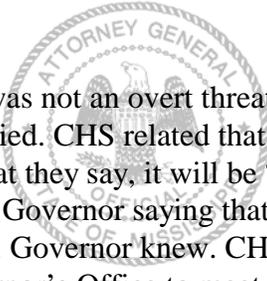


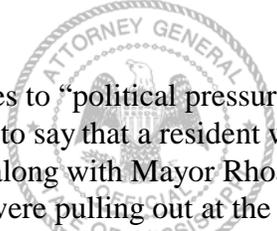
- CHS related that Senator Simmons got mad about it.
- CHS stated that McGrath sat on the request until the request for the project was resurrected.
- CHS stated that there was interest from the Lt. Governor via his staff and that his staff would ask for updates periodically but there was not much to give them at that time because nothing was being done.
- CHS related that the updates would be provoked by the Lt. Governor's staff and that it would usually be during appropriations time.
- CHS stated that there was a meeting at MDOT one afternoon (CHS could not remember date) in which McGrath and a Lee Weiskopf, (staffer of the Lt. Governor's Office), was present.
- CHS related that a copy of the frontage road sketch was reviewed in which it was determined that a traffic light was not feasible due to a traffic light being close and it was determined that a "J" turn was not the desired system.
- CHS stated that the question, "what about a frontage road" was posed.
- CHS related that a graphic of what the frontage road would look like was provided.
- CHS went on to say that there was an agreement to "get them what they wanted" which was a frontage road.
- CHS felt like there was influence from the Lt. Governor by using his position to get the frontage road so the CHS put it on MDOT's server via email so that he/she would have a record of it because the CHS felt "queasy" about it. The CHS would do this on everything because the CHS would get requests from Legislative staff often.
- CHS stated that Weiskopf would ask for updates a couple times a year and that when Weiskopf left the Lt. Governor's Office, a Kenny Ellis would ask for updates.
- CHS was removed from discussions after the above-mentioned meeting with McGrath and Weiskopf and the CHS was only a conduit for updates at this point.
- CHS went on to provide that it was expressed by the Lt. Governor's staff that the Lt. Governor was not satisfied with the pace of the project and that they wanted more updates.
- CHS stated that utilities companies can be slow in which the Lt. Governor's staff asked for an update at one point in which the CHS told the Lt. Governor's staff to contact the utilities companies to see if things could be sped up; CHS related that was done and things were sped up.
- CHS related that the Lt. Governor was actively participating through his staff as it relates to the construction of the project.
- CHS stated at it relates to other public officials being involved, it was mostly the Lt. Governor through his staff and Senator Simmons at the beginning.
- CHS went on to say that Senator Josh Harkins called at one (1) point to ask about the property that is located on the Northeast side, maybe around the church. CHS related that Senator Harkins was excited about the property being included in the project.



- CHS stated that there was not an overt threat made towards him pertaining to the project, but it was implied. CHS related that CHS knew what they were capable of and if you don't do what they say, it will be "hell" to pay.
- CHS stated that the Lt. Governor saying that he knew nothing about the project is not true and that the Lt. Governor knew. CHS went on to state that they were invited to the Lt. Governor's Office to meet regarding the road and bridge closures in which McGrath told the Lt. Governor to let her update him on the project, in which she did.
- CHS related that MDOT was prevented from carrying out its job or duties as it relates to Vision 21. CHS stated that the Lakeland Drive project needed to be done but other things throughout the state needed to be done as well. CHS went on to state that the Lakeland Drive project was pushed up the list.
- CHS stated that as it relates to the note on his phone from 2014 regarding McGrath trying to minimize political exposure for the Lt. Governor, the CHS would write notes so that he/she would not forget. The CHS went on to say that he/she was helping McGrath craft a letter but the CHS did not know if it was about the frontage road. CHS stated that McGrath can be "brash" and that she tells it like it is so he/she would help her with that.
- CHS stated that he/she was contacted by Senator Josh Harkins right after the Litigation Letters went out in which the CHS described him as being worried, squeamish, and very warm during the phone call. CHS related that she/he thought that Senator Harkins was either recording the conversation or was on speaker phone. CHS went on to say that Senator Harkins stated that the CHS was going to get Subpoenaed in which the CHS told him that the CHS was going to go and tell what the CHS knows.

