

News Release

Jefferson Parish, Louisiana

Issued by: Patricia Borne
Public Information Officer



Our Mission Is:

“Provide the services,
leadership, and vision to
improve the quality of life
in Jefferson Parish.”

Steve J. Theriot
Parish President

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 18, 2010

Statement from Steve J. Theriot, Interim Parish President

Regarding the lawsuit recently filed by the Parish of Jefferson and Steve J. Theriot against John Does 1 through 100 and the subpoena issued to New Orleans, Net, LLC;

This lawsuit was never intended to silence individuals from expressing their views or suppressing any First Amendment rights. Rather, the focus was on the detrimental consequences that stem from false and injurious statements being made by anonymous posters and bloggers in Cyberspace. With the increase use of the internet, anonymous blogging or blogging by speakers using pseudonyms (fictitious name used by an author) has dramatically increased. Those who are victimized by such anonymous postings or blogs often do not know what recourse they have to seek redress. I sought redress, but the matters I attempted to address by the lawsuit have been and were totally misperceived and mischaracterized; therefore, at this time, I have decided to pursue the matters needing to be addressed through alternative avenues.

Yesterday, I instructed the lawyers to withdraw and dismiss the lawsuit. Going forward, I hope to focus on working proactively to do what is best not only for the public interest of the citizens of Jefferson Parish, but also for the employees of Jefferson Parish. The internet is a wonderful tool, but false information that is unverified by those under the cloak of anonymity or using pseudonyms can ruin a person's name, reputation and career. It has a detrimental effect not only on that person, but on that person's family and colleagues as well. I will begin by asking the Times-Picayune, who is an aligned party with the website NOLA.com in that it publishes its stories on the NOLA.com website, to assist or influence the website owners to provide the same basic identification information that the Times-Picayune demands from any citizen who wishes to write a letter to the editor, as described on its editorial page. I believe that the general public should expect such action from an accredited news organization such as the Times-Picayune – an organization that the citizens of Jefferson Parish rely upon for accurate news reporting.

I will pursue other available avenues not only to ferret out wrongdoing, but to ferret out employees spreading untruthful information, which is not only injurious to the intended target and his or her family, but also to the public at large.

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