

Subj: **Responses to web site**  
Date: 8/25/2007 10:12:42 AM Eastern Daylight Time  
From: [Lewisknox](#)  
To: [mike.ragsdale@knoxcounty.org](mailto:mike.ragsdale@knoxcounty.org), [dwight.vandevate@knoxcounty.org](mailto:dwight.vandevate@knoxcounty.org)

Mayor Ragsdale,

I wanted to share with you some of the responses to the web site [www.knoxexpenses.com](http://www.knoxexpenses.com) since Thursday evening. I have received no negative comments as to what I have done. Through 10:00 am today Saturday, August 25, 2007 there have been 6,594 hits to the web site since being broadcast by WBIR- TV on Thursday. Lewis Cosby

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Get a sneak peek of the all-new [AOL.com](http://AOL.com).

Phone: N/A

Question/Comment: It certainly seems that there are a lot of expenses to account for. Did you ever get a response from the Law Office concerning the travel policy questions? My plan is to attend this commission meeting Monday so see you there.

Question/Comment: keep on them,,,things are not right in MY county government.

Question/Comment: Thanks from another angry Knox County Taxpayer. Please keep asking questions and hold our government accountable. Feel free to copy this e-mail to the county mayor so he will know that others are applauding and watching your work.

Question/Comment: dear lewis cosby

bravo to you on what you are doing with this ridiculous situation.

ragsdale seems to have ambitions way above his 'talents' (political talents are very suspicious in any regard).

so i'm thinking he's just sort of a happy go lucky doop. i could be wrong tho.

thanks for your excellent work. i speak the language of accounting so if you need some volunteers let me know.

Question/Comment: Mr. Cosby,

I was disappointed that it seems to have been glossed over on the three trips Ms. Finch took on county business that just happened to coincide with her sority events. She obviously created county business at each location. At best, if I had audited, i would have at minimum, written up half of the trip expenses as personal for the sority work.

Question/Comment: correction. after reviewing the caliber of work you have done, your solidly professional approach and your insightful queries into detailed expenses, what you have done is simply OUTSTANDING!!!

BRAVO!!!

Phone: none

Question/Comment: Thanks for your work; Please keep pressing the Mayor, Scott Moore and the Commission as well.

Phone: N/A

Question/Comment: Keep the pressure on, being a teacher it makes me sick to see all of these meals that were charged to this card

Question/Comment: I appreciate your effort in trying to hold Ragsdale and Co. accountable to the citizens of Knox County. Your questions are reasonable and require answers. I know this is not easy but don't give up. If I can be of any help let me know. Thanks.

Question/Comment: Great information. The tax payers thank you.

Hopefully you can actually speak to the commission. Ms. Finch still works for the mayor and the council is a shady organization so you fight an uphill battle. Hopefully some lawyer will work for you for free to help.

Question/Comment: Just wanted to say thanks for taking a stand on this issue and not letting it pass. As a senior at the University of Tennessee majoring in Accounting, I find these numbers and situations very interesting. Thanks!

Lewis,

Interesting background...worked closely with Coopers for several years.

A business would cease to exist if operated the way Ragsdale has run the county. Also, in the real business world several employees would be prosecuted and many fired. Good Luck.

Mr. Cosby:

Thank you for what you are doing... I have one questions which I have asked several times but have not been able to receive and answer to date.

With regards to the hospitality account... there is the line item transfer from "BB&T Account Closed \$1416.20"... have you asked to see a ledger of this account prior to being closed and transferred into a Knox County Account?

It could be very interested to see who contributed to this account prior to it being closed and rolled into a Knox County Account... also who had control of this account... sign check.. reconciled the account and general accounting issues... I am sure you are much more aware of general accounting principals than I am.

Again, thanks for what your are doing.

Sincerely,

just wanted to comend you on your dedication in unearthing this waste of OUR MONEY that the good ole boy system has seemingly being thrown out the door on vacations and what ever this admin in office has been doing with our money. I like you have come to be tired of the LIES we have been told. Like the one that if the wheel tax was passed that the property tax would not be increased. Hmmmm seems to me that the voting machines had not even been unplugged and the property taxes were increased. Ragsdale has not been managing his people, if he had then he would had known about these credit cards being abused like it appears they have been. I was listening when you challenged him on checking his records. He did not think that would have happened or he would have not given the invitation for you to check the records. I heard today that the county mayors office stated it would take thousands of manpower hour dollars to carry on this investigation. I would rather the money be spent on investigating these seemingly liers and theives than pay for another vacation for another card holder. Again in closing the people I have talked to would like to sincerely thank you for your time in trying to find the answers we deserve. Good luck and make your findings public.