On November 20, 2018, Investigator Ware along with Special Assistant Attorney General Crystal Utley Secoy and Special Assistant Attorney General James Bobo conducted an interview with Melinda McGrath, Executive Director of the MS Department of Transportation (MDOT) regarding her statements as it relates to her agency receiving "political pressure" to build a frontage road at the intersection of Lakeland Drive and the entrance to the Oak Ridge Subdivision located in Flowood, MS.

McGrath stated that she first found out about the Oak Ridge Subdivision and/or the intersection several years ago through her staff members, Michael Arnemann and Amy Mood. McGrath related that the Lt. Governor's Office wanted a traffic light at the intersection in which MDOT's engineers said that a red light would be too close to the Dogwood/Lakeland Drive red light. McGrath stated that Lee Weiskopf was over transportation for the Lt. Governor in which he (Weiskopf) came to her in or around 2014 or 2015 in which they met in Arnemann's office about the frontage road project. McGrath did not remember the details of the meeting and related that Arnemann kept documents due to her relying on him with everything legislative wise. McGrath related that Arnemann handled everything involving the legislature and Amy Mood kept up with anything dealing with design and that they both should have emails and logs of how everything happened.



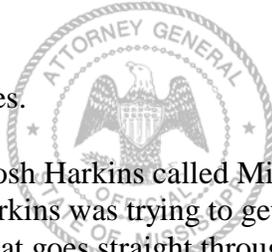
McGrath stated that as it relates to “political pressure,” there was interest from the Lt. Governor’s Office. McGrath went on to say that a resident was hit pulling out of the subdivision in which he said that it was not safe, along with Mayor Rhoads. McGrath related that they had a concern that kids and elderly people were pulling out at the intersection as well and she was told that she did not want to see kids and elderly get hurt at the intersection because she did not do what she was supposed to do. McGrath stated that they looked at and that there is a frontage road on the other side that the city built. McGrath went on to say that Mayor Rhoads stated that if she did not do it, the Senate was going to put it into legislation that she had to put a traffic signal up. McGrath stated that a traffic light was not going to work due to the intersection being too close to the Dogwood intersection. McGrath went on to say that she was told that if she did not do the frontage road, the legislature would write it into law.

McGrath stated that the Lt. Governor’s Office or the Speaker’s Office would call to ask about certain projects, you would know the project was a priority. McGrath related that it has always been like that. McGrath related that as it relates to the “legislative wrangling comment,” you have to compromise or you don’t get your budget. McGrath used the Lakeland Drive widening project and there having to be a Special Session called in order for MDOT to get their budget.

McGrath related that they worked on the design of the project for about ten (10) years and worked on buying right-of-way. McGrath went on to say that they were trying to finish plans and to come to a logical stopping point due to receiving a directive from the Commission to stop widening roads. McGrath stated that Lakeland Drive was not in bad shape at this time and that it just needed paving. McGrath related that the project was resurrected due to communication with the Lt. Governor’s Office and that Representative Mark Baker was also vocal about the project. McGrath stated that from 2014-2016, they would meet with the Lt. Governor’s Office to provide updates on the Lakeland Drive and frontage road projects. McGrath stated that the frontage road project did not come about until the Lakeland Drive widening project came about which is when the request for updates started. McGrath related that both projects were together and that they are both in the same environmental document. McGrath went on to say that they became separate projects due to them not being able to get the plans for the frontage road done in time. McGrath stated that the Lt. Governor would not say much during these meetings and once the updates were given, he respond by saying, “sounds good.” McGrath related that the Lt. Governor would be paying attention but he just would not say much about it. McGrath related that present at the meetings would be a Michael Arnemann, a Parks McNabb, and a Rebecca Staples.

McGrath stated that there would be updates provided to Mayor Gary Rhoads of Flowood pretty regularly. McGrath related that in maybe 2014, there was an earmark to the City of Flowood to buy right-of-way instead of giving the right-of-way to MDOT. McGrath went on to say that for them to access that money, that they had to enter into an agreement.

