

SMITH COUNTY

CITIZENS FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

News Release

For Immediate Release

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August 27, 2009

THREE STRIKES AND YOU'RE OUT JUST AS PREDICTED-- ANTI-ALCOHOL EFFORTS FUNDED BY LONGVIEW/KILGORE LIQUOR INTERESTS

Since the election in May, what have we learned about the Groups/individuals opposed to the alcohol election----

1. Opposition Treasurer cited for drug paraphernalia in Frisco
2. Alleged Illegal Voting by Former Winona Official in Winona's tied Election
3. And now, Longview, Kilgore and Fort Worth based Liquor Interests contributed over \$35,000 to defeat elections in Smith and Cherokee Counties

Early Warning

On March 30th, the SCCEG Committee held a press conference and tried to warn the citizens of Smith County that liquor stores and alcohol interests outside Smith County were raising monies to defeat the JP 4 and Winona referendums. Repeatedly leaders of Keep Precinct 4 Dry, Rev. Tony Watson and Anwar Khalifa stated time and again they would not take any money or help from liquor/alcohol interests.

Mystery Consultant—Ken Bryan in Longview, Rusk, Paris, Lubbock and Smith County

In 2007, according to an article in the Tyler Morning Telegraph, a Longview minister claimed to have gotten campaign talking points from Austin consultant Ken Bryan, who he claimed was working with businesses opposed to the alcohol election. But campaign finance reports—even to this day, fail to show who was paying Dr. Bryan.

In 2008-09, Dr. Bryan surfaces in Lubbock (paid by D. Workman, the man filing the protest to the TABC against issuing licenses), Paris, Texas (still no report on file), and in Winona when Pastor Tony Watson admits to having met with and received similar "talking points" from Dr. Bryan. Watson admitted that it was Bryan who provided the information he used to claim that Smith County's referendums would bring sexually oriented businesses to Smith County—even though SC already had numerous adult businesses, when the County was completely dry.

This is the same information used by the opposition groups to question the economic impact quoted by the Tyler Morning Telegraph in their editorial against the Propositions, even though former Smith County native and world-renowned Economist Ray Perryman, stated the financial gain would be much greater.

When automated phone calls claiming the Rusk election would bring "package liquor stores" to Rusk, something not possible under the law, the opposition group claimed they were not getting any assistance from liquor groups.

East Texans United

Seven days before early voting began, a group headed by Longview alcohol retailer, Don Talley (leader of the Longview '06 effort, too), filed a campaign treasurer's designation—not in the communities where the elections were being held as is common procedure, but instead used an obscure state law that allows a group involved in more than one effort to file with the State Ethics Commission in Austin. So while most media groups were looking at the local courthouse where the reports are normally filed, this group claims they only started seven days before the voting began and raised more than \$35,000, much of it coming the week of the election, almost twice the amount supposedly raised by the Smith county opposition group. But the mystery remains, where did the money go? According to documents filed with the TEC, the group claims they only spent slightly over \$4,000 and that was to Austin/Victoria Consultant Dr. Ken Bryan.

ETU Top Contributors

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 1. \$12,000 | Majestic Liquor Stores, Fort Worth |
| 2. \$ 7,500 | Tucker's Beverages Inc, Kilgore |
| 3. \$ 5,000 | Talley Oil Company |

We call on the media in Smith County, Longview, Paris, Rusk and Lubbock, to ask the tough questions.

1. Why are these alcohol retailers giving money to “anti-alcohol” groups?
2. Why did they hide their reports in Austin, rather than file the reports in the communities where they were trying to influence the decisions of voters?
3. What is the ***real*** relationship between Anwar Khalifa, Tony Watson and Ken Bryan?
4. Why did Tony Watson not think to ask who was paying this “mystery consultant from Austin/Victoria” who just “showed up in my office one day”?
5. Each Local group claimed they were not taking help/money from outside alcohol interests, yet all received information and help from Austin/Victoria based consultant Ken Bryan who was paid by Longview, Kilgore and Fort Worth Liquor interests? Don't they owe the voters an apology for misleading them?
6. Since each local opposition group campaigned against the pro-group's “outside consultant”, don't they owe an apology to the voters for now taking help from their own “out of town” consultant—Dr. Ken Bryan, who was paid with liquor money?
7. Don't the voters deserve to know who is paying to influence their vote—BEFORE the election?
8. Where did the \$35,000 go, was any of it used to pay people to oppose these elections?
9. Why did Mr. Talley not report paying Ken Bryan in 2007 as required by law?
10. What other communities has Dr. Bryan been paid to oppose alcohol elections?
11. Did Watson and Khalifa know this group was assisting their efforts and that is why they refused to submit their materials in advance to the media for “truth tests” or verification of information? Because providing copies of all materials could show the amount of money spent in direct mail, television and radio exceeded the approximately \$17,000 they claimed to have raised?
12. How can people like Don Talley and Don Workman find “consultants” like Ken Bryan, when the media has yet to find him? Who recommended to these

individuals that Ken Bryan be hired? Did Ken Bryan call them or did they call Bryan?

As we said last March, the voters have a right to know who is paying to influence their vote. Groups who pretend to be concerned about morals or protecting the community when funded or tied to groups or individuals whose only real concern is protecting their pocketbooks is wrong. The media needs to ask the tough questions and the opposition groups need to quit their denials and withholding information the voters have a right to know.

Taken from the March 30, 2009 SCCEG press release.

“These elections rarely fail on facts. But when they do fail, it is usually because of rumor, innuendo and scare tactic. And most of the time, scare tactics funded by companies that already sells alcohol just wanting to stop the competition.”

Timeline of Mystery Consultant Ken Bryan

2007

April 28

TMT Story quoting Ken Bryan as a consultant for Longview opposition

May '07 – April '09

Still no listing of payments to Bryan by Longview opposition committees

2009

April 7

Lubbock Media alerted that Bryan was spotted on plane in Lubbock Airport, local opposition officials finally admit Bryan is working in Lubbock

April 9

Truth About Alcohol Sales Committee (opponents) in Lubbock list Don Workman (person who filed protest halting licenses from being issued in Lubbock) as having paid Bryan \$1700 for research and analysis on their 30-day before election finance report (even though rumors of Bryan's involvement go back to Sept. '08)

April 20

Don Talley creates East Texans United, names Dana Leavitt as Treasurer, begins collecting contributions

April 27

Early Voting Begins

May 1

Ft. Worth, Longview, Kilgore and Big Sandy liquor stores report giving \$16,500 to East Texans United to oppose elections in Smith, Gregg (even though no election

is taking place) and Rusk (Cherokee)

May 6

Paris News story quoting opposition leader for Citizens Against Alcohol that he intended to pay Bryan. According to the story, Bryan “spoke to several groups in Paris, including the ministers of local churches.”

May 9

Election Day

July 15

ETU files report with Texas Ethics Commission showing another \$19,500 collected from alcohol interests and show Ken Bryan of Victoria was paid \$4,000 on May 4 (5 days before the election) for “consulting”.

Question: Only **after** Ken Bryan was spotted on a plane from Dallas to Lubbock did ANY local opposition committee finally disclose his compensation (as required by law), begging the question. . .if Dr. Bryan had not been seen, would these groups have continued to disobey state law and refuse to disclose who was paying for his “consulting” services?