



Elected official makes six figures but doesn't show up for work

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Written
by
Mike

Deeson

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New Port Richey, Florida - When you do business at the Pasco Courthouse it will eventually involve Jed Pittman the Clerk of Court.

Pittman, a powerful Pasco politician, has been running the office since 1977.

When we stopped in to see Pittman we were surprised he was in the office. Pittman wasn't there the past couple times we checked. An employee, whose identity we are protecting, says Pittman only works a couple of days a week, a few hours at a time.

The employee says he never stayed the whole day. According to the insider, Pittman just pops in and pops out.

Pittman, who drives a motorized vehicle

and says he can't walk well because his legs are giving out as a result of the excess weight he's gained, doesn't deny it. Pittman says he just comes in and does the best job he can when he can.

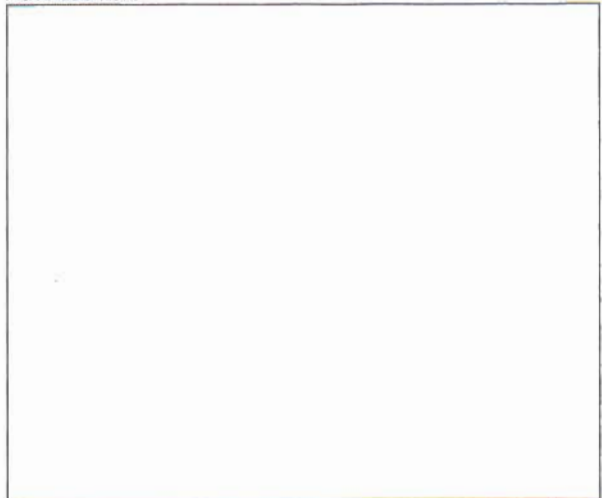
According to Pittman, who makes \$136,576, he only has to show up 8 days a year in order to get paid.

Pittman says he has no hours that he has to be in the office. The Clerk says he doesn't have to come in and work for 43 days. However he says on the 44th day he better be at the office. That's because if he misses 44 days in a row the circuit judge can relieve him and replace him with somebody else.

The insider in Pittman's office says it's a waste. Our source says the people elected this person and trusted him to run an office and yet he can not be there.

But, like the infomercials say, wait there's more. Pittman is making an additional \$74,908.08 a year from the \$6,242.34

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retirement payment he receives each month from the Florida Retirement System. That's right, Pittman retired in January 31, 2004, but then un-retired and went back to work a day later. He will collect the retirement money for life.

He also got a lump sum of \$362,687.68 from the Florida Drop fund when he retired for a day.

Our source says that's stealing.

Despite what some think, Pittman has found a loophole in the law and what he is doing is completely legal. Pittman has no problem with it and doesn't think taxpayers should either.

According to Pittman he thinks taxpayers get their money's worth of out of him.

Meantime, Pittman admits when he ran for re-election in 2004 and knew his physical problems might make it hard for him to come to the courthouse everyday, he considered not running.

However Pittman says the problems truly worsened in the past two years when he could not come to the office 8 hours a day or for that matter five days a week. He says he did consider resigning, but he just couldn't do it.

He says he wants to finish his term out and that's nine months.

He feels that way even if finishing out the term is on a part time basis.

When we asked Pittman if taxpayers might

complain their Clerk of Court isn't there, he says the taxpayers haven't said that.

But that could be because until now, most taxpayers didn't know they had a part time clerk with full time pay. And some who do know are upset.

Our insider says he should pay back the people, the money, for the time he was not there.

Our whistle blower says there should be laws passed and watchdog groups to keep our politicians and government in check.

But for now the only checks on Pittman are the ones he is receiving every month from the Florida Retirement System and Pasco County taxpayers.

That's this week's What's That Costing You.

Mike Deeson, Tampa Bay's 10 News

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