

RECORDED PHONE CONVERSATION BETWEEN
SENATOR ROSALYN DANCE AND MAYOR W. HOWARD MYERS
THAT OCCURRED ON
FEBRUARY 13, 2016

Transcribed by: Lisa Wright, Court Reporter

1 (Phone rings.)

2

3 MS. DANCE: Hello?

4 MR. MYERS: Hello.

5 MS. DANCE: I looked at your stuff. I'll have
6 to be honest with you, that first page I would strike all
7 of that stuff that you got there. That's a little too
8 much to be -- 'cause it's like you are defending yourself
9 and putting blame on others. That's not a good sign of a
10 good leader. You said, They did it, their fault that
11 we're dealing with this.

12 I noticed when they interviewed you on TV you
13 were saying, We were having to clean up this, that, and
14 the other. The others never put us in a spot this bad,
15 okay? The others did not do this. No matter what
16 happened, if they did this, then it says you all built on
17 it and that gives you responsibility because the here and
18 now is worse than we've ever been. That's the truth of
19 it. And they can pull any audit and they can make you
20 look bad because they still don't understand the
21 magnitude of what's going on. So I would cut all of that
22 out.

23 You have a message where you say -- where is
24 it? The voices of the people have not gone unnoticed,
25 that you are starting to say that you can have your

1 opening statement. I rise above the fray tonight to say
2 tonight. I would stop with all of that and say the voice
3 of the people have not gone unnoticed. And that's like
4 the first -- of all that you got on that page, that's
5 what I would have.

6 Then I'd go all the way down to the bottom to
7 your last paragraph where you're saying, During these
8 unprecedented announcements in the past few days, the
9 (audit reporters?? 2:15) was breaking news of the (IRS
10 ??), budget shortfalls, and water billing issues. This
11 administration has failed to accurately address the
12 issues and have failed to inform the council of the
13 devastating effects of non-received revenue.

14 I would make that sentence -- I would -- I
15 don't agree with Number 1 at all. Number 2 should be,
16 Therefore, I move the following, and then the following
17 of that motion you got four phases of that motion or you
18 can make them four separate motions. The Number 1 would
19 be, I move, not I motion, I move that the positions held
20 by city manager and city attorney, as you got the names
21 spelled out, be terminated upon a second by majority of
22 voting members of council through roll call thereupon
23 taking effect immediately.

24 Nobody, not even Will, has allowed somebody
25 that has caused problems for the city to stay in that

1 position for 24 hours. Once you say it, sabotage starts.
2 That's why I told you the importance of not letting Will
3 or anybody know because that's when they start shredding
4 paper. That's when you start not being able to find
5 information. That's when you find out the keys, like
6 Vanessa played the games with the keys or whatever. All
7 of those things happen when people get heads-up notice,
8 okay? So that's why that cannot happen.

9 Then the Number 3, following what you got here
10 would be that you -- okay. I offer -- you don't offer.
11 You move that following transitioning team of interim
12 city manager and interim city attorney serve for a period
13 up to six months, and that that period can be reviewed at
14 that time by the majority of council, at the will of
15 council. It can be during that term of six months with
16 monthly reports. They've got to give you monthly
17 reports. You don't just let them function. You get
18 monthly feedback on their progress.

19 That 30 days that you have in your first one, I
20 would say that the fourth thing -- I gave you two, three?
21 The fourth thing would be that your motion shall include
22 the interim city manager terminating a current assistant
23 city manager and finance director, because they're one in
24 the same, right? I wouldn't even put in there by
25 regulations in which human rights -- human resource

1 policies permit because that's a given.

2 That if there is, some positions function at
3 the (pleasure 5:28), like the four members that you --
4 work for you function at the (pleasures). Knowing the
5 people at the level of assistant manager, those people
6 function at the (pleasure) of the city manager to the
7 extent that if he goes, they can go too because the next
8 one doesn't have to be saddled with that person. So if
9 it's going through, and you don't know whether it is or
10 not, so if it's going, those things will be worked out.
11 That says a new city attorney got to make sure that he
12 gives you right instructions on how that is to work, so
13 that you're not held liable for putting them out before
14 their time. You follow me?

