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June 17, 2009

An Open Letter to the Public:

This letter is written to respond to remarks and questions raised about State Representative Tim Bearden's consultant work with the City of Carrollton. From the very first day I was elected Mayor, I made it known that the City of Carrollton would operate with accountability, "open doors" and transparency.

First and foremost, I want it known that the City of Carrollton has nothing to hide about its relationship with Rep. Bearden. Rep. Bearden has provided a service for a fee. Never at anytime has the City of Carrollton asked Rep. Bearden to sponsor any local legislation or ask for any favor in that regard.

The summer of 2005, the City of Carrollton identified a need for a community policing consultant to facilitate an alliance between our police department and the community.

In the fall of 2005 the City asked Rep. Bearden to provide consulting services for our Police Department's community policing efforts. Newly elected Rep. Bearden, a former police officer with the City of Douglasville "took the bull by the horns" and organized and implemented the "Stop On Red" Campaign in the community. The project was a huge success and since that time, Rep. Bearden has been effective in improving police-community relations and aiding in responses to community problems.

Rep. Bearden's 15 years of experience in law enforcement has not gone to waste. A list of work Rep. Bearden has produced has been requested by local media. The end result work sometimes is not necessarily a memorandum, or a complicated report, but it is in the minds of our children, our citizens and our community who have been educated or participated in a community policing program; however, I am providing a sampling of the projects Rep. Bearden has either solely or partially been responsible for; including:

- "Save A Life... Stop on Red" Target Audience: Community and Teen Drivers
- "It Won't Happen To Me" Target Audience: Teen Drivers and Parents
- "Crossroads" Target Audience: Community, Parents, and Youth
- Youth Football Camp Target Audience: Youth
- "Life is a Journey" Target Audience: Youth
- "Toys for Tots" Target Audience: Underprivileged Children
- "Fans for Seniors" Target Audience: Senior Citizens

In addition to these community policing projects, Rep. Bearden has also served in an advisory capacity on sensitive police issues that are not open for public disclosure.

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Open Letter to the Public

Being a member of the Georgia General Assembly is a part time job. Members make up a diverse cross section of Georgia. Most of these members rely on other employment to make a living, including educators, attorneys, consultants, farmers, real estate agents, ministers, business owners, pharmacist...and the list goes on and on. We are delighted to have Rep. Bearden on our team, he has done a great job and we look forward to his input on future projects.

You may ask "why a consultant?" The City of Carrollton utilizes consultants for numerous projects including: DOT, UDO (Unified Development Ordinance), Downtown Master Plan, Carrollton Historic Depot and Environmental Impact Studies - just to name a few. By using these consultants, the City gets the maximum amount of work for less cost. Consultants are considered contract labor and therefore no monies are spent for employee benefits. And yes, these consultants (if not affiliated with a firm or company) are issued a 1099 annually if payment exceeds six hundred dollars (\$600.00).

The City of Carrollton Council, City Manager Coleman and City Staff have been frugal and responsible with our taxpayer's dollars. Five (5) years ago, the City had slightly more than two (2) million dollars in its cash reserve. Today, the City's cash reserve is more than six (6) million dollars. With all of this in mind, I ask that you do not judge the City's actions on one merit...but as a whole.

Again, I want to remind you that the City has never denied or tried to "cover up" Rep. Bearden's consulting work, nor payment thereof. In fact, I personally discussed the matter openly during a Mayor and Council Meeting (June 2006) when asked to comment on the services that Rep. Bearden was providing to the City.

In closing, I ask for your continued support and trust in your elected officials and the operations of your City. We are doing everything and will continue to do everything to keep our City a safe and secure place to live for our citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Wayne Garner".

J. Wayne Garner
Mayor