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Subject: Sullivan story

To: Larry Shook <[lwshook@gmail.com](mailto:lwshook@gmail.com)>

Hi Larry,

At your request, I am sending my recollections of a conversation involving Shannon Sullivan in a meeting with Tony (former Sheriff Bamonte) and me that took place at our home sometime in 2010. Unfortunately, neither of us can recall when the meeting took place, but we believe it was probably sometime in the spring. As we recall, Sullivan had contacted Tony because she was interested in trying to get Spokane County Prosecutor Steven Tucker removed from office and wanted Tony's input. (This was the second time she had contacted Tony. Maybe a year prior, but I'm very sketchy about the timeframe, she had contacted him with the hopes that he would be interested in writing a book about the part she played in impeaching Mayor Jim West.) I had not intended to participate in the meeting, but after Tony began talking with Sullivan, he made a point of encouraging me to come hear what she had to say in regards to her determination to help clean up our local government. She seemed genuinely interested in trying to make a difference and emphasized the importance of standing on one's principles.

I was quite taken aback at Ms. Sullivan's denial in her recent e-mail to you regarding saying anything to Tony about the airplane flight involving Mayor Verner and Betsy Cowles. She apparently forgot that I was present in that meeting, too, so I can verify that she did, in fact, give us some interesting details surrounding the incident. Of all that was said during that meeting, that particular story left the most dramatic, lingering impression in my mind. Here is what I recollect:

Sullivan said she and Mary Verner have been good friends for ten years or so, having gotten to know one another because their sons are best of friends. Sullivan apparently was quite involved in Mayor Verner's campaign for mayor and the day after Verner won the election, the two of them were in her office in City Hall (I believe it was in her new (the mayor's) office – she even mentioned how impressive the view from the office was) bright and early, sharing their own private celebration of her election. As I recall, she made a point of saying it was quite early when they arrived and no one else was around. The new mayor soon received a call from Betsy Cowles. Sullivan described Verner's initial response to Cowles, saying something like "I can't do that" or "that wouldn't be appropriate" (I don't recall the exact verbal response). But then, Verner became rather quiet, at which point Sullivan began sharing the phone receiver with Verner in order to listen to the conversation, I believe at Verner's invitation. Sullivan then went on to convey the gist of the conversation. It was essentially that "I am not asking you to do this, I am telling you." I remember Sullivan saying that Betsy Cowles told Verner "this is just what the mayors do."

The call from Cowles was to inform Verner that she would accompany Cowles to something (I don't recall either the destination or what the event was, and am not even sure Sullivan divulged that information). As Sullivan's story continued, Verner did, in fact, accompany Cowles on her mission and described the experience as one that was rather uncomfortable for Verner. They flew in what, I believe, was Cowles's private plane and they were sitting almost knee to knee. During the flight, Cowles buried her head in a newspaper (or something she was reading) and did not speak to Verner at all. Sullivan's description left us with the impression that Cowles's attitude was "you are here to serve me, but I don't want to engage with you on a friendly basis." Essentially, "this is business only."

Sullivan said that something seemed to shift in Verner after that experience and that her whole demeanor about "going in and taking the reins" of her office in an authoritative way seemed suddenly subdued. Sullivan said Verner even began to avoid her. She said the two of them had since worked past that and have remained friends.

At some point during the meeting (I don't recall whether it was before or after this account), Tony told Sullivan about his experience with Mary Verner when she was running for office and wanted his support, and how she refused any further communication with him after she was elected. Tony described his perspective that she was an accomplice in some cover up regarding RPS, etc., and that she had failed to follow up with campaign promises to do some cleanup at City Hall. Sullivan, in a rather dramatic way, let it be known to us that, even though they were friends, she intended to confront Verner about some of the allegations and failure to do her job. Since then, Tony has tried to contact Sullivan on three separate occasions to inquire if she had followed through with what she said she was going to do (i.e. ask some specific question of Verner), but she has employed Verner's MO of refusing any further communication with him.

Because of Ms. Sullivan's denial of our conversation, both Tony and I would be willing to take a lie detector test regarding our recollection of this event.

Sincerely,  
Suzanne Bamonte