15 MR. MYERS: Uh-huh.

16 MS. DANCE: And then, um, Number 4, I would say
17 that within 30 days you would expect this new team, the
18 city manager, city attorney, working with the appointed
19 assistant finance director will provide you all with a
20 report where you are fiscally and what is the plan. Give
21 you at least three options of how they could -- for you
22 all to decide how you want to have it implemented. Like
23 they can pay over this period, this period, or that
24 period, looking at the interest of the people because
25 you're listening to the needs of the people. So you want

1 to make sure you select the plan that will get you there,
2 but not on the backs of the citizens. You want to leave
3 them as much -- you don't put all of this in there, but
4 that's what you're saying is that you give them a time
5 frame that if they're in this position, within 30 days,
6 they need to report to you all a status of the city and
7 what they intend to do during this interim to correct
8 situations.

9 MR. MYERS: Okay.

10 MS. DANCE: That's what I see from what you
11 got. So what are you thinking?

12 MR. MYERS: Um, I'm thinking that I am still
13 making decisions.

14 MS. DANCE: Tell me what you mean by that.

15 MR. MYERS: Well, basically, I guess I need to
16 see the facts behind the allegations.

17 MS. DANCE: Do you know what --

18 MR. MYERS: I have not seen those and --

19 MS. DANCE: Do you know what you sound like?
20

21 MR. MYERS: What?

22 MS. DANCE: Do you know what you sound like?

23 MR. MYERS: What?

24 MS. DANCE: You sound like I'm telling you I've
25 shared with you information that I really should not have

1 shared with you, but I did not want you as a mayor to go
2 down as not being in control of the situation, not being
3 on top of it.

4 MR. MYERS: I do understand that.

5 MS. DANCE: But I can tell you this. Know what
6 this sounds like? It sounds like you have consulted with
7 people that I asked you not to consult with.

8 MR. MYERS: I've not consulted with anyone,
9 other --

10 MS. DANCE: I'm just saying

11 MR. MYERS: -- than talking to Brian, but --

12 MS. DANCE: Okay. I'm just saying what it
13 sounds like because, you know, this isn't my first rodeo.

14 MR. MYERS: I do have a mind of my own.

15 MS. DANCE: Okay. I'm not --

16 MR. MYERS: Huh?

17 MS. DANCE: Let me tell you this. Let me tell
18 you this in all sincerity, okay?

19 MR. MYERS: Okay.

20 MS. DANCE: That as the senators and Lashrecse
21 as the delegate --

22 MR. MYERS: Uh-huh.

23 MS. DANCE: -- we have announced, What are you
24 all going to do about this? Now -- and I have to be --
25 I'm working with you, but to tell you the truth, come

1 Tuesday if this ain't resolved, she and I both are going
2 straight to the media. We're going to hold our press
3 conference and we are going to say that we do not have --
4 we have lost confidence in the leadership as evidenced
5 by. And this is where we live and where I have lived and
6 raised my family, where I have invested my time as a
7 mayor, as a house. I do this unselfishly. I've taken
8 the heat of whatever's been thrown my way, but this is
9 the worst ever.

10 And for you to say you're not known, that says
11 that you -- I have been in your seat and that's the worst
12 thing for you to say, that you don't know as the mayor
13 and that you have not investigated it because you stood
14 up there and you made a speech for the city. And you
15 were saying I did not do my homework. I just read this
16 stuff and I don't know. That is even worse because you
17 are not leading.

18 MR. MYERS: Have you read my speech?

19 MS. DANCE: No, I haven't.

20 MR. MYERS: It's on my Facebook page. Go read
21 my speech.

22 MS. DANCE: I'm going to read your speech,
23 Howard, but I'm saying --

24 MR. MYERS: Wait a minute.

25 MS. DANCE: Okay.

1 MR. MYERS: Go read my speech. I did not paint
2 a rosy picture. I did not sugarcoat anything, but I
3 want you to read my speech.

4 MS. DANCE: I'm going to read it. I promise
5 I'm going to read it. I'm going to read it as soon as I
6 hang up.

7 MR. MYERS: Please, but, but, but my point is
8 --

9 MS. DANCE: Go ahead.

10 MR. MYERS: -- is that I'm not privy to what
11 the allegations are until I heard them the other day. It
12 doesn't factor in whether I knew it or not. The bottom
13 line is I need to know for sure that I'm making a sound
14 decision with respect to the progress for the City of
15 Petersburg. And so I'm not saying that I am not -- as I
16 have told Brian, I'm on the fence, but I have to clearly
17 in my mind make a sound decision before I press that
18 button on Tuesday night. And in my mind I've got to live
19 with that decision either way, either way. And that's
20 where I am.

21 MS. DANCE: Okay. So if you -- I'll back off.
22 You don't want to do any of this. The only thing --

23 MR. MYERS: I did not say -- I did not say I
24 didn't and I didn't say that I did. I'm saying that I'm
25 not making an immediate, rash decision at this point

1 today, which we have until Tuesday, until I consider all
2 of the factors. That's what I'm saying.

