

July 11, 2002

7/11/02
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submitted by
Vernon Hayes

To: The Honorable City Commission
City Manager
Equal Opportunity Director

On May 14, 2002, my Recreational Manager, Jeff Moffit, called a meeting to talk with the Recreation Maintenance Crew about the City's intentions to contract our jobs to an outside cleaning service. Mr. Moffit told me and my co-workers that the budget has hit rock bottom and the department cannot function unless he cuts either Athletics or Maintenance staff. By October 1, 2002, before the new budget comes out, he wanted us to do a lateral transfer over to Parks and Grounds. He stated that he had discussed the matter with the City Manager who signed off on it without the City Commission's consent. Mr. Moffit assured us that he would not do this unless we had jobs to go into.

Mr. Moffit gave us a week to make up our minds because two positions were coming open in Parks and Grounds, and he could place two of us in those positions (there were three of us that needed to be placed). I asked him about the Maintenance II position that was posted on the City of Gainesville employment opportunity board for GRU. When I asked if a lateral transfer could be done into that position, Mr. Moffit said I would have to fill out an application for that position. He explained that he could only do a lateral with Parks because it was within the same division.

I wanted a fresh start and I knew I was not liked very well in the Recreation Department. When I found out from Brian Shea that the two positions were with Ed Sams, I felt threatened for my job, so I went to Public Works and talked to Bob Stone. I explained the matter to Mr. Stone. He talked with Mr. Moffit and they transferred me laterally into the Parks division.

Recently, I have heard from my co-workers who remain in the Recreation Department that proper procedures were not used to end or contract our jobs to an outside service. On Monday, June 17, 2002, I worked four days out of the week, ten hours each day. I went to see Mr. Moffit to ask if he could put it in writing about contracting my job to a private cleaning service. Mr. Moffit then told me that he would have to find out if that is proper procedure, and that he had never thought about it. He said he would check into it and Personnel would get a letter to me. It was later that I found out the City Commission would be having a Hearing about the matter on July 11, 2002, and that the City Manager cannot sign off on this incident.

I am very concerned about the way my job was threatened and the fact that proper notice and consideration was not given to me or my co-workers in this incident. I believe this is just one more example of the unfair practices and racial discrimination that unfortunately exist within the Recreation Department. Although I have decided to stay in the position I have transferred to in Public Works, I felt compelled to take this opportunity to bring this concern to your attention. It is time that something is done to eliminate the corruption and discrimination that exists in the

Recreation Department. Listed below are some of my most critical concerns:

1. Lack of integration within the department; minorities being increasingly replaced (causing some black employees feel they are under a constant threat of losing their jobs)
2. Unequal treatment of staff by management. Some employees being openly favored over others.
3. There continues to be a lack of communication between management and the rest of the staff.
4. Inefficiency due to incompetency and poor leadership
5. Low employee morale in the department
6. Management's inability to deal with situations before they become a problem
7. The need for a black administrator within the department
8. Lack of funding availability
9. Management changing department policies without getting input from staff who will be effected
10. Promotions not made within the department, but outside personnel being hired instead

I know the City Commission is the governing body for the City of Gainesville. This is why I have presented these concerns for your review and consideration. It is my hope that you, along with the City Manager and other appropriate staff, will address these issues with the Recreation Department.

On behalf of the employees that are counting on your help, I thank you.

Humbly submitted,

Vernon Hayes