

December 4, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor Tracy Andrews
Chipley City Council
PO Box 473
Chipley, FL 32428

Mr. Michael Maxwell, Executive Director
Washington County Chamber of Commerce
P.O. Box 457
Chipley, FL 32428

Dear Mayor Andrews and Executive Director Maxwell,

Over a decade ago I was sought out to serve on the CRA Board. I was truly honored but took time to research the CRA and study to see if the board would be a good fit for me and me for the board. With my wealth of experience such as in community planning and revitalizing, working on a Community Economic Council, serving on the Board of Directors of Capital City Bank, and compassion for the citizens of Chipley I knew I had much to bring to the table.

During my tenure I was one of those faithful community servants, working as a team, that helped navigate the CRA Board through Michael, Pandemic and other unforeseen circumstances; through the board's various changes and challenges, grouping and regrouping. Being a man of structure, organization, respect for leadership I tried to make sure proper protocol was always followed. The meetings were run in "decently and in order," always in a businesslike manner. I faithfully strived to be a "voice for the voiceless" that everybody was to be treated in the same way and manner (constantly repeated), no section of the community overlooked or by passed. We, the board, have been entrusted with the taxpayer's money not our money and we must do right by them. (also constantly repeated) When there were verbal attacks on the Executive Director, chairperson, lawyer, other board members it was my voice that rose up to deescalate the situations.

As we sat together in board meetings I listened to unsolicited testimonies of how when fellow board members were new members they sat patiently, listening, and learning before they ventured forward especially into any leadership position. It benefited them personally as well as the board. Some wished a former board member had done so. We as a team agreed for our upcoming leadership selections to be those who are serving now and understand the working of the board. Reminders were said and resaid even in the interviewing process.

A shift in the selection of leadership, vice chairperson, has occurred from the way we as a team agreed on. As a man of integrity who faithfully follows through what he agrees to, whose word is his bond to the people of Chipley I must respectfully resign due to the latest course of action. I've had some great positive experiences and have grown as a community servant of Chipley. I'll miss the work and the workers but there's a higher calling to be true.

Sincerely,

Rev. Malcolm O. Nelson

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