

# Mayor Dupree Failed to Disclose Repeated, Fraudulent Gasoline Purchases to Council in Claims Dockets



Click to enlarge.  
Note the times and amounts of the repeated fill-ups. Cars were fueled minutes apart.

Every city council meeting there is a claims docket whereby city council approves expenditures. On Monday December 16th there was a slight hiccup in the approval process. Council members brought into question clearly fraudulent gasoline expenditures racking up within the Water Department. The water department has two vehicles being used and gasoline is purchased at a local gas station using a city credit card. Each card is equipped with a pin number associated with a city vehicle. So, what's so unusual about the gasoline purchases? For the month of November the water department and its two vehicles billed over \$10,171.61 in gasoline expense. In comparison the entire police department's fleet of 100+ vehicles spent \$5577.04 on fuel costs.

The two vehicles attached to the charges were a 1997 Chevy Pickup and a 2000 Dodge Caravan. The Chevy Pickup, (unit # 9745) billed \$313.00 in fuel; while the Dodge Caravan, (unit # 11912) billed a whopping \$9858.61. The Chevy Pickup has not been in the city's fleet for some time, while the Caravan has not been in operation.

It is not clear how long the scam, or “hustle” as some say, has been going on, but it should come as no surprise given the problems other departments have faced. The Dupree Administration has been racked with allegations of corruption and criminal activity by this and other responsible media outlets. The long list of alleged corrupt activities has mounted against the Dupree Administration ranging from:

- (1) voter fraud
- (2) employee theft
- (3) evidence room theft
- (4) city computer hard drive theft
- (5) overtime schemes
- (6) fuel theft
- (7) Waste water treatment theft
- (8) Municipal Court bribes

One such incident #5 occurred at the Public Works Department when under the leadership and management of Russell Davis and Tim Pittmon. [Both men repaid the city \\$14,000 each](#) (click link to read story) for loss to taxpayers relating to an overtime scheme where employees were being paid but were not on the job. Pittmon and Davis have also been linked to two LLCs (Apollo, LLC and Carousel LLC) which received a number of bids from the city; while the men were also employed by the city. This internal bidding, being a clear conflict of interest, is likely what resulted in the LLCs being moved into a relative’s name.

Another incident which occurred was the [theft of tens of thousands of dollars of wastewater aerator motors](#) (click link to read story). Both the director and manager of that department left the city. HPD investigated the theft, but no arrest were made. Furthermore City Attorney Charles Lawrence refused the Hattiesburg Patriot’s public record request for the investigation’s summary citing personnel matters. City Attorney Charles Lawrence is the person who asked Major Hardy Sims to use a federal background database to attempt to dig

for dirt on a Ware trial witness. The database is only legally accessible when a person is being investigated for a crime or terrorism activities.

The Hattiesburg Patriot requested copies of the documents that Councilman Carter Carroll was reviewing when questioning the Mayor about the gasoline fraud, and the document can be found below. The relevant information can be found beginning on page 7 with the item description "WATER TRANS." If you look at the November 20th dates you can see nine separate transactions, with many a mere few minutes apart. It is not clear how far back the theft is happening or what Minit Mart video shows, but the Hattiesburg Patriot is requesting fuel records initially going back the past 12 months.

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