McGrath stated that when the project broke in the news, Mayor Rhoads sent a text to Commissioner Hall in which he (Mayor Rhoads) were very angry. McGrath related that she had no idea why Mayor Rhoads would care. McGrath related that Mayor Rhoads said that the Lt. Governor called him and cursed him out and she told Mayor Rhoads to just hang up on the Lt.



Governor like Commissioner Hall does.

McGrath stated that Senator Josh Harkins called Michael Arnemann in which they all met. McGrath related that Senator Harkins was trying to get rid of some land. McGrath stated that there was a driveway easement that goes straight through Harkins' property and that this was a cheaper option to tie into Senator Harkins' property. McGrath went on to say that the church located in that particular area caused some concern due to the easement being so close. McGrath stated that Senator Harkins was not pushy with her.

McGrath stated that the frontage road project did not violate Vision 21 but it did violate the Commission's directive. McGrath described Lakeland Drive as an annoyance, not a safety issue. McGrath stated that Vision 21 states that safety issues should be the top priority. McGrath related that the Commission has always related that MDOT's number one (1) priority is safe preexisting roadways. McGrath stated that no one provided exaggerated information, nor were there concerns about contracts and that the only thing unusual was prioritizing the project from the very beginning. McGrath stated that the Lt. Governor's Office would say that they were not moving quick enough on the overall project. McGrath related that this project was the only project that the Lt. Governor's Office has called for updates on that she was aware of.

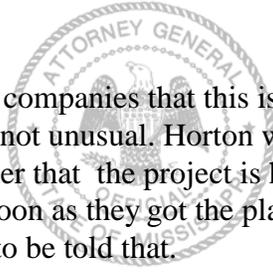
McGrath stated that the normal procedure with projects would be MDOT staff looking at the volume of capacity and that the staff puts it all together, then she looks at the data with them. McGrath went on to say that she or the staff then presents the information to the Commission at one (1) meeting, let them review the information, and the Commission votes on information or project at the following meeting for the projects to go to the legislature. McGrath related that the frontage road project was different in that they looked at it and realized that the project was more political than data driven. McGrath went on to say that she and Amy Mood went to Commissioner Hall about it. McGrath stated that there were remarks made by the Lt. Governor about MDOT every year and that it was tough for MDOT to get a budget, Commissioner Hall said go ahead with the project .

McGrath stated that, as it relates to the alleged statement made by Senator Simmons stating that MDOT would not get it's budget if they did not build the frontage road, she did not remember him saying it about the frontage road, but he has said it about other projects.

McGrath stated that what she meant by "political pressure" is when one (1) entity or group is directing her outside of the Commission.

On November 20, 2018, Investigator Ware along with Special Assistant Attorney General Crystal Utley Secoy and Special Assistant Attorney General James Bobo conducted an interview with Lisa Horton of the MS Department of Transportation (MDOT) regarding the frontage road project.

Horton stated that she has been employed with MDOT for approximately twenty-one (21) years where she currently serves as the Utilities Coordinator. Horton related that at the time this particular project began, she was the Assistant Utilities Coordinator. Horton stated that as it



relates to her statement to the utilities companies that this is a very very very political project and Jackson is pushing really hard, it was not unusual. Horton went on to say that her boss at the time was a David Foster in which he told her that the project is highly political, that they could not drag their feet on the project, and as soon as they got the plans, move forward with the utilities. Horton stated that it was not unusual to be told that.

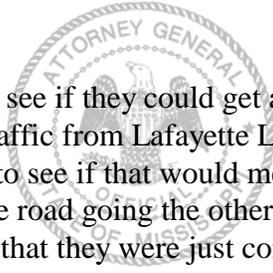
Horton stated that the Lt. Governor was pushing for the project. Horton related that she did not know why MDOT was going to hold off on the project but stated that the project would come back up and that it was put in with the existing Highway 25 project. Horton went on to say that one (1) time they were going to hold up on the project, but move forward with the utilities. Horton stated that there was a set of plans sent and they were told to see what utilities would need to be moved. Horton went on to say that they reviewed the plans and there was a gas line and fiber optics. Horton stated that there was power and AT&T on one (1) corner. Horton related that Amy Mood was told to make adjustments to not affect Energy and AT&T. Horton stated that they also discussed the right-of-way in which they were told to wait on the plans and meet with the utilities companies to go over where the utilities were located. Horton went on to say that Mood sent emails asking for the status of the utilities being moved. Horton stated that there was an issue with a gas line. Horton stated that there was some changes at Center Point Energy in which new people came in and some left which caused the gas line issue to fall through the cracks and that MDOT had to start from scratch with Center Point.

