

Monroe A. Miller, Jr.
2200 Camp Branch Road
Waynesville, NC 28786
January 19, 2023

Subject: Request for Public Information - Kevin Ensley joint commissioner letter slamming Ramey.

A Request for Public Information has been made to Haywood County requesting the joint county commissioner letter by **Kevin Ensley, Jennifer Best, Tommy Long** and **Brandon Rogers** slamming newly elected county commissioner Terry Ramey.

[**Editor's Note:** Yes, **Jennifer Best** just went **bold** because of this back stabbing.]

Here is the Request:

Subject: Request for Public Information - rare joint statement issued Kevin Ensley
Date: Thu, 19 Jan 2023 10:31:00 -0500
From: Monroe Miller
To: Kris Boyd <Kris.Boyd@haywoodcountync.gov>, Bryant Morehead <bryant.morehead@haywoodcountync.gov>
CC: Terry Ramey <terry.ramey@haywoodcountync.gov>, Jennifer Best <jennifer.best@haywoodcountync.gov>, Tommy Long <Tommy.Long@haywoodcountync.gov>, Brandon Rogers <brandon.rogers@haywoodcountync.gov>, Amy Stevens <Amy.Stevens@haywoodcountync.gov>, Tracy Wells <Tracy.Wells@haywoodcountync.gov>, Frank Queen <Frank.Queen@haywoodcountync.gov>, Scott McLeod <info@smokymountainnews.com>, Greg Boothroyd <ads@smokymountainnews.com>, Kyle Perrotti <kyle.p@smokymountainnews.com>, Vicki Hyatt <vhyatt@themountaineer.com>, Becky Johnson <bjohnson@themountaineer.com>, Jonathan Key <jkey@themountaineer.com>

Mr. Boyd and Mr. Morehead,

Please review an article in the smn tabloid, attached, by Cory Vaillancourt, entitled "Haywood commissioners issue joint statement on Ramey" on 1/17/2023. It states:

Republican Commissioner Terry Ramey should pay his taxes and stop threatening the media for reporting on the issue, according to a rare joint statement issued by the other four Republicans on the Haywood County Board of Commissioners.

“An election was held and 26,927 voters cast a ballot. Of those, 13,498 (50.13%) voted to elect Mr. Ramey. The issue about his taxes had been reported and printed in the press prior to the election. Our taxes support our schools, community college, EMS, fire departments, sheriff’s department, library, mandated state/federal programs and many other initiatives that enhance our quality of life,” reads the statement, sent to The Smoky Mountain News by Chairman Kevin Ensley on Jan. 11 and bearing the names of fellow commissioners Jennifer Best, Tommy Long and Brandon Rogers. “Our opinion is that, as an elected official, we should be an example and promptly pay our taxes.”

This is a written document evidently signed by Kevin Ensley, which is now Public Information. Please provide a copy of that letter.

Secondly, at the end of Cory Vaillancourt's article, he references a bunch of alleged delinquent taxes from a source called secure.webtaxpay.com/search. Please provide any information you have that this entity is part of a Haywood County Tax authority.

Thank you,
Monroe A. Miller, Jr.

Here is the article by **Cory Vaillancourt**.

Haywood commissioners issue joint statement on Ramey
Written by Cory Vaillancourt
Tuesday, January 17, 2023



Then-candidate Terry Ramey speaks at a Haywood GOP forum in 2022. Cory Vaillancourt photo

Republican Commissioner Terry Ramey should pay his taxes and stop threatening the media for reporting on the issue, according to a rare joint statement issued by the other four Republicans on the Haywood County Board of Commissioners.

“An election was held and 26,927 voters cast a ballot. Of those, 13,498 (50.13%) voted to elect Mr. Ramey. The issue about his taxes had been reported and printed in the press prior to the election. Our taxes support our schools, community college, EMS, fire departments, sheriff’s department, library, mandated state/federal programs and many other initiatives that enhance our quality of life,” reads the statement, sent to The Smoky Mountain News by Chairman Kevin Ensley on Jan. 11 and bearing the names of fellow commissioners Jennifer Best, Tommy Long and Brandon Rogers. “Our opinion is that, as an elected official, we should be an example and promptly pay our taxes.”

