

South Carolina Department of
Natural Resources



DNR

Alvin A. Taylor
Director

April 14, 2014

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The Honorable Kirkman Finlay, III
House Agriculture, Natural Resources &
Environmental Affairs Committee
SC House of Representatives
PO Box 11684
Columbia, SC 29211

Dear Representative Finlay,

I know that last week you received an anonymous letter criticizing the leadership of DNR. When I received a copy of this letter, I immediately forwarded it to all DNR employees with an explanation attached. I have enclosed a copy of that email for your information. I regret the necessity for this, but I believe that my responses cover these issues thoroughly. However, I will be very happy to meet with you to discuss any concerns you might have. Please do not hesitate to call me. My contact information is as follows:

Cell number: 803-360-7725
Office number: 803-734-4007
Home number: 843-889-3727
Email: TaylorA@dnr.sc.gov

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "A. Taylor", written over a large, stylized circular flourish.

Alvin A. Taylor
Director

Enclosure

Alvin Taylor

From: Alvin Taylor
Sent: Thursday, April 10, 2014 4:32 PM
To: All SCDNR employees
Subject: Message to staff
Attachments: anonymous letter Attachment 1.pdf; anonymous letter response Attachment 2.pdf

TO ALL DNR EMPLOYEES:

Something very disturbing has happened, and I feel that it is my responsibility as your Agency Director to keep you informed so that you are not left in the dark, and you deserve to hear this from me, not the street or rumor mill. I have always been open with you about the state of our agency and in that spirit of "openness," I have attached a letter that was recently sent to the Governor's Office. Although the letter writer is anonymous, I have also attached responses to the allegations in that letter.

Alvin A. Taylor
Director
SC Department of Natural Resources
PO Box 167
Columbia, SC 29202
Telephone: 803-734-4007

ATTACHMENT 1

Dear Governor Haley,

This letter is concerning a very serious DNR issue that evidently you are not aware of. Otherwise this situation would not have been allowed to continue for as long and as freely as it has been. Colonel Chisolm Frampton has repetitively been allowed to sully the reputation, morale, and credibility of DNR and its officers. Every respectable officer who has ever worked with him or for him knows him to be the most corrupt, incompetent person ever to wear the uniform. He has made a career taking credit for other's work and blaming others for his mistakes. Everyone who interacts with Frampton knows he is an embarrassment to the department. Everyone that is, except for Director Alvin Taylor. There is strong evidence and agreement that Taylor has spent his entire career covering for Frampton i.e. making excuses for him, promoting him, and truth be known, lying for him. As Frampton's last arrest for beating his wife proved, Taylor will stop at nothing to protect him, which is why there was never a legitimate investigation. To say anything negative about Frampton, no matter how true, means instant retaliation from Taylor as he absolutely refuses to see or hear the truth. Hence the reason no one feels safe to say anything. The cost is too high when a career is at stake.

To give you just a few examples (and there are many more) of the corruption:

1. Frampton drove his state vehicle to Florida with his wife and son in it. While he was there, he was involved in an accident, charged, and found at fault. His state vehicle was totaled. Taylor covered for him.
2. Frampton was arrested and charged with hitting his wife. Taylor immediately, with the help of his friends and Terri McGee (HR Director and chief cover-up conspirator), immediately began providing coverage for him by overseeing a sham of an "internal" investigation. SLED was never asked to investigate or a polygraph done (even though Frampton has forced officers to take it), because we all know what the outcome of that would have been. We have had officers forced to resign or retire for far less. Not so for Frampton, he gets special treatment.
3. The attorney for Frampton, Craig Jones, responsible to help ensure this case never saw the light of day, was recently HIRED by DNR as a new full time staff attorney. How's that for a quid pro quo and conflict of interest, all under the watchful and knowing eye of Taylor, Frampton, and Terri McGee.
4. Immediately after Frampton was appointed Colonel by Taylor, they began creating and promoting new Captains (staff Captains in Cola.), in positions that were never Captains positions before. Why? To provide cover and support for Frampton because Taylor knew that the field considered him weak and incompetent, and he needed additional support at the Captain level to help cover for him. What do these five Captains have in common? They are all puppets for Taylor and Frampton and have little to no field experience.
5. To date there have been five new Captain positions created and filled (see number 4). Not one of those positions were posted or advertised as should have been so that other officers had the chance to apply, making sure that only the handpicked favorites and those willing to compromise had a chance.
6. Any time a promotion opportunity comes up and a "friend" of Taylor/Frampton applies, you can always count on Terri McGee to show up on the interview panel and see that they get who they want. She is as corrupt as they are and is responsible to ensure that skeletons stay hidden, evidence is covered, and help hatchet anyone that stands in their way.

