

June 26, 2008

To: John Vandermolen, Acting Chair
Trailer Estates Park and Recreation District

Subject: Article for Tribune

John,

I was surprised to learn that you refused to print the article that I had written and submitted mid May for the Let's Talk Club item to appear in the July Tribune. I was surprised by your decision to censor the article rather than notify me that there was a problem, despite the fact that I submitted the article several weeks before you made the decision to censor it on the deadline for publication. I have been even more disturbed that nobody has deemed it important to notify me that the article has not been included in the July Tribune. I would have appreciated an opportunity to correct the article or write another one. I would also like to point out that Board action was taken at a workshop. There was a Board meeting after I submitted the article on behalf of the club.

I have a memo from Janet Jones that states that the only rules for the Tribune is that the submission must be an article, not the minutes of a meeting and can not be commercial advertising or personal items. I had requested that I be provided with any and all rules available for articles to be submitted to the office for the Tribune.

The Bylaws and Charter of the Let's Talk Club were satisfied with the article as well as the board policy. I am very concerned regarding your government censorship of a club article in the park resident newspaper, paid for with public funds. I was even more confused by the statement that I could post the article on the bulletin board.

I am enclosing a copy of the article. I plan to resubmit it as soon as I find out what it was that you felt was wrong. Please highlight or circle those areas that you feel do not comply with either our club's mission or the policy of the Park.

I request a copy of the new rules that you set for articles to be published in the Tribune at the workshop on June 10, 2008. I will appreciate your prompt response. I am enclosing a stamped self addressed envelope and money to cover the cost of copy of your new policy.

Sincerely,

Sharon Denson
7054 McCords
Alto, Mi 49302

Enclosures: Janet Jones Memo, Feb 6, 2008, Tribune rules
Censored Let's Talk Tribune Article

MSSD01362

Tribune Article for July

Let's Talk Club

The Let's Talk Club was founded to provide factual information to the residents of this Park. Recently we have had a misunderstanding regarding The Federal Privacy Act that needs to be addressed.

The perception that our Special District is regulated by the Federal Privacy Act is totally unfounded in fact. The U.S. Dept. of Justice in their "Privacy Act Overview" states that "The Privacy Act—like the Freedom of Information Act, U.S.C. 552—applies only to a federal "agency....." The document further states that, "State and Local Government agencies are not covered by the Privacy Act...."

The United States Government web site states, "The Privacy Act of 1974 regulates what personal information the Federal Government can collect about private individuals and how that information can be used."

GPO Access tells us that the Privacy Act provides safeguards against unwarranted invasions of privacy through the misuse of records by Federal agencies by restricting disclosure of personally identifiable records maintained by.....

The Justice Department states that, "Privacy Act rights are personal to the individual who is the subject of the record and cannot be asserted derivatively by others....."

We have a responsibility to have the facts in order to make an informed decision. T.J. and The Board of Trustees were correct in giving out the documents. They have an obligation under the law to protect this district. Violating the law does not serve any of us.

We are a 55+ Park. That is an exemption from the Civil Rights Act. We must collect birth dates from everyone living in Trailer Estates to continue to be able to discriminate against people based on age. (See Florida Statute 760.29 and 24 C.F.R. part 100) The Florida Sunshine Laws do not exempt the birth dates from public records. I do not believe any of us would want the board to jeopardize our ability to be a 55+ Park. The Trustees and/or Office Manager could receive severe penalties for violating the law. I do not believe any of us would ask them to make that sacrifice to protect our vanity.

The documents discussed in this article are available in the Park Office for review.

MSSD01363

John - F. Y. I. Article for Review

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Resp. to PRR 1-12-08 -000165