3 MS. DANCE: I'll tell you, this is hard ball
4 time that I have to tell you this. You're truly
5 insulting my intelligence. You're insulting --

6 MR. MYERS: I'm sorry you feel that way because
7 --

8 MS. DANCE: I do and I'll tell you this.
9 You're insulting how I have --

10 MR. MYERS: -- obviously it feels the same way.

11 MS. DANCE: I have laid back trying to support
12 you, even though I know I told you last year that these
13 were problems. I know before Brian left I was dealing
14 with your customers because they were not being paid.
15 They said, I need my money. I know these things are
16 going down and I know that since August you haven't
17 gotten a water bill and people have been calling and
18 you've been making statements, but you all just found out
19 just in time to figure out after the man is gone that
20 you're in terrible, terrible shape with your water. Even
21 after you found it out, you still haven't gotten it
22 fixed. And I know because I'm still waiting for a bill.
23 That is crazy. That is ludicrous, downright crazy.

24 What I know now, the millions, not thousands,
25 not hundreds, the millions of dollars that have not been

1 paid. I don't know how to say it. You cannot put your
2 head in the sand.

3 MR. MYERS: Ms. Dance, I have not put my head
4 in the sand. What I'm hearing, you're insulting my
5 intelligence because all I asked you to do, I have not
6 made a decision, just like you. You shared something
7 with me and I've shared something with you. I'd like to
8 be knowledgeable too when I make a decision, just like
9 you do.

10 MS. DANCE: Okay. Well, then I'll say this --

11 MR. MYERS: Allow me to be knowledgeable about
12 the decisions that I make and have to make. That's what
13 I'm saying.

14 MS. DANCE: Okay. So I'm giving you my best
15 take and you can use it however you will or not, but I
16 think Lashrecse and I should be there because based on
17 what happens, then we need to speak one way or the other.
18 We are going to be speaking in support of you or we're
19 going to be speaking at a point of we've lost confidence
20 with City's ability to get what's right because I cannot
21 have people play that Exit 52, like I'm a local
22 government person.

23 If the public is going to wrestle my shoulders,
24 and they've done this to me. I didn't go looking for any
25 of this. When I had the county administrators saying to

1 me, city administrators saying to me they have concern
2 about what's happening in Petersburg and they want to
3 help. They have no reason to lie. I didn't want to hear
4 this. I didn't want to be in the middle of this, but no
5 one was coming down. I couldn't let a train run over you
6 and not tell you about it.

7 So what I've done is I've really stepped away
8 from, and I'm going to have to deal with it. I'm going
9 to have to apologize. I'm going to let them know I
10 violated a confidence because they did not want you to
11 know about this, but I just could not see that going down
12 like this. That's not the way you improve situations
13 when you're isolated because everybody's got their own
14 reasons for wanting to do it. They say they're doing it
15 in the name of Petersburg, but they've got their own ways
16 of doing it. They want to build an anarchy for
17 themselves. They want to take over. They want more than
18 justice. They want to use this as an opportunity to
19 build themselves up at your expense and that was just not
20 right and I would do it again because I can't see you
21 falling like that.

22 Again, this time I really have to defend
23 myself. When they tried to -- well, they did try to hurt
24 you the last time about your education. I said, Throw me
25 under the bus, but don't let them do this to you. You

1 know, I worked with you on that because I did not want
2 people to do that to you, so I stood with you.

3 I'm standing with you now, so maybe that's why
4 I'm crotchety or whatever because I feel like --

5 MR. MYERS: Ms. Dance, I have done the same for
6 you and all I said and all I'm saying to you at this
7 point where you may be the senator and you may have more
8 knowledge in sitting in this particular seat, but allow
9 me to learn something rather than dictating something to
10 me. Allow me to follow through with --

11 MS. DANCE: I take it all back.

12 MR. MYERS: You're not listening.

13 MS. DANCE: I'm listening. I really am
14 listening. Go ahead.

15 MR. MYERS: I'm asking you to allow me to
16 digest what you have given me to work with yesterday.
17 Allow me to figure out how to make my decision for
18 Tuesday night because that is two days from now. I'm not
19 going to make a decision or a rash decision immediately
20 because someone tells me something. I need to
21 understand. If it's a decision I have to make, then I've
22 got to live with it for the rest of my life. That does
23 not preclude that I don't believe what you're saying. It
24 does not.