7. As we all know, Frampton is a closet racist, ask any black officer who has worked for him (especially those who have resigned, were fired, or retired). When they learned of a pending discrimination lawsuit from a fired black officer, they immediately went into defense mode. They suddenly decided they needed a new black field Major, so they redrew Region lines to ensure that their handpicked favorite minority would be eligible, set up a sham of an interview panel, and promoted him over a Captain with 30 years of service and over 15 years as Captain. The new Major had only been Captain a little over a year, and had less than 15 years of service with DNR. But, they knew he would go with the flow and it would provide the cover they needed.

8. Now we learn of the payoffs. Terri McGee, who a little over two years ago, was making just over \$75,000, had her salary mysteriously raised after Taylor became Director and Frampton was promoted, to \$86,000. It has been raised AGAIN recently, to almost \$99,000 annually. An almost \$25,000 raise in two years, with no added duties or extra personnel to supervise. Her workload has definitely increased though trying to hide the scandals from Board Members and Legislators, all under the watchful eye of Taylor/Frampton.

9. FRAMPTON gets a salary increase to over \$100,000 a year, and has done NOTHING to deserve it. Everyone knows that Taylor still makes all the decisions and calls the shots. Frampton is just a puppet, which is why you never see Frampton out from under Taylors shadow-scared he'll get a question he can't answer.

10. In summary, two deputy directors (Frampton and Boyles) along with HR Director-Terri McGee, get huge raises. The other three Deputy Directors and boots on the ground-0 pay increase, except, of course, the handpicked favorites of Taylor/Frampton and the five new Captains, referred to in the field as the Charleston Mafia.

These are just a few examples. They are ruthless and masters of deception, which is why no one speaks up. We are sick of it and need relief now. We felt our only hope was to appeal to you. Thank you for your concern.

Sincerely,

Active & Retired DNR Employees & Concerned Voters

Copy:

John Courson, Senate Pro Tem
Danny Verdin, Chair, Natural Resources, Senate
Luke Rankin, Chair Senate Ethics
Hugh Leatherman, Chair Senate Finance
Billy Odell, Chair Senate General
Larry Martin, Chair Senate Judiciary
Senate Fish Game and Forestry Members

Bobby Harrell, Speaker of House
Kenny Bingham, Chair House Ethics
Greg Dellaney, Chair House Judiciary
Brian White, Chair House Ways and Means
Gilda Cobb-Hunter
House Ag and Natural Resources Members

SCDNR Board Members

LE Advisory Board Members

The Charleston Post and Courier
The Greenville News
The Rock Hill Herald
The Spartanburg Herald
The State

ATTACHMENT 2

April 10, 2014

1. Colonel Frampton is the agency's representative on the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC), serving as the chair of the Law Enforcement Committee, which met in Florida on this occasion. He asked for and received permission to take his family, as do many of our employees when they are attending out-of-state meetings. When he was returning to South Carolina, he was involved in an automobile accident. The accident was investigated by the Florida Highway Patrol and was reported to the S.C. Accident Review Committee. Following the recommendation of the Accident Review Committee, he was required to take an eight-hour driver's safety class which he completed.

