

**PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Islamorada Community Alliance (ICA)**

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**January 26, 2022**

**ICA discovers, investigates and discloses to the public, abuse of office by Islamorada Village Councilman Mark Gregg**

The ICA has discovered that Islamorada Councilman Mark Gregg has breached the public trust by improperly using his public office for personal gain, at the expense of the constituents he took an oath to serve. While doing so, we believe Mr. Gregg has intentionally misled the Village. Additionally, as a practicing attorney, Mr. Gregg's actions violated the rules of professional conduct and ethical standards of the Florida Bar with regard to conflict of interest.

Like all of Monroe County, Islamorada has very few available building permits left to issue. These few remaining building permit allocations are competitive and have become quite valuable, especially for waterfront locations. Once the waterfront permit has been granted, the permit alone (right to build) can be sold to a third party for \$250,000.00 or more and transferred to a new location.

In 2020, Mr. Gregg submitted a building permit application to acquire a building permit for a small unplatted portion of a jetty in front of his home. He also submitted an aggregation application for an unbuildable parcel of land in order to qualify for additional points to improve his status. With the aggregation application, Mr. Gregg submitted a self-authored opinion of title to the Village. That allowed him to jump ahead of the 76 local property owners attempting to get building permits. The scoring for Mr. Gregg was contrary to the Village of Islamorada Comprehensive Plan and Land Use regulations.

This acceptance and positional placement/replacement of Mr. Gregg's permit application by the Village of Islamorada staff only occurred after Mr. Gregg was elected to the Village Council in November of 2020.

The unbuildable parcels of land that Mr. Gregg submitted as buildable lots to acquire the permit are designated on the subdivision plat as a waterfront park and road. Under Florida law, these parcels of land are encumbered by an easement for the benefit and use of residents of that subdivision. By claiming exclusive rights to these parcels, Mr. Gregg is attempting to deprive the residents of the subdivision their lawful access to the waterfront park and connecting road.

Further, Mr. Gregg has made many public statements about what he believes to be a dire financial situation facing Islamorada, referring to the 2023 deadline for permit allocation, where some landowners will be unable to build and may have a financial claim against the Village. Simultaneously while making these public statements, Mr. Gregg was attempting to gain building rights contrary to the Islamorada Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulations.

Mr. Gregg identifies himself as a land use attorney and is a member of the Florida Bar.

Mr. Gregg's actions were discovered and investigated by the Islamorada Community Alliance (ICA). Two separate, independent law firms with specialized expertise in land use were hired by the ICA to review Mr. Gregg's submitted documents and actions. Their analysis forms the basis of the complaint against Mr. Gregg. Their reports along with documents acquired from the Village through public record requests will be made available in the near future at the ICA website ([www.Islamorada.org](http://www.Islamorada.org)).

The ICA revealed its preliminary findings to the Village Manager. Once Mr. Gregg learned of the investigation, he withdrew his application during a Council meeting where his application would have been reviewed in a public forum. Mr. Gregg publicly blamed the Village for his withdrawal of the application due to "Village staff error". His withdrawal of the application does not diminish the abuse of office by Mr. Gregg. Unfortunately for our community, our new, highly regarded Village Manager recently resigned.

The ICA will be providing this data to all prevailing ethical and legal entities.

Please refer any questions to The Islamorada Community Alliance at [info@Islamorada.org](mailto:info@Islamorada.org) or contact Board member Tom Raffanello at 305-781-9998.

**ICA's Vision for Islamorada**

*To enhance the community of Islamorada by preserving the quality of life of the residents as well as the beauty and vitality of the native ecosystems and to stop any further degradation of our community from over-development.*

**ICA's Mission Statement**

*To provide the Islamorada residents with information about events occurring in our community that will impact our quality of life, preservation of our native ecosystems, land development, lawful and transparent governance.*

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