

Acclaim Investigations LLC

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Case: Colorado Independent Ethics Commission

Lawyer: Kyle Dumler

Investigator: Bill McBean

Subject: Roxane White

Bill: My name is Bill McBean. I'm an investigator for the Colorado Independent Ethics Commission. It's March 19th, 2014. This is an interview with Roxane White, Governor Hickenlooper's Chief of Staff. Roxane, do you know that this interview is being recorded?

Roxane: Yes, I do.

Bill: And is that okay with you?

Roxane: Yes, it is.

Bill: In the room with her is David Spector. Who is here to take care of her today. David, do you know this interview is being recorded?

David: Yes, I do.

Bill: Is that okay with you?

David: Yes [inaudible 00:33].

Bill: So now we're all on the up and up, and everybody knows what's going on. My first question is, Miss White, how ...

Roxane: Roxane is fine.

Bill: Is Roxane? Okay, all right. First let me ask you, can you set me up with an interview with the governor on March 26th or 27th?

Roxane: I have no idea.

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Bill: Okay.

Roxanne: But David can go through the governor's scheduler.

Bill: Okay.

Roxane: I don't do the governor's scheduling.

Bill: All right. The other problem is, we've been having a big problem with the DGA. They will just not return our phone calls. They don't want to have anything to do with us, with our inquiries. Do you think you could exert any influence on getting them to cooperate? Are you willing to?

Roxane: I'd have David call again.

David: Yes.

Bill: All right, good thank you. All right.

Roxane: I would hope they would fully cooperate.

Bill: Yeah, well not so far. All right, Roxane how, and when were you first contacted about the event in Aspen?

Roxane: Oh my gosh, I don't know. It comes through my scheduling office as well. So it may have been ... I think I have DGA events on my schedule for next year at this point.

Bill: So you don't remember at all about [crosstalk 02:00].

Roxane: No. But scheduling requests go in to my scheduler as well.

Bill: Okay. Were you briefed about DGA preparations?

Roxane: No.

Bill: Not at all?

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- Roxane: No. I would have had a briefing book that I read on the way to the meeting.
- Bill: Okay, all right. Did you do any work on the event prior to the event?
- Roxane: Off hours, I helped the DGA with some fund-raising issue things. But that would have been on my own private time.
- Bill: Okay. Who else from the governor's staff, and campaign staff attended the event in Aspen?
- Roxane: Alan Salazar, Will Shafroth, and Laura Warren.
- Bill: Okay.
- Roxane: And the governor's security detail.
- Bill: Did the staff discuss the DGA event with you?
- Roxane: Not to any extent. We would of, when we reviewed the governor's schedule have gone over but that would be it.
- Bill: Okay. Did you supervise them in the completion of their assigned tasks while they were working on it?
- Roxane: No. That would have been Alan Salazar.
- Bill: Okay. I guess this question just applies to Mr. Salazar. Was his tuition and meals and overnight expenses ... hotel expenses covered by the DGA?
- Roxane: I assume so.
- Bill: Could we find out?
- Roxane: David can.
- Bill: Okay. David find out? Thank you. Has the governor received funds from the DGA in years 2010 or his 2014 campaign?

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Roxane: I don't know.

Bill: You know David?

David: No.

Bill: Okay. Could we find out?

David: You'd have to talk to the campaign.

Bill: Okay. We checked, and I could not see it in the public record anyplace. But sometimes campaign contributions take circuitous routes.

Roxane: I disagree with your assessment of that sir.

Bill: Okay, good.

Roxane: If there had been money given, you should be able to find it.

Bill: All right. That's confident thank you. Since I can't find it, do you have any idea why they haven't contributed?

Roxane: Well, we're just barely in the 2014 campaign.

Bill: Yeah.

Roxane: And the governor entered the race very late in 2010.

Bill: Okay.

Roxane: And, you may remember that we had a problem with the republican candidate. Who was the front-runner, and ultimately there were two opponents against him. So, it wasn't a highly contested race.

Bill: And so they just didn't think it was?

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Roxane: It wasn't ... you know, I'm not aware of the DGA spending money when they don't need to.

Bill: Yeah, we noticed that too. Did the DGA imply or state that the governor would receive a campaign contribution as a result of hosting the July 13 event?

Roxane: Absolutely not.

Bill: Have they said anything about him receiving a campaign contribution at all?