On Sept. 28, 2022, The Smoky Mountain News first reported that a candidate for Haywood County Board of Commissioners, Terry Eugene Ramey, owed thousands in back taxes to the county, with at least one bill dating back to 2012. This fiscal year, the county will collect more than \$52 million in property taxes — by far its largest source of income.

At that time, Ramey said he’d pay the bills if they were valid. A subsequent review of the bills with the county’s tax assessor determined that the bills are indeed valid. On Nov. 8, 2022, Ramey earned enough votes to claim the last of three contested seats, despite his delinquencies.

As of Jan. 10, Ramey still has 13 outstanding tax bills in Haywood County totalling more than \$2,500.

Since being sworn into office on Dec. 8, Ramey has cast 13 votes, some of them concerning more than \$38,000 of taxpayer money — all without paying his own taxes.

Ramey has repeatedly threatened multiple individuals at The Smoky Mountain News for bringing light to his delinquencies, both before and after the election.

“It is never acceptable for public officials to threaten the press,” the commissioners’ statement reads. “The Constitution’s First Amendment guarantees freedom of the press. This was granted along with the other amendments to protect the Republic and everyone’s freedoms. Newspapers have ‘letters to the editor’ for an elected official, or anyone for that matter, to refute what they believe to be misinformation.”

When asked if they thought Ramey should recuse himself from board votes until he pays his taxes, or resign, commissioners said that it was up to the public to demand those outcomes.

“The voters of Haywood County elected Mr. Ramey and he will have to face them,” they said. “The county commission has a public comment session at every regular board meeting. If Haywood County voters have lost their trust in him, then they have the opportunity to voice whether or not a resignation is in order.”

Now that Ramey receives a paycheck — about \$1,000 a month — from the very county he’s been stiffing on tax bills for the past 11 years, there’s been talk about garnishing those wages.

When asked if the county should take that step, commissioners deferred to the county’s tax collector.

On Jan. 11, Republican Tax Collector Sebastian Cothran said that he wouldn’t garnish Ramey’s earnings because Ramey had signed up for a payment plan.

“Usually if they’re working with us, we wouldn’t do that,” Cothran said.

Details of the plan, made available to SMN by Cothran, state that Ramey is to pay \$300 a month until the debts are fully paid. In the interim, he’ll be charged .75% interest per month, and 2% each January, should the debts last that long. Both rates are set by state statute.

That means Ramey should have his debts paid off by this coming December, if he doesn’t miss any payments or make any additional payments.

During that time, county commissioners will work on and vote to implement the county’s next budget, likely nearing the \$100 million range.

Commissioner Terry Ramey's delinquent tax bills, as of Jan. 17, 2023.

Name	Year	Amount	Bill #
Terry Eugene Ramey	2022	\$49.98	8115
Terry Eugene Ramey	2021	\$54.37	8115
Terry Eugene Ramey	2020	\$53.38	8115
Terry Eugene Ramey	2019	\$57.29	8115
Terry Eugene Ramey	2018	\$61.38	8115
Terry Eugene Ramey	2017	\$65.39	8115
Terry Eugene Ramey	2016	\$61.44	8115
Terry Eugene Ramey	2013	\$644.26	9002
Ram Dog Enterprises LLC	2014	\$429.49	206544
Ram Dog Enterprises LLC	2013	\$520.85	206544
Ram Dog Enterprises LLC	2013	\$90.84	569920
Ram Dog Enterprises LLC	2013	\$34.07	533047
Ram Dog Enterprises LLC	2012	\$451.01	206544
TOTAL:		\$2,573.75	
<i>Source: secure.webtaxpay.com/search</i>			