On November 20, 2018, Investigator Ware along with Special Assistant Attorney General Crystal Utley Secoy and Special Assistant Attorney General James Bobo conducted an interview with James Sullivan of the MS Department of Transportation (MDOT) regarding the frontage road project.

Sullivan stated that he is currently a State Traffic Engineer with MDOT and has been since February 2012. Sullivan related that the basis for building the frontage road was due to safety complaints. Sullivan related that an investigation was conducted and that they were asked to consider a traffic signal, and their findings were that a traffic signal would not be sufficient. Sullivan went on to say that the Roadway Design Division asked his division to offer comments on the geometric layout of the frontage road. Sullivan stated that some of his staff may have been more involved in the process of considering the frontage road.

Sullivan stated that Andy McNair, Kevin McMillian, and Amriak Singh were involved in the Traffic Signal Warrant Analysis. Sullivan related that the matter did not meet a traffic signal warrant as it is laid out in their manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and also it violated the spacing requirements in their Access Management Manual because the traffic signal would have been less than one-thousand feet (1000') from the signal at Dogwood Festival.

Sullivan stated that they had some crash data from the intersection and the crash data was such that it would not warrant meeting the crash warrant for a traffic signal which is somewhat of a benchmark. Sullivan went on to say that a for crash warrant for a traffic signal, there had to be five (5) correctable right angle crashes within a twelve (12) month period. Sullivan stated that if it did not meet a traffic signal warrant, retroactively, he would not recommend a frontage road.



Sullivan stated that in order to see if they could get a traffic signal to work at the intersection, they tried combing the traffic from Lafayette Lane which is the intersection just North of the intersection in question, to see if that would meet a traffic warrant which would have also involved a different frontage road going the other direction to try to link up the two (2) intersections. Sullivan went on to say that they were just conceptually designing trying to find out if anything could be done to warrant a signal.

On November 20, 2018, Investigator Ware along with Special Assistant Attorney General Crystal Utley Secoy and Special Assistant Attorney General James Bobo conducted an interview with David Seal of the MS Department of Transportation (MDOT) regarding the frontage road project.

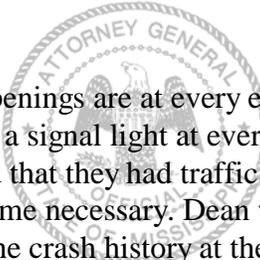
Seal stated that he is currently the Assistant Roadway Design Engineer. Seal related that the frontage road in question was never intended to be included for safety purposes in which he based that off of the Road Safety Audit conducted in January of 2014. Seal related that they looked at and evaluated everything including the crash data and that they made recommendations.

Seal stated that the first time that he became aware of the project was in December of 2013 in which his boss at the time, John Reese, asked him to develop a frontage road and to also complete a cost estimate. Seal stated that they worked hard on the project and in September of 2014, they were told that the project was not going to be a part of the six (6) lane widening project. Seal related that the project came back up in 2016 from an operations standpoint as it relates to if the frontage road would work. Seal stated that there was concern that it was not going to work well and that they asked the Traffic Engineering Division to look at it to see if it would function. Seal went on to say that from a traffic operations perspective, they determined that it was not going to be a problem as he expected and that they were surprised that it would work. Seal stated that no one ever asked for any data to be manipulated nor did anyone exaggerate outside material that was provided.

Seal stated that they were told to focus on making the deadline and that it was clear that the deadline needed to be met. Seal related that at the onset of the project, there were three (3) team members and the number of team members increased to approximately eight (8). Seal went on to say that they were told that failure was not an option. Seal related that everyone kind of knew why they were doing what they were doing and that everyone knew who lived in the neighborhood.