Roxane: No, not that I'm aware of.

Bill: Do you know about how the ... generally speaking how the DGA operates, with regard to democratic governors, in supporting of campaigns. Is it directly through the state party? In other words, we know that Terry McAuliffe from Virginia, got six million dollars from a recent campaign.

Roxane: Sir, I don't run the campaign, and I wouldn't know that.

Bill: And so ...

Roxane: I'm the governor's chief of staff.

Bill: I know, but you know a lot about democratic politics too though.

Roxane: I am a non-affiliated voter, and I disagree with your assessment of that sir.

David: Mr. McBean how the DGA operates, again I'm happy to put you into contact with them. If you want to continue to ask Roxanne questions about it that's fine. But if she doesn't know she doesn't know.

Bill: Well I understand. But you don't think you know a lot about democratic politics?

Roxane: No. I don't think so.

Bill: Really?

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Roxane: I don't think I know more about democratic politics than I know about republican politics.

Bill: Okay.

Roxane: I'm fortunate to work for a governor that doesn't require that from me.

Bill: Okay. All right. I didn't know...

Roxane: There are two governors...

Bill: I never [inaudible 07:32].

Roxane: There are two governors in the country that have unaffiliated voters as their chiefs of staff.

Bill: Okay.

Roxane: We happen to be fortunate to have one of those.

Bill: I did not think you were unaffiliated, so. The governor stated that he was actively raising money for the DGA at the event. Did he tell you how much he raised for them?

Roxane: No.

Bill: Did the DGA ask Hickenlooper to host the event? Or, did the governor come up with the idea to host the conference?

Roxane: I believe they would of asked him. We generally don't go looking for more work.

Bill: Okay. I think I can just probably ... personally; I'll have to ask somebody else. But do you personally have knowledge of the governor receiving campaigns from any attendee at the retreat?

Roxane: At the event itself, no.

Bill: Okay.

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Roxane: Absolutely not.

Bill: Okay.

Roxane: It's not a fund-raising event.

Bill: But he did have campaign...

Roxane: Right.

Bill: ... people up there. So, there was a potential for that happening. People have lots of money, campaign workers up there. Excuse me if I make the assumption.

Roxane: We had campaign events off hours. We worked three hours when we were in town.

Bill: Those campaign events in Aspen were totally separate from the DGA ...

Roxane: Correct.

Bill: ... function.

Roxane: Correct.

Bill: I see, and some of the same people may have gone to...

Roxane: I don't even recall many of the same people being at the two events.

Bill: How interesting, okay. Because there were two deals in town that day. The Aspen Institute was holding something.

Roxane: They were.

Bill: There were a lot of different reasons for people being in town.

Roxane: Right.

Bill: And then, of course there's always the Aspen Music Festival bringing a lot of people into town. Any number of reasons for people...

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Roxane: Seems like there's always a lot going on in Aspen.

Bill: Okay, and the [inaudible 10:39]. Just to make sure that I covered the [inaudible 10:54] in as many ways as I can. Did he have any discussions with you regarding fund-raising at the retreat at all?

Roxane: Not that I recall, no.

Bill: Okay, and you have a pretty good mind?

Roxane: Well, it's been a few months but generally, yes.

Bill: Yeah. So these kinds of things generally don't go in one ear and out the other?

Roxane: Right, right.

Bill: Yeah.

Roxane: I went to a fund-raising event with him, and I told him he had to get back to the DGA, and was hustling him out of that. But, that was about get back to the policy conference.

Bill: Okay. Did the governor discuss the implications of Article XXIX with you before the trip?

David: That's another important point.

Roxane: No, legal would do that for us.

Bill: Okay. Legal would discuss it with him?

Roxane: And with myself, yes.

David: Yes.

Bill: Did anybody talk to you about it?

Roxane: Before we go to anything we go over the ethics rules.

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Bill: What did they tell you?

Roxane: As always, they remind us about being careful to not take anything from lobbyists. Over \$53.00 dollar rule, all and anything that they think might apply.

Bill: And they didn't mention the DGA?

Roxane: In terms of what? [crosstalk 12:28]

Bill: In terms of the hotel. Paying for the hotels being a possible violation?

Roxane: They did not think it was a violation.

Bill: Okay. All these issues were thrashed out in advance?

Roxane: Absolutely.