2. 3. The case surrounding Colonel Frampton's arrest has been well-documented. He was investigated by the Charleston County Sheriff's Department in conjunction with the Solicitor's Office. The case progressed through the judicial system to trial and the charges against Colonel Frampton were dismissed. Colonel Frampton had been suspended pending the outcome of the investigation and trial. Upon the determination of his innocence that was rendered by the Court, he was reinstated which had previously been done in a very similar case of a field officer. This is how the American justice system is supposed to work. During this entire process, the DNR Board was briefed on numerous occasions as was the Governor's Office.

The attorney representing Colonel Frampton was Bart Daniel, although Colonel Frampton and Craig Jones do attend the same church.

Concerning my possible influence over the outcome of Colonel Frampton's case, it is my intention to ask SLED to review the case to validate what I know to be true - that there was no influence from me, not one call.

4. 5. 6. I believe that the five captains referred to in the letter are:

(1) Gary Sullivan: Gary was the lieutenant in the Marine Investigations Section. This area had historically been supervised by a captain, then by a major. I know this because I was that captain and that major.

(2) Mike Sabaka: This position was posted. This position is responsible for records and intelligence. Captain Sabaka has also taken on the added responsibility of assistant to Derrick Meggie who is our legislative liaison. He represents the entire agency in this role, as does Derrick Meggie. Captain Sabaka also is responsible for Law Enforcement technology development and all grant management for Law Enforcement.

(3) Tim Baxley: This position was posted. Captain Baxley is in charge of our agency's Emergency Management section. This position is comparable in rank to the same position in SLED and DPS. Captain Baxley also manages our 24-hour communication system as well as our Styx Compound which supplies equipment and other supplies to the entire agency.

(4) Billy Downer: Captain Downer was the lieutenant in the area of Hunter and Boater Education as well as all of our Shooting Sports activities and range building. Historically, Hunter Education and Boater Education each had a captain supervising, and I know this because I was the captain supervising the Boater Education side.

(5) Robert McCullough: Captain McCullough was the lieutenant over Training and Special Operations. He had been the Law Enforcement spokesperson for years. When I moved into the Director's position, I saw a need for an agency spokesperson, and he was the natural choice. Captain McCullough is also responsible for coordinating much of our public outreach and media events. This was my decision supported by the Board.

7. 8. 9. 10. From the time I became Colonel of the Law Enforcement Division, I have demonstrated to employees across all division lines that promotions would be based on merit and not on time served. In the area in which it is suggested that lines were changed so that a "handpicked favorite minority" could be promoted, I do not believe that anyone can dispute the fact that Major Jamie Landrum is an excellent supervisor, Law Enforcement Officer, and ambassador for this agency. The lines in question had historically been established and I know this because when I served as a field major I supervised Regions II and IV and Major Pulaski Region I and II as the current structure stands.

On a separate note, the same lines were drawn for new supervisory positions in the Game and Fish Section that are comparable to a Law Enforcement major's position. These were new positions in Game and Fish to address supervisory and structured needs. I mention this because the letter seems to point all of our actions in the direction of Law Enforcement when in fact you can see new opportunities and changes across all divisions.

Concerning our personnel director, Terri McGee has sat in on not only Law Enforcement interview panels by policy, but also on the interview panels of the other divisions. Either the personnel director or one of her staff tries to sit in on as many interviews as possible. The salary of the personnel director is comparable to the salaries of the personnel directors of other state agencies of same complexity.

As for the pay increases for deputy directors, that process is ongoing as are many other salary studies across the agency. I would note, however, that none of the executive office pay actions took place before the deputy directors had opportunities to bring other pay actions in their divisions forward which has resulted in hundreds of promotions and increased pay actions across all divisions. These actions are what I am most proud of and will continue to push forward.

Please do not let this distract you - that is what I signed up for 2 1/2 years ago. If you have any questions, please call on me at any time. We have a wonderful agency with truly dedicated employees, and I want to thank you for all that you do every day for our public and for the resources of our state.

Alvin

