

No. 50989  
10/05/12 City of Hattiesburg 14,729.11

RECEIVED FROM RUSSELL DAVIS  
FOURTEEN THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED TWENTY NINE AND 11/100 \*\*\*\*\* Dollars  
Check - Number 14,729.11

ACCOUNT OF REIMBURSEMENT OF OVERTIME & AUDIT

FOR CREDIT OF: Y/001 General Fund

*Check # 215*

*[Signature]*  
Deputy Tax Collector

# Mayor Johnny Dupree Cited “personnel matters” in Scheme: Russell Davis & Tim Pittmon Repaid Over \$28,000

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Receipt from Russell Davis in the alleged payroll scheme.

An independent investigation commissioned by the city council found that two of Mayor Johnny Dupree's appointees were involved in an overtime and payroll doctoring scheme, attempting to bilk thousands of dollars from taxpayers. The two employees were Department of Public Works Director Russell Davis and Department of Public Works General Manager Tim Pittman. The scheme was uncovered only after the city council hired an outside investigating agency, paid for by taxpayers, that looked into alleged fraud in the department. One person

who spoke to investigators, contacted the Hattiesburg Patriot. This informant told us they were instructed by Davis to lie and to "get their stories straight" in order to hide the alleged crimes. This person told the Patriot they did no such thing, but also didn't report the attempted tampering to investigators.

As a consequence of the investigation, both men have since paid the city over \$28,000 in restitution. When they abruptly resigned Mayor Johnny Dupree told WDAM on June 1<sup>9th</sup> "There were circumstances surrounding their departure that cannot be commented on because it is a personnel issue," The Hattiesburg Patriot doesn't think it is a personnel issue, but rather alleges numerous violations of:

- (1) **SEC. 97-7-10. Fraudulent statements and representations.**
- (2) **SEC. 97-7-15. Conspiracy to defraud state; each party guilty of felony when one or more conspirators act.**
- (3) **SEC. 97-11-31. Embezzlement; fraud committed in public office.**

The normal process for payroll reporting is:

- (1) Payroll documents were prepared by a secretary from time card sheets.
- (2) The documents were then verified and signed off by the a manager.
- (3) They were then given to Public Works Director Russell Davis.
- (4) Davis delivered the official documents to city hall for processing.

The crime allegedly began when Davis returned to the person in charge of preparing the original payroll report and instructed them to

No. 50937 10/05/12	City of Hattiesburg	14,729.11
RECEIVED FROM TIM PITTMAN FOURTEEN THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED TWENTY NINE AND 11/100 ***** Dollars Check - Number 14,729.11		
ACCOUNT OF REIMBURSEMENT OF OVERTIME & AUDIT		
FOR CREDIT OF: T/001 General Fund		
<i>cash 931605</i>		
 Deputy Tax Collector		

Receipt from Tim Pittman paid to city for repayment in the alleged payroll scheme. It is not clear what Pittman's role was in the alleged scheme. The mayor refuses to release the details to taxpayers.

fraudulently change the official payroll records citing a number of explanations for the needed changes. Payroll records were doctored for many reasons, including a six week paid vacation given to Davis' alleged mistress. Davis told an employee the alleged mistress was working in other departments for a six week period, and the payroll entries needed to be made in the public works payroll report. According to one city informant, overtime for city workers was given to city employees who tended to Russell Davis' PRIVATE VEGETABLE GARDEN. Yes, you read that correctly. Russell Davis was allegedly paying city workers overtime to tend his PRIVATE VEGETABLE GARDEN at the airport according to the government source who witnessed the garden.

The Public Works department was also no stranger to sexual harassment. The Hattiesburg Patriot was told that by a source working in that department at the time that the departmental culture during Davis' tenure was not a pleasant environment for women, and sexual harassment in the department was commonplace. One woman filed a complaint which progressed all the way to the Mayor's office, and involved Eddie Meyers and

other high level administration employees. This particular victim even received counseling with the city's employee services center, but ultimately left her job since the offender was still employed there. It was definitely a man's world at public works. Pittman worked for the city for 18 years and 5 months and served as the general manager since August 2009. Davis had been with the city for 17 years and 5 months.

The Hattiesburg Patriot submitted a request for information into the outside investigating agency's official findings, but the request was denied by the Dupree Administration, citing "personnel matters." The Hattiesburg Patriot also received the same response in our request for the police department's official report into the investigation of the theft of tens of thousands of dollars in [sewage lagoon aerator motors](#). Two other department heads resigned as a result of that theft. This begs the question, "How do we as Hattiesburg residents make informed decisions at elections when the incumbent has the power to hide the criminal behavior of his appointees under the guise of a "personnel matter?"

Please consider donating to the Hattiesburg Patriot and support our efforts. We have real cost in bandwidth, hosting, design work, etc. [paypal-donation] If you can't donate, please consider sharing this article on Facebook. It will save us in advertising. Doing both would make our day. One person can make a difference and everyone should try.

*\*This article goes out to all the women, present and past, in Public Works Department. If you are experiencing sexual harassment at the City of Hattiesburg or want to report any crimes please call our hotline at 601-620-0104 extension 403 and report it. Your identity will be kept confidential.*