

LAS VEGAS

# Sentinel Voice

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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

## HAWKINS QUILTS LV HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD

By Nichole Davis, Sentinel-Voice

Frank Hawkins made it official Wednesday.

He said he formally resigned from the executive board of the Las Vegas Housing Authority last week.

Hawkins, who hasn't attended a meeting since July, said he would have formally resigned in June when he turned over his gavel for serving as board chair, but he was asked to stay on despite warnings that he would not be able to attend meetings.

"I would have resigned then, and members of the board asked me to stay on until the new year. Then the mayor would appoint someone to take my place," Hawkins said.

"When she did not (appoint someone), at least I hadn't heard about it, I faxed her a letter asking her what her intentions are. She responded and the response was that she would appoint someone," he said.

Hawkins said that he told Housing Authority officials that scheduling conflicts would prevent him from attending any meetings. Hawkins didn't say what the conflicts were.

The Sentinel-Voice attempted to contact Brown to confirm this information, but he did not return phone calls on deadline.

Hawkins added that his schedule did permit him to meet with Housing Authority officials "about every issue that came before the board," he said. "I made the time to meet with the staff people two to three times a month."

When pressed why he "made time to meet with staff" but couldn't make time for meetings he said, "I could have made the some of the meetings, if I really wanted to," he said.

Las Vegas Mayor Jan Jones said she wasn't suprized by Hawkins'

Former  
Councilman  
Hawkins  
worked with  
Mayor  
Jan Jones  
responding  
to public  
housing  
residents'  
concerns.

Sentinel  
file photo



resignation, but she wasn't aware that he had arranged to do so after the new year.

"I suspected for months he would resign, but Frank never said he was going to resign," Jones said by telephone

from Washington D.C. Wednesday.

Jones said she talked to after the election and asked him if he would like to leave the board, but he told her no. She also said she wouldn't have asked for his resignation had she known his

plans.

"With Frank, I really felt the decision was his," she said.

Jones said she would miss having him on the Board, because he was an activist for residents.

"It's always hard to work with housing authorities, because you're dealing with people's lives," she said.

But, "Frank was an activist on that Board...He cared," she said.

With Hawkins' formal resignation, Jones is required by a new state law to fill the vacancy with a resident from public housing.

Jones told the *Review-Journal* Monday that she would begin accepting five-name lists from residents councils presidents next Monday.

Assemblyman Wendell Williams, who wrote the bill, said he is glad to see that a resident will finally sit on the

Board.

"I've been trying o get this done even without legislation as long as I remember," Williams said. "The people in public housing should have some say so in how there lives are conducted. They should have a voice on how their lives are directed."

Williams, who said he once lived in public housing, said having resident on the board provides a necessary second perspective to housing boards.

"If you don't know or you're so shocked about what goes on in public housing, then obviously you're out of touch," he said. "It would make sense to have someone who lives there give first hand information."

Beatrice Turner, a former Housing Authority employee who worked closely with public housing residents, said, (See HAWKINS, Page 3)

## Airport Vendors Hope Audit Results in Lower Rent

By Nichole Davis, Sentinel-Voice

Minority airport vendors await a final decision on the possible reduction of their rents from the County Commission.

The vendors, who are federally recognized as Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), went before the Board earlier this month to request the reduction of their rent, which is based upon a variable percentage of their sales.

Per an old leasing agreement first reached in 1978, vendors paid 15 percent of newspaper and magazine sales, 20 percent of sundries sales (e.g. suntan lotion and deodorant) and 36 percent of T-shirt, gifts, toys, and/or jewelry sales for rent.

The County Commission slashed the percentage paid on T-shirt sales

Jan. 16 to 18-26 percent from 36 percent again based on the total sales volume, but airport officials had suggested creating a flat 12 percent rate for all vendors at an earlier meeting.

An audit was requested by commissioners to determine the financial impact reducing rates would have on the airport.

"We're a self-sustaining entity of Clark County," said Nora Cooper, an airport spokesperson.

"We're charged with the responsibility to generate income to sustain ourselves," she said.

McCarran International Airport has a \$200 million a year annual budget, and airport officials said \$14.576 million was generated by the concessioners during the 94-95 fiscal year, which ended in July.

Commission Board Chairwoman Yvonne Atkinson-Gates supports lowering the rates to a level that is "comfortable to everyone else."

"It needs to be looked at and whatever is worked out needs to be fair to everyone," she said.

When you take a look at the overall picture, she said. "(Lowering rates) won't

hurt the airport at all."

"I just think it needs to be looked at so that people who make \$.50 cents on a dollar and people who make \$5 on a dollar don't pay the same amount," said Vice Chair Paul Christiansen, who leases professional space.

"I think we need to level the playing field...I just want everything to be fair," he said.

The issue came to light at an August 1995 minority vendors roundtable discussion where they discussed areas of concern, said Robert Ulivarri, the (See AIRPORT, Page 3)

## Assemblyman May Not Take Appointment

By Nichole Davis, Sentinel-Voice

Will he? Won't he?

Assemblyman Wendell Williams, D-District-6, was expected to sign a contract today for a new appointed position with the City of Las Vegas, but, at press time, it was unclear whether Williams would end up with the job.

Williams was expected to begin working as a senior management analyst in the newly created Department of Business Development, but he told city officials that they could "take this job" after a disagreement.

Williams was upset with city officials, because they were supposed to fax a notice about his new position to the Sentinel-Voice and didn't.

"Somebody's playing games down there," he said. "They called me all day for my resume. Then they don't get it here."

"If they won't even fax something over here, who knows what going to happen next; they can keep this job," he said. "I've got some other irons in the fire anyway."

He didn't want city officials to think they could control him now that he works there, Williams said.

Ironically, Williams has been a very outspoken concerning city government.

"I was one of the most vocal critics of the city about how things are done and the way some businesses are run," he said

A teacher by trade, Williams said he was looking forward to the challenge of switching professions at the age of 45.

Williams has been a teacher on special assignment at the Clark County School District for two years working as a community coordinator for Prime 6 schools.



## SWORN IN

Former Deputy District Attorney Michael L. Douglas takes the oath of office earlier this month to become the fourth ever black District Court judge. Administering the oath is Supreme Court Chief Justice Thomas Steffen.

Photo by Savoy/LVS-Voice