

From: [Surfside](#)
To: [Charles Burkett](#)
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SURFSIDE

TOMORROW

News and Views from Surfside, Florida

Velasquez Caught in Cocoa Controversy

In the heart of Surfside, a tale of dual residencies and questionable transparency concerning Commissioner Nelly Velasquez.

Diving into the chronology of Commissioner Velasquez's property and business dealings, we find a narrative that strikes to the heart an elected official's bond with their constituency - **where her private actions clash with her public statements.**

Her financial disclosures and property records - now shown to be in conflict - have stirred up a whirlwind of speculation and

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controversy, casting shadows over her residency claims.

Surfside Tomorrow is here to share some important truths about what's going on in our town. Got a tip? Send your news and gossip to surfsidetomorrow@gmail.com

BUSTED!

In June 2021, Commissioner Velasquez [purchased a property at 541 Peachtree Street](#) in Cocoa, FL through an [LLC](#). In November, she [transferred the property from her LLC to her personal name](#), assuming personal liability and suggesting an intention to no longer rent out the North Florida property.

Shortly after, a complaint surfaced accusing her of not living in Surfside and instead operating a rental at her long-time property here. While she [vigorously denied renting](#) out her Surfside homestead illegally, it was [listed online as a Vacation Rental](#) online and had staged photos with her furniture

from inside her home.

In fact, you can even compare the two photos yourself of the [kitchen of her vacation rental](#), and then her of [property listing](#). Remember that this is a single family home, not a condo where there are potentially identical units.



The situation came to light when Velasquez's longtime Surfside property at 9481 Byron Avenue hit the market in May 2022. She describes her Surfside property as a prime piece of real estate [ripe for expansion](#), **an enticing prospect for developers and a seemingly odd choice for an anti-development crusader!**

This discrepancy between her public persona as a defender against development and her private dealings advertising development opportunities exposed a troubling duality—**like former Mayor Burkett, Commissioner Velasquez's principles seem only to extend as far as her wallet.**

Follow the Money...

Velasquez's financial disclosures have consistently reported rental income, yet there are troubling inconsistencies in the paper trail. [City records from](#)

Cocoa reveal no business tax receipts for her rental business, as is required by Section 6-2003 of the Cocoa city code. Operating or renting a residential dwelling unit in Cocoa without a local business tax receipt constitutes **illegal tax evasion**. Additionally, Section 6-2004 mandates that a local agent be available to handle property complaints for rentals, but documentation suggests that Velasquez is the only contact, flouting landlord regulations meant to protect the community.

By October of 2022, Velasquez had sold her house here in Surfside, leaving the Cocoa property as her sole real estate holding and fueling rumors that Brevard County might be her true residence. The Commissioner's financial disclosures ([2018](#), [2020](#), [2022](#)) do little to dispel this notion, with her catering business and out of town property ownership remaining the sole constants throughout the years.

Taxpayers Deserve Answers.

The question for taxpayers and the State of Florida becomes whether Velasquez has been truthful on her ethics forms regarding her rental income from Cocoa, or if she's another self-serving politician that has been sidestepping tax obligations the rest of us have to pay and avoiding regulatory measures designed to hold property owners accountable.

Or to put it more succinctly: Is Velasquez lying on her ethics forms about the rental income, or is she illegally evading taxes and ducking regulations?

Is Velasquez artfully navigating between two cities, claiming Surfside residency for political convenience while Cocoa holds her hearth? The murmurs among Surfside residents grow louder now that she sold her

homestead and her claimed local “residence” is a small rental apartment.

With her Surfside property sold and her presence in Cocoa increasingly evident, the Commissioner's narrative has evolved from a simple residency query to a complex inquiry into the ethics of her public service.

Surfside Tomorrow Readers: Sound Off!

Remember last week we told you about when **former Mayor Charles Burkett** placed a doggy waste bin on a political opponent's property as revenge for speaking against him. (and people ask why we remain anonymous!)

Last week, we urged the community to share their experiences and stories of Burkett's terrible reign with us at surfsidetomorrow@gmail.com - **and WOW did you deliver!**

This week, we're pulling back the curtain further with a few more choice insights and anecdotes from readers about the terror he brought to town:

I am deeply troubled by the retrospective of Charles Burkett's leadership in Surfside. His attempt to block the dune restoration—a project crucial for our environmental protection—smacks of a personal agenda overriding the ecological needs of our town. Such actions betray a shortsightedness unbecoming of an elected official and a troubling indifference to our shared natural heritage.

---R.C.

I must express my astonishment and dismay at the underhanded tactics employed by Charles Burkett. The abrupt shutdown of our communal pools and hot tubs, right in the midst of an election cycle, was nothing short of a political ploy. It is disheartening to witness the lengths to which some will go to unsettle the electorate for their gains.

---A.L.

Burkett's campaign to limit home sizes was not only regressive but discriminatory. His proclamation against large homes, ostensibly targeting the Jewish community, is a grim echo of historic prejudices. Such decrees have no place in our diverse and welcoming community and serve only to foster division and discontent.

---M.M.

Keep them coming, folks! We love to hear your tips, gossip, suggestions or information, and we take your feedback seriously.

This issue is dedicated to S.W. and M.L. - who both asked that we do more in-depth reporting.





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