

PRESS RELEASE
DATE: Dec. 3, 2011

SUBJECT: **Fraud by Johnson Co. library continues in phony “centennial”**

Contact: Gary W. Moody (Concerned Citizens of Johnson County), Franklin IN

Summary:

Officials of the JOHNSON COUNTY (Indiana) PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT have proclaimed Monday, Dec. 5 to be the district's “100th birthday”, although county and state documents show that the library district was actually created in 1977!

Background:

Beverly Martin was hired as Director of the JCPL district in 1987. In July 2004, Martin appeared before the City of Franklin Common Council (City Council), seeking approval of a property tax increase for the library district, an increase which paved the way for the issuance of bonds used to fund the construction of the Trafalgar branch. In explaining why the approval was being sought from Franklin officials instead of the Johnson County Council, Martin expressed confusion about the history of the library district, and thus how the statutes on property taxes applied to the situation. Her statements amounted to lies about both the district's history and the law, and the City Council was suckered into approving JCPL's property tax increase – an action which was not legal, as only the County Council could have done that. The district's bond counsel was Ice Miller, and the bond broker was H.J. Umbaugh & Associates.

Martin struck again in 2009, this time accompanied by other library officials, JCPL district attorney Brian J. Deppe, and a representative of Umbaugh. This time, Martin & company actually “shopped around” for approval of a \$2 million dollar bond issue to fund preliminary stages (we also call this “serial bonding”) of a push to build a huge “Taj Mahal” main library in downtown Franklin. (Which would also be funded with bonds, which would trigger a referendum on the issue, and the district is planning that for the May 2010 election.)

Martin & her fraud posse bounced around between the city and county bodies in a series of three meetings in August 2009, starting with the Franklin City Council. BJ Deppe gave a rambling and seemingly befuddled account of why they were there, and why they were still confused about the library district's history, whether the district was a “city” or “county” district, and how the bond statutes applied to the situation. And said that they were also going to the County Council “in an excess of caution.” A week later the Martin roadshow appeared before the County Council, and the same “song and dance” was given by Deppe, with some claims of confusion added by Martin. This body showed more curiosity and concern for taxpayers, however, so Martin asked that the matter be tabled and promised to return.

The following week, however, Martin's circus pitched its tent at the City Council again. Deppe proclaimed that, by golly, they'd just discovered that JCPL, despite its name, “is a city library” district after all, and that the City Council could approve the \$2 million bond issue. Which our ever-compliant council did, unanimously. Again, Ice Miller and Umbaugh foisted the bonds. Among the expenditures from that pile of boodle was the hiring of former **Daily Journal** editor and publisher **Jeffrey Owen**, a.k.a. “J Owen Media LLC”, as the district's “PR” strategist and lobbyist for the main library campaign – thus ensuring the newspaper's participation in the campaign, and ongoing coverup of the securities fraud and tax scandals.

A key part of the fraud, which was devised by **Ice Miller**, is the claim that the founding of the Franklin Public Library in 1911 was the “origin” of the county district, a lie to get around the language of the 2009 statute on the issuance of bonds by library districts, which specified that only our County Council had the authority to approve JCPL's bond issue. In fact, the history shows that in 1967 the County Commissioners formed a “contractual” library district for those areas of the county (outside of Franklin, Edinburgh, and Greenwood) which were not then in a library district. These rural areas were served by the old county bookmobile, which borrowed books from the city library districts.

In 1977, the trustees of the Franklin library district, and the county contractual district, met and issued separate but essentially identical resolutions (as the law specified), both agreeing to “dissolve” their respective districts, and form a “new county library district” as of “April 2, 1977.” Therefore, the Johnson County Public Library District is now THIRTY-FOUR YEARS OLD, not 100! And, please note that a trustee of both of the old districts, a signatory to BOTH resolutions, was none other than JCPL's smooth-talkin' attorney BRIAN J. DEPPE!

THE DOCUMENTS: <http://home.comcast.net/~garyx56/history1.pdf> – the resolutions are also at the State Library.

THE STORY: <http://www.ccjcin.org/library.htm>