Bill: You went into this with eyes wide open?

Roxane: We went into it believing we were absolutely in compliance with the law.

Bill: When Compass came up with this complaint you said, "Saw all this coming."

Roxane: No. Thought we had followed the letter and the spirit of the law, and that we had done everything correct. We were surprised because we work very hard on everything here to try to follow both the letter and the spirit of it.

Bill: Who made the decision to make the Saturday night dinner closed?

Roxane: I don't know.

Bill: Who do you think I might ask about that?

Roxane: The DGA. I was told it was closed by the DGA.

Bill: Okay. Were you consulted, or did you contribute to the invitation list that was made up for that dinner?

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Roxane: No.

Bill: That was all DGA?

Roxane: Yes.

Bill: The governor admits that the DGA is unabashedly partisan. I think those are your words in the 12/20 response. Yet Valerie Beck, Lisa Carpenter, Mr. Sobanet is that how he pronounces his name? Miss Smith, and is it Mr. or Miss [De-boy 14:43]?

Roxane: Mr., Simon.

Bill: Sorry, I...

Roxane: That's okay.

Bill: ... just didn't remember from my notes. All participated in the event. In setting up the event, and I would like for you to comment on that, in light of your remarks. Of your proclamations after you disciplined Tyler Mounsey with regard to the Facebook invitations some time ago.

Roxane: There's a very big difference between doing campaign work, and doing work where the crowd is all of one political party or another. For example, I helped put together a dinner where the governor was speaking. Where we knew everybody in the room with the exception of me was going to belong to the republican party. It's still important for them to understand the governor's policy position. We do many, many things where only one party may be represented in the room. Or, we have no idea the party. Good policy is good policy. Hopefully, regardless of politics it's a very different thing when a person does something that is campaign related using state resources.

The DGA was not campaign related. Where what Mr. Mounsey did was campaign related. Therefore he was disciplined.

Bill: Okay. Since the governor got no contributions, and since it's unknown whether he will get any pecuniary benefit from the Democratic Governor's Conference. It would be your assertion that it was not a political event, in that sense?

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Roxane: It was not a campaign event.

Bill: It was not a campaign event.

Roxane: There were many, many people in that audience who are known republicans. Roy Palmer, for example was there.

Bill: Oh, I understand.

Roxane: Dan Pfeiffer for example, was there.

Bill: And we all understand that known republicans make heavy contributions to empower democrats. In order to keep their place at the table. That's a well-known fact.

Roxane: I was there to talk about budget issues. To talk about energy, and affordable jobs, and good government. I wasn't there to help any candidate.

Bill: No, I wasn't saying that you were.

Roxane: Nor was the governor there to forward his campaign.

Bill: Do you think he was there to ... do you think that he wanted to host the event to increase his national exposure?

Roxane: I think we have issues that are very important to Colorado, that are national issues. So yes, as they relate to Colorado.

Bill: The reason I brought that up was because I saw the Facebook page attempting to draft the governor for president. With forty-three likes.

Roxane: I haven't seen that so you're ahead of me.

Bill: So you plead total innocence on that?

Roxane: Absolutely.

Bill: Okay, I'll have to ask the campaign people about that I guess.

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David: Or the people who made that Facebook post.

Bill: I'll see if I can find out who that is. Did you talk to Laura Warren about the Aspen conference?

Roxane: You mean the DGA conference?

Bill: Yeah.

Roxane: I saw her there. Yeah and absolutely.

Bill: I mean, prior to it.

Roxane: Prior to it?

Bill: Yeah.

Roxane: Yes. She had some of the logistics. When we needed to arrive, that sort of thing.

Bill: How would you characterize your conversations with her? Would you say occasional, extensive?

Roxane: Oh gosh, I think I would have gotten two emails from her. These are the things that you should be sure to attend.

Bill: Okay. Did she mention anything about the governor hoping to raise anything for his campaign at DGA?

Roxane: From DGA?

Bill: Yes.

Roxane: No. At the events, the other events, yes.

Bill: At the other events, yes. Okay. Before today I had absolutely no idea about the other events. That really clears up a lot. That clears up why the campaign people were there. With whom was the governor seated with at the sponsored dinner on Saturday night?

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Roxane: I don't think I was at the sponsored dinner. Wasn't it the closed dinner where we were only allowed one staff person?