On November 20, 2018, Investigator Ware along with Special Assistant Attorney General Crystal Utley Secoy and Special Assistant Attorney General James Bobo conducted an interview with Wes Dean of the MS Department of Transportation (MDOT) regarding the frontage road project.

Dean stated that he served as a State Traffic Engineer until December of 2011 and then moved to Administration where he serves as the Assistant Chief of Engineering. Dean related that he has looked at the frontage road project a few times over the years. Dean went on to say



that on Lakeland Drive, the median openings are at every eight-hundred and eighty feet (880') in which it is a common practice to have a signal light at every other one (1) due to the volume of traffic on Lakeland Drive. Dean stated that they had traffic counts done in which the crossing at Oak Ridge Trail did not meet the volume necessary. Dean went on to say that spacing was an issue as well and they also looked at the crash history at the intersection. Dean stated that there was just not any reason to “buck” the practice of putting a light at every other median opening. Dean stated that there was no crash relation for a traffic signal at the intersection nor was it significant enough to warrant putting a signal light in.

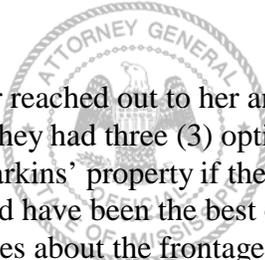
Dean related that there was nothing given to exaggerate the need for a traffic signal nor did he receive any threats pertaining to this project but he had an idea that there was something because the project kept coming back up after they said no three (3) times. Dean went on to say that they did offer the option of a “J” turn but that was not too popular.

On November 20, 2018, Investigator Ware along with Special Assistant Attorney General Crystal Utley Secoy and Special Assistant Attorney General James Bobo conducted an interview with Amy Mood of the MS Department of Transportation (MDOT) regarding the frontage road project.

Mood stated that she served as the Assistant Chief Engineer since 2011 and that she is currently over Roadway Design. Mood stated that as it relates to the email she sent Gary Miller in March of 2014, Mood related that has to get projects moving and that is the nature of her job. Mood stated that she does not know the politics behind the frontage road project and that she was just told to get it done. Mood went on to say that she was sure that she became aware of the project through Melinda McGrath and that McGrath told her that they needed to get it done. Mood stated that they could not put a light at the intersection. Mood stated that they drove out to look at the utilities and that there were too many utilities. Mood related that they then looked at going a different way.

Mood related that the purpose for the frontage road was the residence of the subdivision were concerned about crossing three (3) lanes of traffic and that there were safety concerns with there being young drivers. Mood went on to say that she was just told “we’re going to do this.” Mood stated that Wes Dean was over Traffic Engineering at the time. Mood stated that in speaking with Jarrod, the frontage road was added for safety concerns with there being young drivers having to cross three (3) lanes of traffic.

Mood stated that in 2015, it was her understanding that they were not going to do the frontage road and that one (1) year later, they were back working on the frontage road project, which was not unusual. Mood went on to say that projects come up and go away like that. Mood related that she thought that it had to do with cost. Mood stated that they ran some numbers and cost became a concern. Mood went on to say that concerns from citizens were being received again in which they looked at an easement and that the easement was the only cost efficient way.



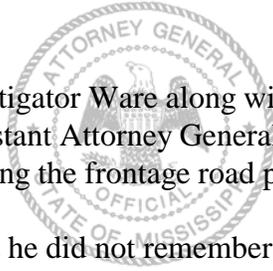
Mood stated that a Gary Miller reached out to her and McGrath about using Senator Josh Harkins' property. Mood related that they had three (3) options which were go to the mall, use the church property, or use Senator Harkins' property if the two (2) subdivisions could have agreed in which she thought that would have been the best option. Mood stated that they met with the City of Flowood a couple times about the frontage road project. Mood related that Mayor Rhoads thought that it was the best option for the subdivisions and that he was very pro frontage road but not for any personal reasons that she knows of .

Mood stated that no one was ever pushy or threatening towards her probably because they know that she is not the decision maker. Mood related that she thought there were legitimate concerns but she would have just turned right out of the neighborhood and did a u-turn. Mood went on to say that the frontage road would have been the safest option but it was not necessary to go to this extent. Mood stated that she does not disagree with McGrath about the "political pressure."

