

March 5, 2010

Tony Bamonte
P.O. Box 8625
Spokane, WA 99203

Gary Graham, editor, *Spokesman-Review*
999 West Riverside Avenue
Spokane, WA 99210

Dear Mr. Graham:

About a week ago, Randy Shaw, of KREM news Channel 2 broke a story concerning a major multi-million dollar fraud in the assessors office. I find it exceptionally suspicious and disappointing that there is no mention of that scandal in the *Spokesman-Review*, especially since in my research as a Spokane historian, this is the biggest scandal to ever occur in the history of the Spokane assessor's office. In other words, this should be a front-page top-of-the-page headline, yet it did not receive even a mention in your newspaper.

I am aware of the vast amounts of properties your employers own, as I'm sure you must also be. I am also aware of real estate values in Spokane as, following my law enforcement career, I worked for three years in Spokane as an appraiser and 12 years as a licensed Washington State realtor. I have already examined some of the assessed values of Cowles's real estate and have found them to be highly under-assessed in value. The fact that the assessor's conduct is not being reported in your paper creates the impression that Mr. Baker is providing your employers with special property tax favors in return for political support and protection. As I recall (please correct me if I am wrong), Mr. Baker has been endorsed by your editorial board during each of his elections.

Most important, it appears Mr. Baker's actions as the Spokane County Assessor are not honorable or in the best interest of the public. Since the *Spokesman-Review* is the paper of record for Spokane County, you have an obligation to adhere to your code of ethics. The public has the right and need to know when a public official is corrupt. Consequently, you have a duty to inform the public of Mr. Baker's misconduct in office.

Mr. Graham, at this time I respectfully request that you cause a journalistic investigation of the assessor's office to be made and reported in a timely manner. Please advise me if I can be of any assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Tony Bamonte

Attachments: Exhibits E-132a, E-110 and E-96.