Bill: Yeah.

Roxane: It was 9:30 at night which is way past my bedtime. I did not attend that.

Bill: I believe she got let out of it.

Roxane: When they said one person I was quite happy.

Bill: Who was the one person?

Roxane: I don't know who went. I assume... I don't know. I was going to say [crosstalk 20:21].

Bill: Must have been Mr. Salazar?

David: [inaudible 20:23]

Roxane: I don't know [crosstalk 20:24].

David: We could find out.

Bill: Okay. Would you put that on your list please.

Roxane: I don't know at the end of the day anybody went.

Bill: All right. Did the governor say anything about the sponsored dinner to you afterwards?

Roxane: No.

Bill: Okay.

Roxane: I asked him how did the dinner go. I would have asked him how the dinner went. But we were running pretty hard the next morning...

Bill: Okay.

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Roxane: ...I don't even recall what he said.

Bill: Okay.

Roxane: There was no follow-up. I wasn't asked to do anything out of it, anything like that.

Bill: Okay, that's interesting. We just have eliminated a lot of dinner questions. About seven or eight of them, so we're just getting right through this here. Do you happen to know how much of the conference organizing the governor did himself, as opposed to staff? I mean, in his defense the governor says that the quid pro quo was ... that he really pitched in, and he did a lot of organizing for this himself.

Roxane: I observed him there, doing a number of things to make certain that speakers, that done invites to felt comfortable speaking. For example, Mark Sirangelo was one of the people that the governor personally asked to speak. He and I both made certain that Mark and Mark's staff person were ready to go. They knew what had been on a prior panel. That they felt really comfortable. Somebody from Excel was speaking I think as well, it might have been Ben Fowke. But the governor did quite a bit of hand holding with participants for the policy sections. Where he had asked them personally to come. He asked that I do the same.

They make certain that ... they knew did they need anything. Were they aware of what had been said before them, those sorts of things. To make certain that speakers you ask feel really comfortable. That they know when they're up next. If there had been any questions from the prior panel that got kicked to the next panel. For example, there was some stuff on ... who was the budget one? That got kicked on to economic development, and making certain that those speakers knew those questions were coming. That they had come up in the room, that sort of thing.

Bill: Okay.

Roxane: He and I were both doing that.

Bill: Prior to the weekend, did he actually do any of the preparatory work?

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- Roxane: I know he was supposed to be calling speakers, and asking them, and inviting them. Talking to them about the things that we were hoping to talk about, about Colorado.
- Bill: Supposed to be but you don't know whether he actually did it or not? [crosstalk 23:55]
- Roxane: I was not present for those phone calls.
- Bill: Need to ask him that myself, okay.
- Roxane: They all did a good job so I assume there was some prep work that happened.
- Bill: There was a phrase that struck me in one of the governor's responses to the interrogatories. He said that, "One of the purposes was to have a robust dialog on governance and core policy issues."
- Roxane: Yes.
- Bill: Did you witness the governor having a robust dialog with anybody?
- Roxane: Absolutely. For example, on one of them that really stood out in my mind was the conversation that we were having about [inaudible 24:50] partnerships, and when are [inaudible 24:53] partnerships appropriate. We had folks like, again Mark Sirangelo from Sierra Nevada. Who was there talking about military [inaudible 25:01] partnerships, and it was a fascinating dialog there. One of the governors on the energy panel was talking about his concerns that ... it would have been a Washington or Oregon governor, talking about was energy development leading to warmer waters closer in. So there was a great deal of discussion about energy, and water use. I'm not going to use the word climate change; because I don't think they used that word.
- Bill: Okay.
- Roxane: But sea level temperatures, and what to do about that, and those issues. We also had a fabulous conversation, there's a bit of a competition between Colorado and the state of Washington. On which one of us are doing more [inaudible 25:56] projects in government, and when can you take private sector principles. Like [inaudible 26:03] created the [inaudible 26:04], and bring those into government, and how do they work,

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and when don't they work. With a governmental recourse as opposed to a private sector recourse. What's the difference, and how do you do those sorts of things. All three of the ... I went because of those conversations, and they were fabulous.

Bill: All right, very good. I have no more questions. I appreciate your time. Thank you very much.

Roxane: Absolutely.

Proofread by Amber Mooney, Acclaim Investigations LLC March 24, 2014 11:15am