

STATEMENT

The current regime at the Hamilton County Commission under the leadership of County Commission President Todd Portune has clearly opted to commit hundreds of thousands of dollars to questionable, unproven “economic development” programs at the expense of the county’s statutory responsibilities. None of these initiatives are required by state law. They are optional.

Instead of adequately funding the consumer protection duties of our Weights and Measures Division which are required by law, the Commissioners have chosen to fund a Port Authority. Adding insult to injury they even increased the recommended Port Authority funding from \$350,000 to \$525,000!

Instead of providing proper funding for our critical financial services including accounting, accounts payable and payroll, Commissioners are providing \$90,000 for the expenses of a “consultant” – the same consultant who was so dramatically wrong on their stadium fund projections.

The 2011 General Fund budget which largely funds our Finance Department has been effectively cut by \$92,856. Those funds, if appropriated, would have allowed the Auditor’s office to have a continuation budget for next year. In addition, I requested a supplemental \$120,000 to permit the hiring of a Weights and Measures Inspector and an Accountant.

Contrary to the idea that our concerns were only expressed this week, note that we have been asking for necessary funding for our Finance Department for years – most recently in June through a release and letter posted on our website.

For two decades I have lived with every budget that every County Commission has passed and returned money at the end of each year. I have cut our expenses and payroll, year by year, while other county departments were expanding.

Last week I was asked by Commission President Portune to outline some specific needs. I did so within three business days. My concerns have been summarily dismissed. This is truly outrageous.

Dusty Rhodes
County Auditor

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