

## **Statement of Mayor Pro Tem Tennell Atkins Regarding Events of December 10**

I want to set the record straight about the incident that occurred on Wednesday, December 10<sup>th</sup>, a little before 8:00 AM in the L1 parking garage at City Hall.

Around 7:50 AM I parked in my regular place and proceeded to the entrance I regularly use to get in the building. We had a city council meeting that day which was to begin at 9:00 and I had some calls to make and other things to do before the council meeting. When I got to the door, there was no security guard there to let me in. Looking through the glass door I saw two ladies who were obviously city employees because of their attire. After pushing the buzzer for several seconds, I knocked on the glass to get the attention of the two women but they seemed to disregard my request. I know they knew who I was and that I was entitled to be admitted to the building.

Finally they came and opened the door and I went in. I had a topcoat on and a briefcase and some files in my hands. I admit I was a little upset that they had not opened the door right away when they saw who I was. I asked them why they had not let me in right away when they saw me knocking on the door, and they said I needed to show them my badge. Well, I have never been denied access because I did not have my badge with me before and I told them so. Since it was a little before 8:00 there was no security guard there who would normally let me right in.

I suppose I raised my voice a bit but I did not use profanity nor did I touch, much less shake, either of the ladies. My conversation with them lasted no more than 30 seconds or so and I had my briefcase and files in my hands at all times.

I immediately went to my office on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor and asked the security guard who the security supervisor was and asked to have him come to my office. He did so and I explained that I was unable to get in the building a little before 8:00 and asked where the security guard was that would have immediately let me in so I wouldn't have needed to raise my voice to the two ladies. He left to go find out where the security guard was but I didn't hear back from him.

I was due to be in Washington the next day and had several things I needed to do before I left. I regret that the two ladies feel I was too aggressive in my comments, and that I "shook" one of them. I totally deny that I had any physical contact with either of them. Again, my hands were full with my briefcase and files at all times.

I later learned the security camera which would have verified my account of what happened was not working that morning. I am very sorry this incident happened and extend my sincerest apologies to both women for raising my voice at them.

Tennell Atkins