

## LETTERS TO SUN MESSENGER

### Charter review chief defends process, Ruth Gray's integrity

Joe Liptow frivolously claimed (*The Sun Messenger*, April 30, "Public employees anywhere should not hold council seats") that Ruth Gray's employment in Bedford Heights was a conflict with her being a councilwoman in South Euclid.

He further claimed that the South Euclid charter review process was tainted because the commission was allegedly "made up of council and mayoral appointees." Liptow is wrong, and as the chairman of the Charter Review Commission, it is incumbent upon me to set the record straight.

The commission was established by our city charter. In November 2004, the voters elected nine individuals to serve. They were not "appointed" by the mayor or council as alleged by Liptow. The commission's roster, ground rules, timetable, public meetings/hearings, etc. are available at: <http://www.cityofsoutheuclid.com/charter/htm>.

The commission's minutes document that it unanimously agreed to recommend that residents amend the charter to say that a councilperson could not hold "public employment incompatible with the office of council" and council shall make this deter-

mination. This change is consistent with the charters of a majority of other cities. In November 2005, voters approved this change.

Gray was elected to council in November 2005. At that time, she was the director of the Empowerment Center, a non-profit agency. In March 2007, Gray became the Bedford Heights director of Community Life, but before accepting the job, she asked council to determine whether it was "incompatible" with her duties as councilwoman. On March 26, 2007, after thoroughly reviewing the issue, council unanimously found that it was not.

Gray's advocacy to increase the pay of the city's community center director is part of her duties as a councilwoman and has no connection whatsoever to her position in Bedford Heights.

Gray has served our city with integrity and has zealously advocated the positions of her constituents. Liptow's frivolous attack on Gray and the charter review process is dishonest and without merit.

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