

10/28/08 JCC BOS Public Comment #2

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Members of the Board, Mr. Goodson;

I return to continue speaking about the JCC Code of Ethics as compared to the State of Virginia's Conflict of Interest statutes. They are two entirely different entities. The earlier comment about it taking "blithering idiot" to be found guilty of Conflict of Interest laws in Virginia was quite accurate and I wish to explain to the public just why this is the case.

The work session and proposed changes in language of the Code of Ethics would gut this policy of its intended purpose that is to foster the public trust. Instead the changed Code of Ethics would only be as good as the Virginia Conflict of Interest statutes.

Ethics and conflict of Interest are two distinctly different topics in Virginia. Never the less, when Mr. Henderson and others have been accused of ethics violations, they quickly turn the conversation to say they have no Conflict of Interest.

As I understand it, in Virginia, to be in violation of the state Conflict of Interest statute, a public official would basically have to accept and cash a check for \$10,000 or more with a memo line indicating "In anticipation of your vote".

\$9999 – No Conflict of Interest. Ethical no, but not a "conflict of interest".

This is the very reason James City County needs the existing Code of Ethics and a Board Majority willing to enforce it. Our Code of Ethics need strengthening not weakening or being discarded as the Republican majority is working to accomplish.

There are several outstanding and clear violations of the Code of Ethics / Public Trust that remain unaddressed.

When will the public's trust be restored?