Sincerely,

Question/Comment: I like how you are trying to get the bottom of this. Keep up the good work. We need more people out there to do this ever county across the state. There is to much you cover for i cover for you. When thing are out in the open there is less waste.

Question/Comment: I appreciate you doing this.

As a Knox county taxpayer, I'd like to thank you for your efforts in examining the records involving the use of the P cards by the Knox County mayors office.

As you may know, there have also been questions raised about the spending and staffing levels in the Knox County fee offices. I have been interested in examining the records of the fee offices for

some time, but lack the expertise needed to evaluate their records. Would you be interested in doing an audit of these offices, similiar to the one you have done of the executive's records?

The Knox County fee offices are not taxpayer funded, but all their excess fee monies (monies not used to pay salaries or legitimate office expenses) are supposed to be given back to the county general fund. I suspect, as do many others, that a substantial amount of these excess funds are being spent inappropriatly. This denies the taxpayers of our county money that could be spent on a variety of needed services.

These offices (which as I mentioned are operated soley on the fees they generate) also have their own P cards and I'm curious as to why. Ms Sherry Witt, who is the apointed Register of Deeds, has stated previously that her office uses it's card to purchase office supplies. Is there not a central store of such supplies that the county offices can draw from? And why are fee offices, which operate on their own income and maintain their own petty cash reserves for office purchases, using taxpaer funds to to make office purchases rather than using their petty cash? If you could perform an audit of these fee office's records, I feel you would be doing the taxpayers of our county a great sevice.

In closing, I'd like to thank you again for your dilligent work in examining the Mayor's office records and exposing the questionable spending that has been going on.

Question/Comment: Thank you for your work and time devoted to representing the taxpayers of Knox County. When the majority of these issues were brought to light, my husband and I were struggling with trying to get our 4 year old son who is slightly autistic into the Pre K program at Karns Elementary. What does this have to do with your work you might ask? Your example of perseverance and questioning encouraged me to fight for my son. I contacted all local school officials and finally the governor's office. I was shocked to

receive a reply. Today is my son's third day at Pre K, and he is doing so well, he truly needed this program and would not be allowed in without a fight.

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Question/Comment: Mr. Cosby: Thanks for the web site and doing this work on your own. As a tax payer I appreciate it very much and agree this is absolutely out of control and the mayor should just leave office.

Question/Comment: I just want to express my gratitude for your time and dedication to this important matter - as a concerned tax payer, not a politico with ulterior motives.

Sincerely,

Question/Comment: Don't let up, this whole bunch needs out and probably need to be in jail.

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Question/Comment: Mr. Cosby, thank you for this excellent website. You've put so much time and attention into looking into these records, making a report, and now posting your findings for all to see. You're a great Citizen in the truest sense of the word. I wish there were more like you. God bless you, Sir.

Question/Comment: Mr. Cosby,

Great work! Thank you so much for taking the time to dig into these records. I sincerely hope you will continue your investigation into the inappropriate use of taxpayer funds in Knox County.

Regards,

Question/Comment: From one concerned taxpayer to another, thank you! I appreciate what you're doing, and I would like to assist you if you need help. Unfortunately, I have to work during business hours, but I can help after work or on weekends. I am a CPA (tax person, not an auditor) and an attorney. Again, thank you!

Question/Comment: Mr. Cosby,

Excellent work!!

Question/Comment: Great work. I appreciate the time you invested on behalf of weary Knox County taxpayers. I am looking forward to reading

the responses to your inquiries from both Mayor Ragsdale and Cynthia Finch. Is there an annual audit performed at the expense of taxpayers?

If so, shouldn't the accounting firm bear some responsibility for not documenting the lack of accountability by so many employees?

