards,

Lionel Barden

Chris Morgan

From: Chris Morgan [chrismorgan@austarnet.com.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 20 October 2004 8:06 AM
To: Chris Morgan
Subject: FW: Alice Gorman nominated for "Coverage of Suburban & Regional Affairs"

From: Chris Morgan [mailto:chrismorgan@austarnet.com.au]
Sent: Wednesday, 20 October 2004 8:05 AM
To: 'jane.worthington@walkleys.com'
Subject: Alice Gorman nominated for "Coverage of Suburban & Regional Affairs"

Dear Jane,

The awarding of a Walkley to Alice Gorman for her coverage in the Gold Coast Bulletin of the so called "Bloc in Council" would be akin to applauding extreme political bias in favour of objectivity, naive misreporting in favour of fact and invention in favour of accuracy.

If the status of the Walkleys is to be maintained and enhanced in its "recognition of excellence" among Australian journalists then Alice Gorman has absolutely nothing to offer in support.

From the outset of the March 2004 local body election campaign on the Gold Coast, it was obvious that Bob Gordon Editor, had thrown his support behind the incumbent Mayor and specifically 3 councilors (viz. Crs Critchlow, Young & Sarroff) who had enjoyed constant gratuitous exposure in the GC Bulletin.

It was also equally obvious that Alice Gorman (nee Jones) as Council Reporter had been given an equally clear brief to support this group. This she did with alacrity.

As the election campaign unfolded it became apparent that an anonymous group had established a trust fund to support the campaign efforts of a group of 'like minded candidates'. Primary purpose being to achieve some degree of rational debate, consensus and positive decision making within Council – something that was conspicuous by its absence from the previous four years. The trust fund supported candidates that had no party political affiliations or affiliation with the group of three councilors mentioned above and in some cases supported opposing candidates.

Alice Gorman threw objectivity and balance out the window and went to work like "the pit bull terrier" as she was once described. Her reporting vilified, denigrated, ridiculed, and sought to destroy reputations of all and any associated with the so called 'voting bloc'. That no favour had ever been sought or implied by the trust, that the whole purpose of anonymity was to ensure such an outcome, was totally lost on this reporter in pursuit of "excellence in journalism".

I can personally testify to the degree of anonymity maintained and the manner in which funding was dispersed to ensure that candidates were totally ignorant of the source of donors.

Gorman totally lost the support and respect of the majority of Councillors both prior to and following, the election outcome. In an almost petulant fashion she then proceeded to ridicule the new council with a series of satirical articles, so called.

Repeated calls were made under her by line for an administrator to be appointed to council, she regularly reported on the calls by unsuccessful candidates and her favorite three for a CJC enquiry into the conduct of the elections.

On all these issues the State Government minister has indicated that there is no case to answer, and suggested that the complainants get on with the job they were elected to do.

It would now seem as a consequence, that at last the abortive character assassination attempt by Bob Gordon and Alice Gorman specifically, seems to have been put to rest. It represents a sordid period in Gold Coast journalism that did nothing to enhance the reputation of the Gold Coast, the GC Bulletin and the

reputations of the many other fine journalists who work there.

The issue is not dead as the other 'half of the story' not reported by Alice Gorman, has yet to be addressed. It would however be a travesty to see this individual applauded 'for excellence' when there must obviously be many other deserving candidates who have been able to demonstrate integrity amongst other attributes.

Kind regards

Chris Morgan

PO Box 716
Mudgeeraba Qld 4213

chrismorgan@austarnet.com.au