

Clifton Journal 8/7/15

Why the error?

The first step in solving a problem is admitting there is a problem. Thank you City Manager Nick Villano for admitting there is a problem with the Clifton payroll policy. In this day and age of scandal "gates" one after the other, it is refreshing. Thank you to the one city employee who brought this problem to light last year. As was typical of my Council term, I was the lone wolf who called for an investigation when you began last year. Sadly, none of my fellow colleagues joined my call.

It is time Clifton's elected officials get their heads out of the sand and admit the same - there was a problem with the payroll in 2015 and could be a problem with underpaying city employees going back several years. Everyday this problem isn't acknowledged can be costing Clifton taxpayers more money. This is unacceptable to each and every city worker but also to the taxpayers of Clifton. It is time they start doing the job the voters of Clifton elected them to do.

As a taxpayer, it is troubling that this problem could go back several years - owing millions of dollars to city workers (who are entitled to each and every dollar they are owed). Why didn't the city's auditors find this problem? And now it is this same firm is researching this payroll issue? This is why I called for auditor rotation as a Councilwoman as recommended by the State Comptroller's 2008 report which stated "no government unit should use the same audit firm for more than 10 consecutive years." Clifton has used the same audit firm for at least the last 15 years.

It is time Clifton's elected officials hold someone accountable for this payroll error. It is unacceptable to taxpayers, if like in the Ameripay Scandal which cost Clifton taxpayers over \$1.3 mil-

lion, no one is held accountable for this mistake. Where was Clifton's CFO? As with any company, the Chief Financial Officer should be held accountable for all financial and monetary issues.

An honest day's work deserves an honest day's pay. Each and every Clifton worker - from fireman, policeman, DPW worker, city hall worker to crossing guard - deserves to be paid fully for each and each day they work. It is time Clifton recognizes this is the American way.

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