Question/Comment: Dear Mr. Cosby,

While I don't live in Knox County, I am a property owner there, and I pay taxes. I have kept up with the Knoxville New-Sentinel stories online, and I want to say a big THANK YOU to you for the active role you are

taking in uncovering the abuse of taxpayers' money at the hands of Mike Ragsdale's administration. You have worked very hard at your own expense and I want you to know I, as one taxpayer, appreciate what you are

doing.

If there is any way I can assist in your efforts long distance, please

feel free to email me at ##### redacted I now live in Tampa, FL, but I visit my "old stomping grounds" in east

Tennessee often.

Sincerely,

Question/Comment: I strenuously applaud what you have done here. It has bothered me for the past several months that these politicians are doing what they are doing. xxxxxxRedacted Thanks for your consideration.

Question/Comment: Bravo, and thank you for your hard work! I have never attended a County Commission meeting but plan to attend on Monday and look forward to hearing you speak. It is obvious this bad situation just gets worse the deeper we dig and sadly, is in all probability, a microcosm of our entire government system. It is past time for citizens to

become involved because our lack of interest and blind trust has allowed this to happen. Our elected officials obviously have their own agenda at heart--not the interests of the people who elected them.

With

salaries that astound me, they continue to fatten their wallets at the taxpayers expense with no fear of reprisal. Again, I thank you for doing

what all concerned citizens need to be doing. May this be the beginning

of a rebellion in this country. Where do I sign up?

Question/Comment: Thank you. As a citizen of Knox County myself, I MUST say..Thank you!

You have the insight that most of us "common" people don't have. You have the ability to look for and find the paperwork that most of us lack

knowledge of it mere being.

Thank you

Question/Comment: Mr. Cosby,

I fully support what you are doing. I am disgusted and outraged with all of this. Our County government stinks from Mayor Ragsdale on down. In my opinion, we have been lied to, stolen from and cheated out of

tons of taxpayer dollars. I think we now know where the "much needed" wheel tax is going. Not surprised once again.

If you could, would you let me know the time and location of the County Commission meeting on Monday the 27th? I plan on attending if my

schedule allows.

Thank you,

Question/Comment: It is obvious that our good ole boy network in Knox/Knox county politics does not work,, Establish a concerned citizens

group and I will be happy to be your first member..

Question/Comment: I worked for the Federal Government in Washington for over thirty years, received distinguished executive awards from two Presidents, and am appalled at the lack of accountability and proper controls in Knox County Government. It seems that many elected County officials, and some senior staff, see nothing wrong in spending county monies for their personal benefit. Those responsible should be held accountable.

Your efforts to shed light on these issues are appreciated. Also, thanks for posting your findings on the web.

Question/Comment: Dear Mr. Crosby,

I have just spent the better part of my morning looking over your

website and your questions to the Mayor, and I would just like to say thank

you for asking all the questions that absolutely need to be answered for the rest of us.

I have been frustrated over the past couple months, I am happy to see someone doing something proactive rather than just name calling.

I look forward to their response and thank you again.

Question/Comment: Lewis, I would like to say thank you for taking the initiative to help Knox County tax payers. At times I feel helpless

as

a result of elected officials not doing what they say they would do or by taking advantage of their power and not being accountable for their actions. You are a gift to our county and I for one say thanks.

Question/Comment: I worked for the Health Dept. for XXredacted years and it's

only been the last few years (when all employees were no longer state of

TN hires) that true malfeasance has risen. I certainly approve your investigation.

Question/Comment: Mr. Cosby...yes I am outraged over the fleecing of the local tax payers by these shady characters that are supposed to be county government officials. The phone number above is my home phone

as

I work during the day. If there is any way that I can help you out with any aspect of this investigation, please feel free to contact me.

I

have been posting on the XXXXXX redacted I just want you to know that I am not one that just wants to sit and complain. This really is a sad situation, but I'm afraid it goes all the way to the top of our government agencies. I think the general public is really sick of all of the corruptness that is going on, but just don't really know how to address it where we might get some satisfaction. What you have taken upon yourself is a step in the right direction if we can get enough people to get off of the soapbox and DO something about it. You can

contact

me via home phone after 5:30 PM or email at any time. Again, thank you for all you have done and I'm sure will continue to do.

Question/Comment: Good for you!