25 MS. DANCE: Understand this. Understand this.

1 You might not be in control of the train that's going
2 down the track. If you don't see it with authority and
3 with something that puts them on the spot that they have
4 no recourse but to follow you. They can substitute your
5 motion and make you look -- put something in solidly.
6 Now, you're following and you are no longer the
7 decisionmaker. I just want you to understand that. I
8 want you to be the decisionmaker because that's the way
9 you move forward from this. It's not easy. You're
10 right. I've given you too much. So I'm going to back
11 off and respectfully allow you to do your job.

12 I just want you to know that at the end of the
13 day, that whatever the decision is that you all make at
14 the city, that I have to -- this is my city too. I lived
15 here and I'm invested in the (?? 18:22). Then I will
16 have to speak based on what I know and probably share
17 some information that they don't know from where I
18 received from the localities and how they're willing to
19 help. What we have is a situation that we all that live
20 in Petersburg have to address, that we all need to
21 address. Because I don't have to live in the City of
22 Petersburg. I don't have live -- I have six houses I can
23 live in, six. I choose to live in Petersburg. I don't
24 know if that's going to continue, but I choose to live in
25 Petersburg.

1 On Tuesday I'm going to make my statement of
2 what I'm doing and why I'm doing what I'm doing. We're
3 on the line for money and everything else. We're like
4 the laughing stock. We asked them to give you money and
5 you haven't showed that you can handle what you got. So
6 there's no project that you've got out there that the
7 state will support unless Lashrecse and I say, Governor,
8 yes, we want you to support this. You will get no state
9 money. You will get no federal money. You will not
10 because my reputation is out there. I've been quietly
11 working in the background to help the City of Petersburg.

12 MR. MYERS: You act like I don't think about my
13 reputation.

14 MS. DANCE: I'm saying I don't worry about my
15 reputation. I haven't worried about it or they would
16 have killed me with that Exit 52 stuff. But I've still
17 been in the vineyards, as they call it, working for the
18 city. I am saying we are in this together. If I give
19 you an instruction, I give you the best I have to offer.
20 I'm not dictating. I'm trying to give you the best that
21 I have to offer.

22 If you feel like the best I have to offer --
23 and you're right. You have to decide how you want to do
24 this or if you want to do this. It is your call to make.
25 But then the others, and I don't know how strong they are

1 now, they could be five to your two. I don't even know
2 if you've got two right now. When you speak, even though
3 you are the mayor, you are one of seven. I had to
4 realize that I was one of seven. We don't have a strong
5 lair in Petersburg. We are only one of seven. You're
6 only as good as your last statement and I tried to make
7 sure you had a good one, putting everything that I had in
8 it on your behalf.

9 So don't think I did this lightly. Don't think
10 I just want to set you up. Don't think I did not pray.
11 I've been praying ceaselessly for the last couple days
12 that the right thing will happen, that we will correct
13 this, that we will go on, that we will shut those people
14 down because you can shut them down. It's all in how you
15 come out on Tuesday, but you control the message. I
16 don't want to control the message. From this point on
17 I'm not writing anything. I'm just talking to you.
18 There is nothing. There won't be a paper trail. They
19 will not find my name attached to anything, nothing. It
20 is totally in your shop. I have made the decision there
21 will be nothing. There will be nothing coming my way to
22 you telling you what to do, nothing. I'm just talking to
23 you. You can use it for what it's worth or what it's
24 not, but I would not try to hurt you. I would not try to
25 hurt you.

1 MR. MYERS: I never said -- I never even think
2 that you would. I need to make that very clear, very
3 clear, very clear.

4 I still need to digest the information that
5 you've given me.

6 MS. DANCE: They want to hurt you and they want
7 to hurt you bad. They do. And I'm just trying to stop
8 it.

9 MR. MYERS: Okay.

10 MS. DANCE: But it's up to you to --

11 MR. MYERS: I appreciate it.

12 MS. DANCE: Okay. So you won't have to worry
13 about me giving any more advice. I'm going to let you
14 decide what you want to do.

15 MR. MYERS: I didn't ask you not to do that. I
16 told you to allow me do digest the information you have
17 given me.

18 MS. DANCE: Okay.

19 MR. MYERS: And to allow me to use some
20 discretion to decide how I'm going to position myself on
21 Tuesday night. It is very appreciative. It is very
22 welcomed, but you have to allow me to make my decision
23 and I have not made that decision, which I have said to
24 you several times.

25 MS. DANCE: Uh-huh.

1 MR. MYERS: I have not. But I would want to be
2 knowledgeable with respect to all of the allegations that
3 I have heard, and that if they are true, I'm sure that
4 I'm going to make the right decision.