Mood stated that as it relates to the email for the press release with her stating that the frontage road was for safety reasons, no one told her to say it was for safety reasons and that she said it was for safety reasons because of young drivers. Mood went on to say that the email was a draft for the Department to decide what the official statement would be. Mood stated that she was told that the Lt. Governor wanted the frontage road because he did not want his kids driving across three (3) lanes of traffic. Mood related that her interpretation of the reason for the frontage road was because of kids having to cross three (3) lanes of traffic. Mood stated that no one told her to use the word "safety" and that she said it because of young drivers.

On November 20, 2018, Investigator Ware along with Special Assistant Attorney General Crystal Utley Secoy and Special Assistant Attorney General James Bobo conducted an interview with Andy McNair of the MS Department of Transportation (MDOT) regarding the frontage road project.

McNair stated that he is currently the Assistant State Traffic Engineer over operations and that James Sullivan is his direct supervisor. McNair related that he was previously the Area Traffic Engineer for District 5 until August of 2013. McNair stated that he did not know where the idea for a frontage road came from and that they looked at it over the years due to people having safety concerns. McNair went on to say that they looked at all of the intersections and this particular intersection did not meet signal warrants. McNair stated that his opinion was not a viable opinion but if the frontage road was constructed, it would be under utilized. McNair related that he never asked why the frontage road was being considered but it was his general assumption that it was due to political reasons and powerful people living in the neighborhood. McNair went on to say that he did hear stuff about the project but it would have been third (3rd) or fourth (4th) hand information. McNair stated that they did receive a couple of complaints over the years about safety concerns.



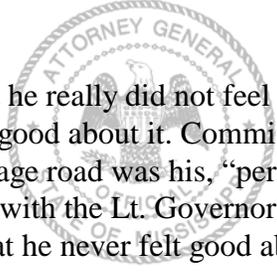
On November 20, 2018, Investigator Ware along with Special Assistant Attorney General Crystal Utley Secoy and Special Assistant Attorney General James Bobo conducted an interview with Commissioner Dick Hall regarding the frontage road project.

Commissioner Hall stated that he did not remember when he first became aware of the frontage road or signal light matter but there was a question about how people were going to cross six (6) lanes of traffic. Commissioner Hall related that the first question was about a signal light at the intersection but it was too close to another signal light. Commissioner Hall went on to say that the frontage road was a high priority for Mayor Gary Rhoads and that he was extremely interested in seeing it get done, but he would have to be asked why.

Commissioner Hall stated that the project was expensive because of the length of the frontage road. Commissioner Hall related that it was estimated that the frontage road would cost Two Million Dollars (2,000,000) in which that was a lot of money to get people out of a neighborhood. Commissioner Hall went on to say that the plan was that they would do the project and that it was a late decision as it relates to the widening project.

Commissioner Hall stated that when the Clarion-Ledger article came out, it gave him second thoughts if it was being done because MDOT staff was getting pressure. Commissioner Hall stated that he was never confident that the frontage road was cost effective and that he questioned the decision to spend Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000) and that he had a great deal of trouble trying to explain why they were doing it. Commissioner Hall went on to say that he has not had any discussions with the Lt. Governor about the project that he can recall and that they do not talk unless they have too. Commissioner Hall stated that Mayor Rhoads was unbelievably upset when the news broke regarding the frontage road project. Commissioner Hall stated that Mayor Rhoads called when the news broke and told him that if he did not fire Melinda McGrath by noon, he was going to make something happen such as make sure he does not get re-elected which he considered a political threat. Commissioner Hall went on to say that after that phone call, he knew that the frontage road was not being built for the right reasons and that it made him firmly decide not to build the frontage road.

Commissioner Hall stated that the reasoning for building the frontage road was originally because of safety issues. Commissioner Hall related that he did not think he decided to build the frontage road because of the Mayor. Commissioner Hall stated that the Mayor did harp on the safety issue and that if they would have built the frontage road, they would have turned it over to the City of Flowood for maintenance. Commissioner Hall related that if he had to defend approving the frontage road project, it was not a good decision. Commissioner Hall stated that Mayor Rhoads threatened him a lot but the Lt. Governor never contacted him directly and he (Commissioner Hall) came to find out that people went around him. Commissioner Hall related that as it relates to threats, Mayor Rhoads was threatening him about McGrath and he considered it political threats in the way he was "dog cursing Melinda." Commissioner Hall described Mayor Rhoads as being the maddest person he has ever talked to and that Mayor Rhoads was irate but he can not say what Mayor Rhoads' motivation was.



