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Sheriff defends office's credit card use

Says charges at bars and restaurants were legitimate expenses

By Tony Scott

Kendall County Sheriff Richard Randall said this week that credit card charges recently questioned by a resident at a county board meeting were for legitimate expenses.

Todd Milliron, a candidate for county board on the Green Party ticket, told the board last week that they should investigate credit card charges made by Sheriff's Office employees, including Chief Deputy Terry Tichava and Commander Phil Smith.

Milliron obtained information about credit card expenses, which included charges at bars and restaurants, for the past five and a half years at the Sheriff's Office via the Freedom of Information Act, and has posted them on his web site.

Randall said that those expenses were all legitimate for Sheriff's Office business.

For example, charges were made at gas stations in Seneca, Ill., where Tichava and Smith supposedly dock boats.

But Randall said Seneca is within the area outside of Kendall County where Sheriff's Office personnel can reside, and that commanders are on call 24 hours a day.

Randall said Seneca is also the site of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency division office. Tichava is the county EMA officer.

Randall questioned the insinuations made by Milliron, who is working on behalf of candidate Robert Lea, an independent running against Randall, a Re-

publican, in the November general election.

"Does he know something I don't know?" he said of Milliron. "If someone has some facts, then somebody needs to look into it."

At last week's County Board meeting, Chairman Anne Vickery said the board has not received information they have requested from the Sheriff's Office.

"I can tell you this much, we have asked for that information, we have

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Briefly

Fox River clean-up canceled

The Village of Oswego's Environmentally Conscious Oswego (ECO) Committee planned clean-up of the Fox River and its banks that was scheduled for this Saturday, Aug. 14 has been canceled.

ECO officials said it was necessary to cancel the clean-up due to the river's high water level which makes conditions unsafe for the clean-up.

Crisis Line seeking volunteers

The Fox Valley Crisis Line is looking for volunteers to staff its telephone line. The service is seeking empathetic individuals with good communication skills to participate in a ten week training program. Classes start on Thursday, Sept. 9. The will classes will take place at the Association for Individual Development's Behavioral Health site located at 1230 N. Highland Ave. in Aurora. Training focuses on mental illness, crisis intervention, suicide, addictions, abuse, and community resources.

For questions, or to register, please call Cheryl at 630-966-4304. The Association for Individual Development is a not-for-profit agency that serves persons with developmental disabilities.

To comply with law, meeting canceled

SA steps in after officials failed to post required notice

By Tony Scott

A Kendall County Board committee meeting slated for Monday morning was canceled because it would have violated the state's Open Meetings Act.

The board's Public Safety Committee was scheduled to meet at 10 a.m. on Monday morning. However, an agenda was not posted at the Public Safety Center in Yorkville, where the committee regularly meets.

Also, an agenda for the committee meeting posted at the County Office Building in Yorkville did not include a time or meeting location.

Todd Milliron, a Green Party candidate for Kendall County Board, sent an e-mail Monday morning alerting the State's Attorney's office about the possi-

ble violation. Milliron's e-mail included photos of the front of the Public Safety Center and of the posted agenda.

State's Attorney Eric Weis quickly alerted the Sheriff's Office about the violation and directed that the meeting should not take place. The committee's chairman, John Shaw, then canceled the meeting.

"It would have been (a violation)," Weis said. "I called over there and asked a simple question: 'Was it posted?' 'No.' 'Then, don't have the meeting.' 'OK.' That was the discussion I had."

Shaw has rescheduled the meeting for next Monday, Aug. 16, at 10 a.m. at the Public Safety Center. Shaw said that the Sheriff's administrative assistant drafts the agendas for that committee's meetings.

Shaw said there may have been an issue because he had changed the committee's regular meeting time from late afternoon to 10 a.m. He said he wanted to change the meeting's time because it sometimes overlapped with meetings for another board committee he sits on, the Planning, Building and Zoning Committee. He said public safety staff said they were fine with the meeting schedule change.

Don Craven, general counsel for the Illinois Press Association, said the "purpose of an agenda is to let the public know when and where the meeting is, and what will be discussed." However, Craven acknowledged that the act "does not explicitly require a 'when' and 'where' on the agenda."

Weis said there would be no issue if elected officials followed the Open Meetings Act.

"The Open Meetings Act says what it says, and you follow that verbatim, the problem's solved," he said.

School district to hire its own bus mechanics

Cost-savings expected, board told

By Lyle R. Rolfe

Oswego School District Board members Monday night learned that the district's transportation department has severed ties with a firm that had supplied the district with bus mechanics for the past five years.

Todd Colvin, associate superintendent, said they had been using four mechanics supplied by J. Merle Jones & Sons Inc.

In a memo to the board, he asked for board permission to hire four mechanics to work for the district.

In the memo he said the cost last year was \$42.53 per hour, per mechanic from Jones.

"Going into this next year, the cost

sion or have the ability to attain and maintain Illinois School Bus Driver and permit during the course of employment.

"Draft job descriptions have been developed," he added.

Colvin said they believe the positions will be easily filled, and said some of the existing mechanics at J. Merle Jones & Sons have shown interest in the jobs.

He noted that there are no "no-compete clause" issues with J. Merle Jones and Sons that would prohibit those mechanics from being hired by the district.

Board members voted unanimously to approve the request and authorized the hiring of four bus mechanics.

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asked repeatedly for that information (from the Sheriff's Office)," she said.

But Randall suggested that the board is asking for too much information, and that he wants to know why they want the information.

"They've asked for all of the (credit card) statements, and I'm not killing more trees," he said. "I could give them all that stuff, it's... what's the question? That's what I've asked them."

Randall said the requests for information are politically motivated.

"It's all political," he said. "Bottom line is, it's political."