Question/Comment: Thank you, Mr. Cosby, for your hard work and time. You're a fine example of what good citizenship is all about! I work part-time, but would volunteer to help you with any secretarial-type duties if needed.

Question/Comment: Thank you so much for doing this. The waste of "other people's money" is sickening. The arrogance of these government employees toward the public is maddening. Follow the Money - that's how Al Capone was ultimately caught, right? I've heard that the bigger dollars are in county contracts to buy & sell land for industrial parks that mostly benefit the contractors and architects who are well-connected to the power-center... I'd like to see those figures and individuals mapped out for the public to decide if there has been an abuse of power bigger than p-cards.

Phone: N/A

Question/Comment: keep up the good work. I am glad somebody is looking into this. It is a mess. It is a much bigger mess that I think the news has let on. I wonder why the paper did not do the same audit you did? We need people like you trying to keep the county straight. Now if you could only do something about the county commision problem.:)

Thanks,

Question/Comment: Please review the expenditures for the XXX redacted.

Phone: N/A

Question/Comment: some one has to question these people

Dear Sir:

As a citizen of **Knox County**, I want to thank you for the things that you are doing to help clear up the problems in Knox County. There are so few of us who have the knowledge to do what you are doing, and there are even fewer citizens who would have the courage to investigate and then to pursue this seemingly pervasive problem.

I would dare say that at least 90% of Knox County Citizens feel the same way that I do, and I am sure that they are as appreciative as I am.

Thank you,

Question/Comment: Thank you for doing all this leg work and exposing the fraud in our county government. Way to go!

Question/Comment: Thank you for your dilligence in bringing these issues to light. The taxpayers of Knox Co. deserve to have answers. No wonder Mr. Ragsdale wanted a wheel tax so bad, to feed their endless spending habits. I will have to agree to the statement about the "slush fund". That is what I felt all along, from the first time I heard about a hospitality fund. The people of Knox Co. are generally naive, me included. We just need someone we can trust to run this county government, and Mike Ragsdale is definitely not to be trusted. He needs to be held accountable instead of standing back pointing fingers at everyone else. Accountability comes with the job and he has failed miserably.

Question/Comment: Mr. Cosby  
Hang in there, you are doing a good job.

Question/Comment: Mr. Cosby,  
I just wanted to write you and thank you so much for what you are doing! I knew the Knox County government was corrupt but I had no idea to what extent. I would love to help you in your investigations. If you need money or someone to help look through records or what not, please let me know. I am an accounting analyst for XXXredacted and have an auditing background. Thank you again for what you are doing. You are our hero!!

Sincerely,

Sir,I applaud what you are doing,I can't wait to vote next year.

Question/Comment: I have spent the last 45 min. reading all of this. It has opened my eyes to the total disregard of accountability in the Mayor's office. Keep up the good work!

Concerned Tax Payer,

Phone: N/A

Question/Comment: THANK YOU

Question/Comment: Thank you for all the time and effort you have invested in researching and questioning the use/misuse of our tax dollars.

Please do not back down to the pressures from the Mayor's office.

Question/Comment: Thank you for spending so much time attempting to give correct information to the Knox County taxpayers.

This information that you have presented is sickening that Mrs. Finch and others have taken advantage of their positions in government to scam the rest of us. I am enraged that this has gone on with no questions from Mr. Ragsdale.

Question/Comment: THANK YOU MR. COSBY, PLEASE KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.

WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE YOU AUDIT THE COMMISSION, COMMISSIONERS AND SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT. WE ARE WILLING TO CHIP IN WHAT WE CAN. PLEASE PUT A

LINK FOR DONATIONS TO HIRE YOU SOME HELP AND OF COURSE TO HELP WITH YOUR

TIME, COPING ETC. THANKS AGAIN VERY VERY MUCH.

Question/Comment: It certainly seems that there are a lot of expenses to account for. Did you ever get a response from the Law Office concerning the travel policy questions? My plan is to attend this commission meeting Monday so see you there.

Question/Comment: Mr. Cosby- I want to thank you for your donation of time, effort and expertise in identifying these serious breeches of fiduciary responsibility and keeping the taxpayers of this county informed.

I look forward to seeing the posting of the Mayors answers both on your website and in the Knox News Sentinel. Keep up the great work.

Regards

