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Megan Fox

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## Village Of Orland Park Joins Library Porn Cover-Up

Posted By [Megan Fox](#) On February 6, 2014 @ 3:00 pm In [Activism, Librarians, Library](#) | [54 Comments](#)

During the four month long investigation into unfiltered pornography offered to Orland Park Library patrons, I have had many interactions with the Village of Orland Park but none as interesting as the last one. My main contact at the Village has been Joe LaMargo, Public Information Officer and designated "Crisis Manager". My first meeting with him was very cordial and he explained to me that the Village has zero authority over the Library, they have their own board of directors and the Village people aren't allowed to ask them to do anything and barely even speak to them. I believed him, until I found emails between Village Manager Paul Grimes and Library Director Mary Weimar where he offers her advice on how to deal with "those people." (Namely, Kevin DuJan and myself and anyone else who objects to porn in the Library.)

This revelation made the Village look like liars and the *same day* I discovered it and confronted LaMargo in his office (where he continually rubbed his hands over his face and jiggled his left leg under the table at around 200 beats per minute) the Mayor of Orland Park finally decided to enter the fray and ask for filters in a letter to the Library. His previous response to my phone calls and requests for a meeting went unanswered or cancelled. Only when I caught the Village telling lies did the Mayor suddenly decide to make a statement and side with parents. (It should be noted that I hadn't planned on disclosing this bit of information but with the Village breaking bad on me I don't feel like I owe them any professional courtesy that I otherwise would have granted them.)

Even after that point, LaMargo continued to be friendly with me and help me with any FOIA requests I had. He was very responsive and always gave me what I asked for well before the deadline. However, the minute I started asking about the laws that govern Sexually Oriented Businesses (S.O.B.) in the Village (there are no S.O.B.s in Orland Park unless you count the ones on the Library Board) his demeanor changed to ice cold. Suddenly, he wasn't responding to me personally, he was dodging my phone calls and was "out to lunch" when I dropped in to see him. He started having his secretary return my calls and emails as if he were suddenly promoted to Village Pope. For the last week before this rapid change in attitude I had been asking him informally to point me to the Village code that governed any S.O.B. in Orland Park. Surely, the Village must have such a thing because in the entire area there are no businesses selling sex; no porn shops, peep shows, strip clubs, bathhouses or adult book stores. The answer I got (through his secretary) was to "look it up" on a highly confusing website that houses the Village codes. I need not tell you what a government website is like. You've no doubt been to your state's "Obamacare Health Exchange Website." This one is no exception to the rule that government-run operations are overly complicated and difficult to navigate.

After asking three times for LaMargo to point me to the exact code (that he kept hinting at without actually providing), I submitted a formal FOIA request specifically asking for the code and telling him that I did not want to be pointed back to their incompetent website. The FOIA law in Illinois states that providing a person with a link to some website is not the same thing as providing information responsive to a FOIA request, so public officers like LaMargo are required to actually go get the document requested and provide it to the public. LaMargo decided instead to give me the finger. After each request on the FOIA, LaMargo copied and pasted the same response informing me that my very specific requests weren't specific enough and claiming that I was requesting legal opinion and — my personal favorite — that all I requested...could be found on the Village website. That's right. He referred me back to the *bloody website*. Out of the five or so easy requests I made, he copied and pasted the same insulting denial after each one because one "F@#! YOU!" simply wasn't enough.

By the way, the Illinois FOIA statute specifically bars guys like LaMargo from claiming something was not "specific enough" if a reasonable person could understand what a person is requesting. The law was written that way because under former Governors Rod Blagojevich (who is now in prison) and George Ryan (who also went to prison), corrupt officials were denying FOIA requests (just like LaMargo is doing to me) by claiming they weren't "specific enough". The current FOIA law, as written, maintains that documents can't be denied because a member of the public did not know the magic words or summoning charms to compel compliance. *Accio S.O.B. codes!*

Why go to such lengths to conceal the Village's position on S.O.B.s? Is it because I finally hit on the angle that could make the walls come tumbling down? How can the Village keep out porn businesses that are legal and yet allow a public library to operate as an unofficial porn profiteer with no government regulation? Recently, the Library decided to charge non-resident patrons a \$3 an hour fee to access their computers. This means that if those patrons are accessing porn, child porn, bestiality or any other kind of obscenity, then the library is profiting off of it in a village that doesn't allow anyone else to profit off of legal adult material. (Not to mention, the Library will actually be profiting off of illegal porn, including child porn, which no one is supposed to be able to do anywhere.)

I must say I'm flattered that the Village, the Police Department and the Library are all hostile toward me now. In my opinion, this is exactly the kind of relationship an intrepid reporter ought to have with her target. There will be no cozy correspondents' dinners (or even tea parties) with my name on the guest list in the Village. I'll be lucky if I get out of it without time behind bars. Isn't that what we all want from our "real" reporters instead of incestuous relationships with the powers that be?

The reluctance of Joe LaMargo and the Village of Orland Park to give me relevant information that is written in their own code is a perfect example of the government's constant desire to pass the buck and hide its own wrongdoings. No one is responsible and nobody wants the decision to fall on their desk when it comes down to it. So clearly, the most expedient course of action is to lie, obfuscate, conceal, avoid and stall. Eventually it will go away... right? To paraphrase one of the government employees I busted in email by using FOIA, "maybe if we wait a week she'll get bored and move on with her life."

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