

During my brief tenure as Public Works Director for the City of Jonesboro, I believe I have conducted myself in an upstanding manner. I have conducted the affairs of the City of Jonesboro in a professional and dignified manner, which I also believe reflect well on Mayor Formon, this Council, and the citizens of this great city. Since learning of the details surrounding this matter, I have personally been burdened by a heaviness that has not lifted. Although, I have tried to move forward with my day to day responsibilities, it has been difficult in the face of the commotion this incident has caused. Not only have I experienced this difficulty, but my wife, children, and YES grandchildren have not been immune from the apparent violation of trust witnessed by this community.

After a few days of struggling to move beyond this heaviness, I have now come to the realization that this burden is not one that I should bear, as no wrong has transpired on my part. Am I the one that requested privileged information from the Human Resources office on another employee? No. Then why should I bear the burden that has resulted in the betrayal of trust by a colleague. I have heard some say that it is only a birth date and that information may be public record. But when you place this request in the context of who requested it, I can draw no other conclusion that Mr. Andrews was in fact being "sneaky"—as stated in sworn statements by Mr. Andrews--in his efforts to use the information for ill gain. And given his prior employment history, it gravely concerns me that his actions once again are targeted at a person of color.

Am I the one that requested the privileged information from the Department Head? NO. Then why should I bear the burden that has resulted in a betrayal of trust by an elected official. Again, I have worked with all officials in the City of Jonesboro for the common good the city. We can not continue to allow the politics of personal destruction to reign in this corporate body. I feel an obligation as a citizen and employee to pursue every option available to stop this type of abuse.

Lastly, I will leave all of you with words spoken by the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"There is nothing more dangerous than to build a society, with a large segment of people in that society who feel that they have no stake in it; who feel that they have nothing to lose. People who have a stake in their society, protect that society, but when they don't have, they unconsciously want to destroy it!"

I have used these words as a guiding principle in my life and hope others can do the same.