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~~Wade W. Matt~~  
12/1/11 Gabriel Hillel  
City  
Commit

# Looking Ahead \_\_ The Next Mayor of Gainesville, FL

## Public Records Act Request—(This will not be addressed orally.

This request is made on Dec. 1, 2011. It is being hand-delivered to the City Clerk or his agent, at the Gainesville City Commission meeting on this date. I seek to inspect, pursuant to the Florida Constitution, and the Florida Public Records Act, all documents within the City's care, custody, and control, about the three subject areas listed below. I can be reached for notification of opportunity to inspect during normal business hours, at [gabrielhillel@gmail.com](mailto:gabrielhillel@gmail.com); (352)-375-2670 (answering machine when not busy answered by Susan), or mail at Gabriel Hillel, 4411 S.W.34<sup>th</sup> St., #1305, Gainesville, FL 32608).

This request is intended to include any document,

recorded in writing or orally,

including but not limited to print, audio, video, computer transmissions, billing records, invoices,

which are not specifically exempt from disclosure by law,

about the following:

1. City claims of ownership, agreement, trademark, loan, gift, or any other form of property right, for a 20"x30" framed logo for Butterfly City which displayed outside of the first floor auditorium at City Hall.
2. Contract agreements only with lawyers or law firms outside of Gainesville, Florida, since the current Mayor first was elected to the Commission.
3. The authorization and reauthorization(s), if any, for the hiring of the City Attorney, first as an assistant, then in his current capacity.

Thank you in advance for the consideration I trust you will give this.

Good evening, Mister Mayor, Commissioners, Charter Officers, Members of the Public, and other presents on December 1, 2011. Tonight, I am again informing you that Gabriel Hillel will be seeking election as the next mayor of Gainesville, Florida, in 2013. Why will I run if I can? The least a mayor and other public officials must do is acknowledge the truths behind actions they take, instead of inventing explanations which count on the rest of us having dim memories or comparable interest in creating myths.

What am I talking about? This year, in 2011, we have learned that of all the communities in the nation, or perhaps just those with more than populations of 100,000, Gainesville has the fifth greatest disparity in income, and presumably in wealth. Anyone who knows this town is aware that the disparity also is evident along geographic and racial lines, between poor East Gainesville and the affluent areas in most other sections of the City. Why does that disparity exist? One absurd suggestion made on TV by a City official who should know better was the placement of I-75 to the west of Gainesville. Follow I-75 to Orlando where it goes through the heart of town and a similar disparity will be found between the poor black sections there on one side of the road and affluent sections on the other.

The real insult to our intelligence came as usual through the only daily newspaper in town. But it echoed in the selective listening of our Commission toward the pleas of a few who need to take buses to get to work or shop.

Perhaps, City officials believe no one works on Fridays any more, certainly not after Thanksgiving apparently. RTS spokesman Chip Skinner said the decision to stop services on Black Friday and Christmas Eve, in addition to the holidays, was based on a need to save money and the relative lack of demand for service on those days. Between 2000 and 2009, an average of 5,432 riders rode RTS buses on Black Friday, compared with between 45,000 and 50,000 on a normal Friday, Skinner said. Between 2001 and 2009, an average of 3,896 riders rode on Christmas Eve. Cutting bus service on those two days saves RTS \$54,000 a year, Skinner said. In the comparable cities of Athens, Ga., and Tallahassee, abbreviated bus schedules will be in operation Friday. Calling the closures "unfair," City Commissioner Scherwin Henry said he was frustrated by the decision to cut service on Black Friday and Christmas Eve and said he hopes his colleagues will find a solution in budget discussions next year, when he already will have left the commission." Where was Commissioner Henry during those budget discussions this year, when there was a surplus. Again the Sun enlightens us:

Commissioners voted to spend all of \$194,546 on a host of programs — from \$84,089 for a website upgrade to \$20,857 to hire, with additional grant money, two police officers to patrol downtown....The 2012 surplus of \$194,546 could have also been saved, but commissioners felt there were various needs that had to be addressed and programs that had to be funded. In addition to the website and the police officers, commissioners also agreed to spend: \$29,400 on two separate nonprofit programs that deal with early childhood education; \$5,200 on a pilot program to reserve beds at St. Francis House for homeless people recovering after hospital visits; \$15,000 for the Florida Community Design Center, a nonprofit that promotes "good design" in urban planning; and \$40,000 for a temporary employee for the city's Equal Opportunity Office. But the City could not afford \$54,000 so more than 5,000 people could use public transportation.

As for Christmas Eve, I hope Tiny Tim and his dad Bob Cratchit are listening. If they need to get to a hospital or work, they better ask Ebenezer Scrooge to send around the limo.

It should be noted that the City budget, which included 2 percent raises for city employees while maintaining the property tax and fire service assessment rates, will be adopted on July 20 and finalized in September, before the 2012 fiscal year starts on Oct. 1.

The hypocrisy of current City pronouncements and actions has to change. Such hypocrisy is most evident in this holiday season, in the failure to maintain Rapid Transit System bus schedules throughout the calendar year, so that people can get to work, or to participate in Black Friday, like those of us who can afford to drive our own cars, or maintain the youthful enthusiasm for bikes. Indeed, City officials often remind us how public transportation is to be preferred locally.

In the coming months, I will try to inform you how the present Charter Officer form of government is an insult to democracy imposed during the heyday of racial segregation and Jim Crow laws in Florida and Gainesville. This information will be available at a [www.firstbutterflycity.wordpress.com](http://www.firstbutterflycity.wordpress.com), website currently under construction.