

U.S. District Court
Eastern District of Louisiana
The Honorable Lance M. Africk
500 Poydras St.
N.O., LA 70130

Re: City of New Orleans and OPSO Consent Decree

Dear Judge Africk:

I am writing to you concerning the proposed consent decree between the City of New Orleans and the Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office. I hope that the information that I provide to you will make a difference in the outcome of this matter. Before I begin I just want to make clear that I am not an advocate for the City or the OPSO. A lot of what I discuss is probably things you may have heard in the media or read in the attached documents that I have provided. There are things happening in other courtrooms at 500 Poydras St. that are reasons why the OPSO is in the financial condition that it is in and the reason why the City of NO may have to bear the burden of their losses.

First let me start by saying that the City of NO is partly to blame for this situation because they allowed the OPSO, formerly the Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff's Office to have and maintain its own budget 30 plus years ago and allow this entity to go on its own and basically fund an operation with no say so on how their funds were spent.? And that also includes the LA Department of Corrections and the US Marshall's service whose has funded millions of dollars every year with no say so on this entity's "purchasing practices". From high, unreasonable no bid professional service contracts to rigged bidding on basic maintenance work, office supply contracts ,etc. As you will gather from the documents I have provided to the details that I will discuss, that entity has really never had anyone looking over its shoulder to make sure that the "taxpayers" best interest was being served.

As you may have heard John Sens, the former Director of Purchasing at the OPSO has pled guilty to conspiracy to commit bribery in rigging of bids on maintenance work at the jail. That position that he held was probably the most powerful position in the whole department even more powerful than the Sheriff himself because he decided on how and who got the money i.e. the business with no help from the City, FEMA, etc who has been funding that operation. The sad part is as this process begins to unfold is that John Sens is not being charged with anything near the amount he actually got from his participation in all of the crooked bid rigging activities at the Sheriff's Office because of his cooperation with Federal authorities. The real truth of the matter is that he had his hands in "numerous" vendors not just maintenance related work a fact that the Department of Justice's own division, the FBI know all about, the truth of the dealings in that department. Which to me the Department of Justice who is one of the ones initiating this consent decree should be talking to one of their own to find out why the City has an argument with regards to more funding of this entity.? The case against Sens is not just about giving contracts to people who knows are friends it is about rigging these contracts

and "blatantly" overstating the costs of these services whether it be A/C work, sheetrock work, etc. Basically, they were able to put almost any dollar amount of invoices created by corrupt vendors and those amounts got paid regardless of the "cost reasonableness" of the particular project. Again, a fact the FBI knows about and Sens and some of these corrupt vendors can also verify. And these schemes were done on the OPSO operation funds, FEMA funds and bond issue funds, all of these sources of revenue were used to funnel millions on rigged, corrupt work/contracts.

For instance, in late 2008 a LED \$63 million dollar bond issue was voted on and passed by the taxpayers of Orleans Parish for construction of new jails and to help fund additional entities rebuilding after Katrina like NO Coroners office, etc. The OPSO used and is using some of these funds to help fund projects that FEMA will not pickup 100% of the cost. One of these buildings at 225 Broad Street is the McDaniels Transitional Work Center. This building had damage after Katrina and was subsequently fixed at the hands of John Sens and Colonel Jerry Hoffman (another co conspirator who has pled guilty). This project cost approximately \$1.5 million dollars in renovations on a building that probably is not worth close to that? And if you ask for the details on which vendors put bids in on to work on this you will see the majority will be Ricky's A/C, Palymra Electrical, K&D Earthworks, all vendors who are under federal investigation and will subsequently be pleading guilty in courtrooms at 500 Poydras Street. Again, this is all facts, that anyone can verify by public records request. All rigged bids, and blatant overstating of basic maintenance work at that particular location. And any reasonable person can go and look at what was done and compare that to a price per sq foot and say something is wrong here? This is just one example of the schemes/games that have been going on in that office since Katrina and before Katrina.. A "forensic audit" is something the OPSO never wanted or wants to have done, ever.

But as I stated earlier, this is not just about maintenance related work, it goes with no bid professional service contracts, supply contracts, etc. I have included two stories from the media which describe exactly these instances. The law firm contract with Usry, Weeks and Matthews which will be defending the OPSO in this matter, amazingly, has received millions in taxpayer monies for years without any real accounting of what exactly they do?? Wouldn't any reasonable person want to have documented at those prices what exactly is being worked on? Wouldn't it make more sense to the taxpayers to have a full time, competent legal staff on salary at the OPSO and cut those fees by probably 60% or more? Or do some of these politicians just want certain vendors to get rich just because they like their work? Or is there something going on behind the scenes that the taxpayers don't find out about until their monies is well out the door? There is also another professional service contract that the OPSO has with Major Services, who makes about \$90k a month, and keep in mind the OPSO has a full time computer department? Again, I'm sure the reason is to just make this vendor millions from taxpayers just because they do good work? Is this having the taxpayer's best interest, the people who fund this entity's best interest? And since these contracts don't have to be put out for public bid, not that bidding matters to the OPSO as we see how they manipulate that process, the entities who fund the OPSO is stuck with the short end of the stick because of the blatant crookedness and mismanagement of public funds. Also, the OPSO has a loan with the LA State Bond Commission because of the blatant mismanagement and corrupt ways of the handling of their funding. Every year this loan

is up for repayment and every year this entity uses some excuse that they cant afford to pay it back. Now the OPSO is hoping again the City of NO can bail them out of this hole as well.

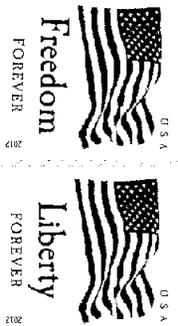
In conclusion your Honor, this all boils down to the fact that the OPSO has never had any "real oversight" on how they spend their funding. There is basically no internal controls when it comes to their purchasing department as we all have read about John Sens and the schemes that they had going on. The sad part about that is he walked into an entity where he saw first hand how easy it was to manipulate the system. And instead of trying to do the right thing and change the mentality around there, he just jumped in with both feet and now will stand before another judge because of his arrogance thinking that they were untouchable. Do I think that there needs to be changes at the OPSO with regards to its conditions, yes. But the City of NO should have the ability to perform its own due diligence on the way the OPSO operates with regards to how they spend the monies that come into their entity from not just the City but from all funding sources. The jail has not enough security, low pay, furloughing administrative staff, poor maintained facilities all because of the way this entity blatantly embezzled and mismanaged their funding since Katrina. More people connected to that entity, employees and vendors, will face justice in the courtrooms on 500 Poydras Street in the near future, hopefully. This is an investigation that should have happened many years ago. But I think it comes to show that people are really just tired of politicians and their henchman robbing the city blind, especially since Hurricane Katrina where many people suffered and are still suffering. I do not know if all these things I have said will make a difference in this case but I really hope that it does. One of the articles I have attached really sums it all up, questions about SMG oversight, I hope you will take time to read it, especially the last two paragraphs. I wish I could come and talk to you in person about this but I cannot reveal who I am at this point but in time I will. Thank you.

Sincerely,

The Taxpayers of New Orleans

CC: Judge Kurt D. Engelhardt
Daryl Purpera, LLA

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