

Siegmund

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Siegmund called that aspect “a virtual open checkbook for Vollmer.” He said, “In reality, it was to punish SAI for daring to have opinions different than those of town officials. . . and to intimidate me and to inflict as much damage on my firm as possible and at same time it created a new revenue source for the town solicitor.”

Siegmund suggested that councilors “showed poor judgment or complicity in escalating a personal vendetta into a shameless and bogus claim. The town solicitor knew, or should have known, how baseless the suit was.”

Siegmund said the arbitration process “revealed the true nature of the lawsuit, first resulting in the dismissal of the town’s claim of engineering errors, then rejection of the claim that SAI breached the contract.” Keiser wrote last week that the arbitration decision was made on the basis of jurisdiction and “mutual agreement to end the contract” and not on evaluation of claimed work deficits.

Siegmund pointed out that his firm was awarded \$47,105 and that the town was awarded nothing. He said the awarding of attorney fees to his firm to defend itself was unusual and represented “the frivolous nature of the town’s suit.”

He summarized the town’s wrongs as “the arbitrary and capricious decision by the former town administrator, the blind approval of her action by the council, the reckless filing of a baseless suit by the town solicitor and the hiring of new engineers (that) resulted in huge cost escalation for the sewer project, delays

in its completion by years, and the incurrance of large legal expenses for the town of Jamestown.” Keiser reported last week that legal and witness costs to the town to date were \$162,373 and would be more than \$200,000 when all bills are paid, but not counting extra engineering costs for the sewer projects.

Siegmund said he estimated “the ultimate cost of this fiasco to the taxpayers may well be over a million dollars.” He said, “The damage to my firm was less in raw dollars but proportionally more significant.”

He claimed the arbitration award “demonstrates that no engineering and no management mistakes were made, and that the charges against my company and me were nothing but politically and personality driven lies. The incident also demonstrates how the legal system and public money can be used to punish private enterprise when the search for the truth is supplanted by greed and political expediency. It also shows that corruption is not limited to taking money, it is not limited to taking place in large municipalities but can find a home in even the smallest town in the state.”

He concluded, “As a former resident of Jamestown I no longer have an interest in how the town evaluates this sorry episode but in my opinion the present council owes it to the taxpayers to call for a serious investigation to determine why huge legal bills were generated rather than settling a minor claim, who did what and why, and who benefited politically and financially. And when the investigation is completed, the results should be made public.”



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