5 MS. DANCE: Okay.

6 MR. MYERS: Does that --

7 MS. DANCE: That helps me side with the
8 auditors report. Go through that and find for yourself
9 that the budget started out not structurally sound.

10 MR. MYERS: Okay.

11 MS. DANCE: And then go from there because most
12 of the information, if you go through the audit report,
13 then you will find the various information. As far as
14 the water authority, any one of them, if you check with
15 any of the city managers or county administration, they
16 will let you know that you all have a \$3 million plus
17 deficit there. You check with the VRS. You can find
18 that number there.

19 MR. MYERS: Right. I mean, that is going to be
20 a part of my research. They're closed tomorrow.

21 MS. DANCE: That is legal. That's a legal
22 matter.

23 MR. MYERS: That's a legal matter, yes.

24 MS. DANCE: Yes.

25 MR. MYERS: And they're closed tomorrow, right?

1 Is the state closed tomorrow?

2 MS. DANCE: We are not closed. We are never
3 closed. We work tomorrow.

4 MR. MYERS: The state works tomorrow?

5 MS. DANCE: We work tomorrow. The General
6 Assembly works tomorrow.

7 MR. MYERS: No. I'm talking about the state.
8 I want to talk to VRS.

9 MS. DANCE: If you want to talk to the
10 secretary to probably whoever it is that can help you,
11 you probably can get that information. I have people
12 that's on the board that I can get to talk with you.

13 MR. MYERS: All right. Then I can do that
14 tomorrow then. And then I'll call a couple of my county
15 administrators.

16 MS. DANCE: Yep. Ask them where you are and
17 the jail that you have not paid.

18 MR. MYERS: That's what I need to know.

19 MS. DANCE: And that's all Vanessa needs to
20 know. You all closed her jail down. You said they were
21 going to save a million dollars, but you have not been
22 paying your fee. Follow the garbage disposal because he
23 said that's another person that handles that.

24 MR. MYERS: Yeah, (?? 25:31).

25 MS. DANCE: Follow up with the person that

1 handles that.

2 MR. MYERS: I'll call Kim tomorrow.

3 MS. DANCE: Do your due diligence, but I'm not
4 saying you shouldn't. I agree with you, that you should
5 do that. In your capacity you should be able to say, I
6 personally checked these things out. It's not what
7 somebody said. It's what I found to be so for myself.

8 MR. MYERS: That's right because I can't get up
9 there and say Roslyn Dance told me, called me to her
10 house and said that these are the things that went on.

11 MS. DANCE: No, you can't.

12 MR. MYERS: So if I don't know them true to the
13 fact for myself --

14 MS. DANCE: No, you can't.

15 MR. MYERS: -- then --

16 MS. DANCE: The people that helped me are Kevin
17 Massengill, Percy Ashcroft.

18 MR. MYERS: Okay.

19 MS. DANCE: Call those guys.

20 MR. MYERS: One of those two, I will talk to
21 one them.

22 MS. DANCE: Talk with them as far as what is
23 the outstanding payment.

24 MR. MYERS: Okay.

25 MS. DANCE: Because they want to help.

1 MR. MYERS: I'll talk to them.

2 MS. DANCE: I sure did not go looking for them
3 to help me. Talk to the person we pay. We pay Denny --

4 MR. MYERS: Morris.

5 MS. DANCE: Yeah, we pay Denny Morris. Call
6 him. I'm sure you've got a number for him, and ask him
7 what does he know about the state of Petersburg.

8 MR. MYERS: Okay. Read my speech.

9 MS. DANCE: You say it's on your Facebook?

10 MR. MYERS: Yes, it's on my Facebook.

11 MS. DANCE: Don't you have a hard -- I mean,
12 don't you have an electronic copy you can send to me?

13 MR. MYERS: Yeah, I could.

14 MS. DANCE: Well, send it to me. I'll read it.

15 MR. MYERS: Okay. I'll send it to you. In a
16 very few minutes I'll send it to you as soon as this
17 computer loads up. You should --

18

19 (Recording abruptly stops.)

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1 COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA,
2 COUNTY OF CHESTERFIELD, to wit:

3

4 I, Lisa Wright, a Notary Public for the State of
5 Virginia at Large, do hereby certify that the foregoing
6 audio file was transcribed to the best of my ability.

7 Given under my hand this 24th day of February
8 2016.

9

10

11

Lisa A. Wright
Notary Public for the
State of Virginia at Large

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15 My Commission expires:
August 31, 2016
16 Notary Registration Number: 293090

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