

Bradenton Herald APR22 2011

Trailer Estates saga over open government continues

In response to the April 3 letter "Trailer Estates Park report from silent majority:"

The author refers to considering our board a government because of district rules. The fact is we are a government, chartered by the Legislature and signed into law by the governor. It is unfortunate that the author was not aware of how we were created.

The author states that coercion was used against the board, yet he provides no specifics. The fact is trustees had ignored resident warning of Government in the Sunshine Law and public records violations for years, as well as violations of other state laws.

The author states that before the lawsuit proceeded, the board of trustees was offered an "escape document." The fact is an attempt to settle was initiated.

The offer contained the steps needed to ensure that our board complied with the law.

The author speaks of "unreasonable demands." A few of those "unreasonable demands" would include the board changing its bylaws to eliminate an executive committee that met outside of the Sunshine Law -- to discuss the hiring of a special district manager, to provide a copy of the database (a public record that had been withheld) and to request AG opinions to establish the authority for its governance. A court order did provide the database

The fact is the attorneys representing the park requested a "shade" meeting to discuss the confidential settlement offer.

Instead, the offer was distributed to the community from the Trailer Estates office. The board did not negotiate or counter our attempt at settlement.

Sharon Denson

Trailer Estates