

PRESS RELEASE

From: Concerned Taxpayers of Duval County, Inc.
John Winkler, President and legal counsel
(904) 384-9918 www.jaxtaxpayers.org
April 26, 2009 Jacksonville, Florida

The legality of Mayor Peyton's efforts to give Waste Management a \$750 million City contract without competitive bids was challenged in a lawsuit by a local citizen's group late Friday. The Concerned Taxpayers of Duval County, on behalf of all local residents, are requesting a court ruling on whether the Mayor's proposal for the Trail Ridge landfill can even legally be considered by City Council. John Winkler, President of the CTDC, said his group is unaffiliated with any potential landfill operator. "Our sole purpose is to insure that the City follows the spirit and letter of its own laws on giving out large contracts," said Winkler. "City Council must determine both who will run the landfill and how much it will cost the residents for the next thirty years or more. Hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars are at stake, and the process has to be transparent, fair, and free of corporate intimidation of either the public or public officials."

Winkler explains that the suit asks the court to declare that a vote by City Council to waive the city competitive bidding rules is illegal, as would be entering into the restated contract on Trail Ridge. The CTDC maintains the Mayor's request to City Council violates local law because the overriding public purpose of the Procurement Code and the contracts it covers make it clear that landfill operations must be bid. The proposed "restated" contract is also unlawful because it contains provisions which could force the City to sell the entire 977 acre Trail Ridge site, together with the newly-purchased City "dirt mine," to Waste Management without following the City ordinance on land sales.

"The citizens must guarantee City Council is not intimidated by Waste Management's threats of litigation, amplified by the Mayor, into approving execution of an illegal 'no-bid' contract on the landfill," Winkler reiterated. "Moreover, even a legal contract that could force the City into selling its only landfill site to a private company is irresponsible. The people of Duval County are unwilling to take that risk."