

Daily Courier's "Fact Check" on Lily Morgan Ad is Full of Media Spin

By JOCO Commissioners Watch

An ad reporting issues regarding Josephine County Commissioner Lily Morgan's performance was the focus of a Daily Courier "Fact Check" on February 13th. The article, written by Shaun Hall, did more to obfuscate the truth rather than enlighten their readers with any tangible facts.

In the article, Hall seemingly attempts to vilify John West, the Josephine County citizen who paid for the Sneak Preview ad and who was the focus of the article, by saying West is a "local man with a history of questioning government policies..."

John West has reported that he had voted for Morgan in her successful bid to become a commissioner, and that his ad campaign against her re-election is nothing personal but has everything to do with her "poor performance, wasting of taxpayers dollars and a dismal ability to communicate with others." West further points out that much of the information about Morgan is readily available to the public on the Josephine County website but that he will be making public all of his documents on the website www.jococommishwatch.com in the near future.

West maintains, "Lily Morgan has made many people inside county government upset and they all talk, and I listen." He went on to say, "According to people, who would much rather retain anonymity for now, Morgan wasted our tax dollars and has been a bully in government. I don't like that, so I started an investigation to find out the specifics."

According to West, his investigation has uncovered the things he outlined in his first ad and

much more, which he intends on providing the public in the near future, both in print and online.

"A day after I submitted a half page ad to the Daily Courier, which I paid for, I get a call from the ad gal. She informs me that the ad needs to change and that if it doesn't they can't run it because of 'liability.'" West recounted. "I told her I didn't want it to change; that I was putting my name on it but that if they insisted on the changes that watered down my points, then I just wanted my money back and they wouldn't get my business."

Interestingly, that conversation happened the same day the Shaun Hall article came out which boldly proclaimed West had made false statements in his previous ad.

The Daily Courier's Hall article makes the following conclusions of "fact":

1. West's ad claimed Morgan was, "Absent or Late to more than 50% of charter mandated meetings of commissioners." As the Daily Courier pointed out, "Charter Mandated" is up for interpretation. Shaun Hall picked the interpretation that suited the bias of his reporting. Fact is, documentation shows Lily Morgan was "absent, late or unavailable more than 50% of the time to meetings she is slated to take part in." But even the Daily Courier pointed out that she had missed or was late 21% of the time to the specifically important weekly business sessions.

2. When West's ad stated, "Morgan filed for personal bankruptcy while making \$129,000/year, which includes PERS and other benefits," the Daily Courier article concluded it was "True" but "misleading about how much Morgan makes in wages." The fact is, the taxpayers pay MORE

than \$129,000/year to employ Morgan as a county commissioner.

3. The ad stated, "She's exercised poor judgment filing a gender bias complaint which was found to be baseless & completely false." Shaun Hall concluded it was unverifiable, yet admonished West for not handing over his documentation to him when requested. Fact is, he is just jealous that he can't get the information.

4. The ad claimed, "extravagant & frivolous trips to LA, Colorado & Tacoma = Tens of Thousands of dollars wasted." The Daily Courier concluded it was a false statement. John West laughed saying, "I think any trip Morgan goes on is a waste, as I have it on good authority she is often late to anywhere she goes. Even then, did the Courier even mention that she went to ball games while on these trips, and that she asked for repayment of her transportation to these games?" Fact is, the total cost to the taxpayers - even state grants are funded by taxpayers - for her trips is in excess of ten thousand dollars just in 2019, and yes, the rest is subjective. Considering she has a substantial vote on the board it delegitimizes the Courier's claim that the "trips dealt with subjects of enough import that they received board approval."

5. The ad stated, "Morgan hired her personal friend to work as her secretary at \$122,000/year." The Courier claimed it was false, subjective and misleading. West wondered, "what would you call someone you worked with that officiated your wedding? I would think that person was a personal friend." West also pondered, "Is it a false statement to say that someone makes '\$122,000 a year' if that figure includes the real benefits they

receive from the taxpayers?" He strongly proclaimed, "I don't think it's a false statement at all! I mean, the taxpayers pay that full amount, not just their salary." Fact is, Morgan's vote counted for 50% of the reason her friend was hired - the vote was 2 to 1. It has been reported that even though her official title is "office manager" she spends a great deal of time exclusively with Lily Morgan.

6. The final ad claim was, "Her annual wasteful spending = 1 less patrol deputy on the road protecting your safety." The Daily Courier concludes it is misleading, because the fact is, they know full and well they can't say she has no wasteful spending.

West scoffs when asked about the Daily Courier. "In my opinion they are a left-leaning, failing newspaper that is becoming more and more irrelevant, and apparently feel threatened when someone else comes along, uncovers information about their buddies, and puts it out for the public to see."

It has been reported that Morgan is seeking legal counsel for potential action against West.

West defiantly commented, "if Lily Morgan wants to try to sue me for defamation, she should go ahead and try. The truth is an absolute defense in such an action, and I have that on my side." Then West chuckled, "I wonder if the Daily Courier would report on the facts when they come out in court, or if they would just try to put their media spin on it again? Truth is, the Daily Courier should leave the 'fact-checking' to those whose only agenda is to get out the truth."

* For more information go to www.jococommishwatch.com. *

JOSEPHINE COUNTY COMMISSIONER
LILY MORGAN

Her policies have been described as:
RUNAWAY SPENDING
EXTREME BULLY POLITICS
DISREGARD FOR TRANSPARENCY

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TO VOTE
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