Commissioner Hall stated that he really did not feel good about the frontage road project and he did not think MDOT staff felt good about it. Commissioner Hall went on to say that the decision not to proceed with the frontage road was his, “period,” when he found out his staff was being contacted and his staff meeting with the Lt. Governor’s staff and that kind of thing. Commissioner Hall went on to say that he never felt good about the frontage road project from the very beginning.

Commissioner Hall stated that he has never talked to Senator Harkins in detail and that he did not find out about Senator Harkins’ property until further talks.

On December 4, 2018, Investigator Ware along with Special Assistant Attorney General Crystal Utley Secoy conducted an interview with Commissioner Mike Tagert regarding the frontage road project.

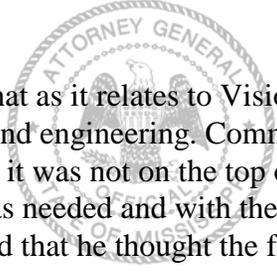
Commissioner Mike Tagert stated that he did not know how the frontage road project came about but he found out about it when it broke in the news in which he looked into it then to understand what was happening back then and what has happened since. Commissioner Tagert related that he looked at the Commission items as it relates to the widening project which would have been on the agendas. Commissioner Tagert went on to say that he was aware of the widening project just like any other project but he was not aware of the issue at the location in question until the news broke. Commissioner Tagert stated that no one spoke to him outside of MDOT.

Commissioner Tagert stated that there was a meeting at the Lt. Governor’s Office where they discussed many projects and the widening project but not about the frontage road project. Commissioner Tagert related that he only remembered talking about the need for the widening project and that the Lt. Governor was pushing or an advocate for additional lanes on Lakeland Drive. Commissioner Tagert went on to say that he was not aware that the Lt. Governor lived at the location in question.

Commissioner Tagert stated that when the news broke, the Lt. Governor called him and asked what the heck was going on in which he (Commissioner Tagert) did not know. Commissioner Tagert related that he then spoke Melinda McGrath several times for a response from an agency standpoint.

Commissioner Tagert stated that he would meet with Senator Simmons on a regular bases but not about the Lakeland Drive project as he recalls it. Commissioner Tagert related that he has not had any conversation with Mayor Rhoads or Senator Josh Harkins pertaining to this matter.

Commissioner Tagert related that when he read about this matter in the paper, he talked to McGrath in which she told him they were being pressured to do the frontage road project. Commissioner Tagert stated that obviously McGrath felt pressured but it was second hand knowledge to him.



Commissioner Tagert stated that as it relates to Vision 21, they have to factor all things into the project such as safety and sound engineering. Commissioner Tagert related that the widening project was on the radar but it was not on the top of the list. Commissioner Tagert went on to say that the widening project was needed and with the earmarking, it was pushed to the top of the list. Commissioner Tagert stated that he thought the frontage road project was a safety related issue but then it was not.

Investigative Findings

During the course of the investigation, MDOT staff emails were provided which indicated that the Lieutenant Governor's Office contacted MDOT to obtain updates and information regarding the frontage road project. On September 16, 2014, a previous employee with MDOT emailed a map of the proposed frontage road project to a Lee Weiskopf, previous staff member of the Lieutenant Governor's Office. On November 4, 2014, the MDOT staff member emailed David Foster, District Engineer, asking for an update on utility movement in response to a call his office received from the Lieutenant Governor's staff. On November 5, 2014, the MDOT staff member then forwarded Foster's update to Weiskopf. On February 1, 2016, the MDOT staff member again emailed Foster asking for an update on the frontage road project at the request of the Lieutenant Governor's Office. On February 2, 2016, the MDOT staff member passed this information on to Weiskopf, who thanked the MDOT staff member for the information.