

Monday, November 16, 2015

2015 Special Committee on Ethics, Elections, and Local Government
House Committee on Education
Statehouse
Topeka, KS 66612

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Jeff Meyer, I was born and raised in Stafford, KS where I attended and graduated from the Stafford school system in 1979. My wife, Nancee and I raised two children in Stafford and they also graduated from the Stafford schools in 2008 and 2009. We started our electrical contracting business in 1993 and added HVAC in 1995. Our business consists of residential and light commercial work. We offer Electrical, HVAC, Trenching and Excavation services. We started as a sole proprietorship and incorporated as our business expanded and grew. We presently have 3 employees, plus my wife and myself. Our employees currently consist of a one child family who plan to attend Stafford schools, a three child family who currently attend Stafford school, and our son who recently joined our business after serving 6 years in the United States Marines Corps. Our son and his wife, who are expecting their first child plan to send their children to Stafford schools.

In July of 2000 I was appointed to the Stafford School Board to fill a vacated position and then was elected to complete that term. I continued to serve on the board for a total of eleven years, July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2011.

Business Relationship with Stafford USD 349

Maintenance and items under the spending limit of the administration

- Routine HVAC maintenance including thermostats, motors, control boards and compressors
- Routine Electrical maintenance including fixture replacement, lighting contactors, ballasts, and wiring devices
- Any HVAC, Electrical upgrades under the spending limit

Capital Improvement Projects and/or items above the spending limit of the administration

- HVAC Systems
 - Two Building Trades Homes
 - Cisco Room
- Electrical Projects
 - Two Building Trades Homes
 - New Football Concession Stand

Owning a business in a small town can be very rewarding but at the same time very difficult. We are constantly concerned with the appearance of favoritism and/or insider information. Public perception

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can be very detrimental or it can work toward the advantage of a business. Therefore, we carefully considered those ramifications before I accepted the school board position.

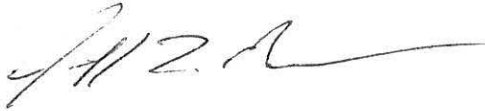
During the eleven years I served as school board member we completed several projects, some of which we had the opportunity to enter a competitive bid. As a board member I would only know the scope of the project before the bids were let. During bid opening and discussion, I would excuse myself from the meeting and return only after the bid was awarded. This was true for anyone that had an interest in something or someone that could be considered a conflict even if it did not fit the definition. This was reported in the board minutes and published in the local paper. To my knowledge, projects were considered on price alone. Some projects were beyond our company's capabilities, and I remained in the meetings for the complete process.

My years of service on the school board were for the most part very enjoyable. If the opportunity arose to serve again, I would not be concerned about the effect my service would have on my business or my business on my board decisions.

Narrowing the definition of conflict of interest is unnecessary. It will be devastating to small school boards. In some instances finding quality people willing to serve on a board is very challenging. This bill would make that even harder. Schools are in a lot of instances the largest employer in the area, making the pool of people willing to serve that are not in some way related to the school or each other very limited.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my experience and thoughts on House Bill 2345.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JLM', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jeff L. Meyer, President
Meyer Electrical Inc
Stafford, KS