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"THE TRUTH SHALL SET YOU FREE"

Despite ethics ruling, Williams said reform needed

Special to Sentinel-Voice

A state lawmaker, whose complaints against current and former city officials were dismissed Friday by the state Ethics Commission, says Nevada must revamp its policies concerning citizens who serve in the legislature.

"It's a policy question that needs to be addressed in Nevada," said Wendell Williams, D-Las Vegas. "We're one of the few states that still has a citizen's legislature and either you're going to have full-time legislators or everyday people who serve such as myself," said Williams who biennially takes an unpaid leave of absence from his job as a senior city management analyst to serve as an assemblyman.

Williams said citizen legislators have to do their best in their jobs and as representatives of their constituents. Oftentimes, trying to serve the interests of both groups poses a dilemma. But, he said, legislators should not suffer

repercussions for voting against the interests of their employers.

Friday's hearing was prompted by Las Vegas Clyde Dinkins who urged the commission to investigate the allegations Williams made against Las Vegas Communications Director and former KTNV-TV Channel 13 reporter Cathy Hanson and former Las Vegas City Councilman Matthew Callister.

Williams had alleged that both Hanson and Callister, in conversations, told him that three members of the five-person city council opted to fire him if he voted against eminent domain legislation

which allows the city to take over public land for private use. The city supported the bill which eventually passed.

Williams said he and the city might have been able to reach a compromise if dialogue was established. He said city officials never approached him about the eminent domain issue.

While they discussed his employment, Hanson and Callister testified Friday that they



CLYDE DINKINS



Sentinel-Voice photos by Ramon Savoy

Assemblyman Wendell Williams, D-Las Vegas, testified at the Grant Sawyer Building on Friday to the state Ethics Commission as his number one supporter wife Zeldia listens on.

never threatened his job. Citing a lack of evidence, commissioners dismissed the complaints against Hanson and Callister.

Williams declined to press for a criminal or ethical complaint, saying he was content in just bringing the matter to the public's attention. He said the issue is a public policy matter and that the commission should take the lead on it.

"Do you have the right and do you have the flexibility without repercussions to represent your constituents in the best way? That is the question that needs to be addressed and I think this commission should take the lead (on

answering that question)," he said.

During the hearing, Williams tailed off on some of the accusations of threats but prompting some to question his story or whether a Las Vegas Review-Journal reporter misquoted Williams. The commission petitioned for the reporter to testify but were rebuffed the state's shield laws which protects reporters from having to testify about their work.

In an interview after the inquiry, Williams said if the roles were reversed racially, with a black legislator threatening a white counterpart, he would be banned.

Music, food festival set for UNLV

By Sharon Y. Savage
Sentinel-Voice

Temperatures drop and summer fades into a distant memory.

Mother nature's foray into a new weather pattern sets the stage for the Reggae, Jazz and Soul Food Festival presented by the House of Flava, a store specializing in music, furniture and urbana apparel.

The event is set for Sunday Oct. 12, at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas' intramural field (Swenson and Harmon).

The first of it's kind, the event will mix reggae and jazz music genres with soul food. Organizers hope the weather cooperates during this culturally diverse happening which they say is intended to generate a widespread community response.

Something will be offered for most everyone. There will be arts & crafts, soul food and live jazz and reggae bands.

Big Mama's Kitchen and other restaurant vendors will have traditional soul food favorites on hand. The Ron Shed Project, Bonafide, Flex Styles and Darcus Speed are scheduled to perform. For the children, there will be face painting, a petting zoo and inflatable kid's jumpers.

A canned food drive, in conjunction with the festival, is also planned. The items will be donated to the Shade Tree Shelter. Partial proceeds will benefit UNLV's Multicultural Student Affairs and Kappa Alpha Psi youth

enrichment program, the Kappa Leadership League.

Event organizers Terry Wade and Kyle Heckard own House of Flava, 904 N. Martin Luther King Blvd. They said they created the event to fill a cultural void in the city's recreational life.

"The idea for the event came about because this is something that the community needed, culture is here you just have to tap into it," Wade said. "(Las) Vegas is a melting pot that has people from everywhere living here, and they miss the culture from home."

The family event was patterned after the long-standing San Gennaro festival that was held annually here in Las Vegas and centered around Italian cuisine.

Heckard and Wade started by selling clothes out of the trunk of the car. Now they have combined art deco styling, vintage furniture pieces and musings from the hip hop culture to create the House of Flava clothing store.

Local and national sponsors include Mecca USA, Pelle Pelle by Marc Buchanan, Pepsi, the Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice, KVVU Fox 5, KUNV91.5, Santa Fe Hotel & Casino, Chaisson Motors, Big Mama's Soul Food and UNLV's Multicultural Student Affairs Department.

Tickets can be purchased in advance at any Ticketmaster location or the House of Flava. For information regarding the festival or the discount offered with can goods donations, call 631-5595.



Sentinel-Voice photo by Ramon Savoy

Property owners along Engelstad in need of exterior repairs can take advantage of federal funds allocated to revitalize the neighborhood.

WLW neighborhood to get \$2.7 million facelift

Special to Sentinel-Voice

One West Las Vegas neighborhood will get a \$2.7 million facelift thanks to the Las Vegas Neighborhood Services Division.

Vegas Heights, known for its drug and crime problem, will benefit from federal funding secured by the two-year-old city division.

The money allocation goes as follows:

- \$1,084,338 for minor rehabilitation of 52 homes at \$10,000 each, to buy and renovate the dwellings surrounding Johnson Park for a community center and Metro Police break room, to buy land on the northeast corner of Lake Mead and Martin Luther King for a business center, for rebuilding the facades of commercial buildings in the area and for

neighborhood meetings and marketing.

- \$940,000 will be used to acquire 25 of the 105 empty lots at no more than \$11,000 each, and for new-home development subsidies for 35 homes at \$20,000 each.

- \$300,000 will be used for substantial rehabilitation of 12 of the 33 homes needing it, at \$25,000 each.

- \$350,000 will be used to put street lights on Carey Avenue.

Tabbed Vegas Heights because its elevation was higher than almost all other homes in the city at the time it was built, the complex is a paradox. It's looks harmless enough in the morning but eerie at night.

The subdivision is bordered by Lake Mead

(See Facelift, Page 13)