

Sheriff's staffer: FOIA requests cost \$18,000

Office used 48 reams of paper to comply with Milliron's requests

By Matt Schury

A letter from Kate Rassmussen, the Kendall County Sheriff's administrative manager, indicates that Todd Milliron, who lost his bid as a Green Party candidate for the Kendall County Board Nov. 2, cost the sheriff's office almost \$18,000 to prepare over 200 Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

The letter, included in the county board meeting packet last week, says Milliron and his supporters filed the requests from July through November. The letter also mentions that C.G. Fifield, a retired state police officer and vocal opponent of Sheriff Richard Randall, filed 13 requests. Fifield and Milliron supported Robert Lea, the independent candidate that lost to Randall in the election.

Rassmussen, the sheriff's department acting FOIA officer, states in the letter that the information requested "cost taxpayers \$17,840 in our salaries, plus all of the printer toner cartridges, copying and paper and postage (everything had to go certified mail/return receipt requested). Just a snapshot of what Mr. Milliron is costing just this Office."

In addition, she explains that the sheriff's office used 48 reams of paper to comply with the request.

Rassmussen shows in the letter that she came up with the \$17,840 figure by calculating that she spent about 70 percent of her time compiling the information while Tracy Page, the executive assistant to the chief deputy and human resources manager, spent about 40 percent of her work time filling the request.

"I make \$49,512 per year and Tracy makes \$47,555 per year. This would be

approximately \$11,500 paid in my salary for these FOIAs alone and \$6,340 for Tracy," Rassmussen says in the letter.

Rassmussen included a photo of a large stack of the pages she said was the information that she had to collect for Milliron.

For his part, Milliron says he considers himself a "FOIA dentist."

"It was like pulling teeth," Milliron said. "There are probably a few teeth over there that still have to be removed."

He added that he didn't believe the office had ever been asked for that much FOIA material and didn't feel he inconvenienced the sheriff's staff.

"The only FOIAs they've had people ask them for is a ticket or a (traffic) stop," Milliron said. "They were less than forthcoming."

As far as what Milliron found from the requests, he says it was further proof of insubordination.

"Some of the stuff that I found is that they weren't following their own policies," Milliron said, adding that he had supporters in the public.

"I ran into a lot of people who were saying 'Go Todd, go,'" Milliron related.

Most of the information Milliron and Fifield requested was posted on the web site yorkvilleinsider.org.

He said that he looked through the information and took the "stuff that I thought was interesting."

Milliron said that he wanted itemized receipts from the county-issued credit card, which made up about 20 percent of the receipts he received adding that most of the receipts were composites with only the totals shown.

Regarding the cost, Milliron said he doesn't see how salaried employees

"It was like pulling teeth. There are probably a few teeth over there that still have to be removed."

Todd Milliron

could claim they cost the county almost \$18,000.

"They were doing work that they were doing any way," he said. "Since they are salary there were no overtime charges involved in that."

According to Milliron, 50 of the FOIA requests were for individual transactions.

Million agrees that he did file around 200 but those were for individual receipts and credit card transactions, which would accumulate paper.

With regard to the photo of the large stacks of paper, Milliron said most of

that was deposition testimony from the Chief Deputy Terry Tichava's sexual harassment pre-trial hearings.

"That adds, if I had to guess, eight or nine inches by itself," Milliron said adding that he spent about \$160 to get that deposition.

He said most of what he requested he still hasn't gotten.

When asked his response to the letter alleging it was a waste of money and resources, Milliron said, "It seems like intimidation to me."

He said that he would like to see documentation showing how it cost the taxpayers that much money when the two are salaried employees.

"If they were doing stuff correctly we wouldn't have had to go through this exercise," Milliron said, adding that the sheriff's office would frequently wait until the very last minute on the day to call him and tell him he could get his request the next day.

Fox Valley Park district releases chief's contract

Agency responds to Ledger-Sentinel's FOIA request

By John Etheredge

The newly appointed director of the Fox Valley Park District will receive a

her own cell phone or other hand-held mobile communications device."

The park district serves more than 200,000 residents in Aurora, North