



State Auditor Seizes Hattiesburg City Records. Evidence of Bid Rigging Emerges Under Davis / Pittman Leadership of Public Works Department.



Click to
Enlarge: Above

is the response given to the Hattiesburg Patriot for several records requests. It shows the State Auditor's office has seized bid records from the city.

Alleged malfeasance within the city of Hattiesburg's Public Works Department under the leadership of Russell Davis and Tim Pittman has been well documented in the past. Allegations of overtime schemes, maintenance of private vehicles by city workers, and even city maintenance of a private vegetable garden were all reported by this blog in the article ["Mayor Johnny Dupree Cited "personnel matters" in Scheme: Russell Davis & Tim Pittmon Repaid Over \\$28,000."](#) Both Davis and Pittman paid restitution to the city involving an alleged overtime bilking scheme, but new information is surfacing that these alleged schemes may not be all that occurred at the expense of taxpayers.

The Hattiesburg Patriot has uncovered multiple instances of what appears to be bid rigging activities involving the "Two Bid" process, involving projects within the Public Works Department when Pittman and Davis were over the department. "Two Bids" are types of bids that involve purchases or jobs costing less than \$50,000. These bids are not required by law to be publicly advertised, and only two bids (or estimates) are required before awarding the job to the lowest bidder. See pages 4 and 5 of the State Auditor's Purchase Law Overview Handbook. [\(b\) BIDDING PROCEDURE FOR PURCHASES OVER \\$5,000.00 BUT NOT OVER \\$50,000.00 Purpose -Two Quote Bids Required](#)

[Note – Must Document Best Bids – See Sec. 31-7-13 \(d\).](#)

The companies involved are a “Cantrell Construction” and “Mike Miller Construction, LLC.” The Hattiesburg Patriot investigated and found that that Cantrell Construction is likely a fictitious company which likely bid up the various projects costs. Mike Miller Construction was always awarded the bids. There is no proof that Cantrell Construction has ever existed as a legitimate, legal entity. Cantrell Construction is identified as being located at 44 Trystan Dive in Petal. However, Amy Heath, who has been with the city of Petal building permit department since 2001 has never heard of “Cantrell Construction. When asked about Cantrell Construction she said, ” I do not remember a Cantrell Construction since 2001.” Heath went on to say, “We do not have any active permits on file for Cantrell Construction.”

<http://www.mississippimedianetwork.com/wp-content/blogs.dir/94/files/2014/03/millercantrellbinder.pdf>

Cantrell Construction:

- (1) Never had a tax privileged license with the city of Petal to operate as a legal entity within the city
- (2) Never pulled a building permit with the city of Petal (according to the permit department manager in Petal)
- (3) Is not known to the building department in Petal, and they have never heard of “Billy Cantrell” or “Billy Cantrell Construction.”
- (4) Has no contractor’s license with the state of Mississippi (However, this is not required for bids less than \$50,000)
- (5) Never had a license with the city of Hattiesburg to legally work within the city. (To perform work with the city contractors must be licensed with the city.)

“Mike Miller Construction, LLC” was awarded the bids on all three occasions involving Cantrell Construction. Tax records show that Mike Miller has a homestead residence on Cabin Road. What’s interesting is that former Public Works Manager Tim

Pittman lives at 100 cabin Rd. The two are almost neighbors. Additionally, Billy Cantrell and Mike Miller were related through marriage (Cantrell's former wife), and Michael Miller transferred property to Billy Cantrell in 2009. So, it is indisputable that the two knew one another. The three bids in question occurred in 2008, 2009, and 2010 and are embedded above. Mike Miller Construction let their license with the City of Hattiesburg lapse in 2012, the same year Tim Pittman and Russell Davis left the city after the alleged fraud was discovered in their department.



The screenshot shows the Mississippi Secretary of State Business Services website. The page title is "Officers & Directors". The table lists the following individuals:

Name	Title(s)
Thomas L. Pittman, Jr. 102 North 10th Avenue Hattiesburg Ms 39401	Incorporator
Russell C. Davis 421 Brown Street P o. Box 1725 Purvis Ms 39475	President, Director
Thomas L. Pittman, Jr. 604 Mackwood Drive Hattiesburg Ms 39401	Treasurer, Secretary, Director
John T. Pittman 110 Cabin Road Hattiesburg Ms 39401	Vice President, Director

At the bottom of the table, there is a link: [Click here to go back to the Corporation](#)

Apollo Maintenance and Construction is owned by former Public Works Director Russell Davis, with former Public Works Manager Tim Pittman, and his father Thomas Pittman.

When a records request was submitted for information related to companies owned by Tim Pittman's father, Thomas Pittman, the Hattiesburg Patriot received a denial of those requests.

The reason for the denial was the State Auditor had seized the records and the city no longer had them in their possession. Mr. Thomas Pittman owns a number of companies that have been awarded bids with the city, and he is connected with [Apollo Maintenance & Construction, Inc.](#) owned by former Director Russell Davis. Apollo didn't receive bids from the city, but instead received work from a company who received

bids with the city.