



METRO | B1

MOM OF SLAIN GIRL SPEAKS AT KILLER'S DEATH HEARING



NATION | A2

TRUMP FIRES VA SECRETARY, TAPS DOCTOR AS REPLACEMENT

The Florida Times-Union

Thursday, March 29, 2018

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\$2

Trump lawyer broached aide pardons

By Carol D. Leonnig, Josh Dawsey and Rosalind S. Helderman
The Washington Post

President Donald Trump's lawyer told attorneys representing Paul Manafort last summer that the president might be willing to pardon his former campaign chairman if he was charged with a crime

stemming from the investigation into Russian election interference, according to two people familiar with the discussions.

John Dowd, then Trump's lead lawyer, was described as floating the idea of a pardon for Manafort during the time he was under investigation by special counsel Robert Mueller, but had not yet been charged,

these people said. Dowd, who resigned as Trump's lawyer last week, also floated the offer of a pardon last summer to attorneys for former national security adviser Michael Flynn, according to a report Wednesday by the New York Times.

Mueller indicted Manafort on multiple charges of financial fraud in October. Flynn

pleaded guilty to lying to investigators and agreed to cooperate with the Mueller probe in December.

Dowd insisted Wednesday that he did not raise the idea of pardons with lawyers representing the two men.

"I had no such discussions with them," Dowd said in a phone interview. "We never talked about pardons. There

was no reason to talk about pardons. No ma'am."

A spokesperson for Manafort, Jason Maloni, also declined to comment.

Robert Kelner, an attorney for Flynn, declined to comment.

Legal experts said prosecutors could view the dangle of

See TRUMP, A4

Old shipwreck washes ashore



Staff from the St. Augustine Lighthouse Archaeological Maritime Program examine the remains of a ship Wednesday that washed up in south Ponte Vedra overnight. The ship is believed to date back as far as the late 1700s. [WILL DICKEY/FLORIDA TIMES-UNION]

Museum historian: 'This is what we were born for'

By Matt Soergel and Dan Scanlan
The Times-Union

SOUTH PONTE VEDRA BEACH — Overnight Tuesday, a surging ocean pushed ashore a remarkably well-preserved, 48-foot section of the wooden hull of a sailing ship that could date

back as far as the 1800s or even the 1700s.

And there's a real chance that high tide could pull the wreck — which is the property of the state — back under the water again for who knows how long.

There's little legally that can be done about that, said researchers from the St.

Augustine Lighthouse and Maritime Museum, who came to the wreck Wednesday afternoon to document it, while it was still there, with photos, video, notes and measuring tape.

With those photos, they can create a 3-D model of what the hull looked like, said Chuck Meide, LAMP's

director of maritime research.

"This is amazing," he said. "It's a section from a big sailing ship, I'll tell you that."

Shortly after they arrived, Meide and his colleague, LAMP's maritime historian Brendan Burke, stood up

See SHIPWRECK, A4

JEA panel stripped of power to subpoena

City Council committee survives after contentious meeting, but speakers won't swear oaths

By David Bauerlein
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JEA Chief Executive Officer Paul McElroy's appearance before a City Council committee exploring the potential sale of JEA was shaping up to be a combination of "Law & Order" and electric and water.

The committee subpoenaed McElroy last after he declined March 15 to answer questions under oath. McElroy said he would be at the Thursday meeting but stopped short of saying whether he would take the oath to tell the truth under penalty of perjury.

McElroy won't have to make the decision.

On Tuesday night, the full City Council stripped the special committee of the power to issue subpoenas and administer oaths to speakers called before the panel for questioning.

That decision came during a lengthy back and forth among council members that nearly killed the special committee altogether but ended up expanding the five-member panel to include all 19 council members.

City Council President Anna Brosche formed the special committee after a consultant hired by JEA released a report in February saying the time might be right to sell the utility.

Going forward, the committee will have the same mission that Brosche established to explore all angles of whether

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TODAY
Warm winds
60°/85°

FRIDAY
Shower?
62°/80°

SATURDAY
Blue moon
56°/72°



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WITH JIMMIE VAUGHAN
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TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Thursday, March 29, the 88th day of 2018. There are 277 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On March 29, 1943, World War II rationing of meat, fats and cheese began, limiting consumers to store purchases of an average of about two pounds a week for beef, pork, lamb and mutton using a coupon system.

On this date:

In 1936, German Chancellor Adolf Hitler claimed overwhelming victory in a plebiscite on his policies.
In 1951, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were convicted of conspiracy to commit espionage for the Soviet Union. (They were executed in June 1953.)
In 1962, Jack Paar hosted NBC's "Tonight" show for the final time. (Johnny Carson debuted as host the following October.)
In 1971, Army Lt. William L. Calley Jr. was convicted of murdering 22 Vietnamese civilians in the 1968 My Lai massacre. (Calley ended up serving three years under house arrest.) ... A jury recommended the death penalty for Charles Manson and three female followers for the 1969 Tate-La Bianca murders. (The sentences were later commuted.)
In 1973, the last United States combat troops left South Vietnam, ending America's direct military involvement in the Vietnam War.

Today's birthdays:

Comedian **Eric Idle** is 75. Pro and College Football Hall of Famer **Earl Campbell** is 63. Comedian-actress **Amy Sedaris** is 57. Actress **Lucy Lawless** is 50. CBS News correspondent **Lara Logan** is 47. International Tennis Hall of Famer **Jennifer Capriati** is 42.

LOTTERY

FLORIDA PICK 3
Tuesday evening: 9-9-4
Wednesday midday: 0-1-4
 PICK 4
Tuesday evening: 8-3-1-9
Wednesday midday: 5-6-2-7
 FANTASY 5
Tuesday: 12-13-16-23-27
 LUCKY MONEY
Tuesday: 7-18-32-33 LB 5
 FLA. LOTTERY
Saturday: 17-26-30-40-45-49
 GEORGIA CASH 3
Wednesday evening: 0-3-4
Wednesday midday: 1-9-6
 CASH 4
Wednesday evening: 7-7-2-8
Wednesday midday: 4-6-1-2
 GEORGIA 5
Wednesday evening: 8-8-8-2-3
Wednesday midday: 1-7-3-3-6
 FANTASY 5
Tuesday: 9-25-26-33-38
 MULTI-STATE MEGA MILLIONS
Tuesday: 7-25-43-56-59
 PB 13
 POWERBALL
Saturday: 10-33-45-53-56
 PB 24

Trump fires Veterans Affairs secretary

By Hope Yen and Zeke Miller
 The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump fired Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin Wednesday in the wake of a bruising ethics scandal and a mounting rebellion within the agency, and nominated White House doctor Ronny Jackson to lead the agency.

A Navy rear admiral, Jackson is a surprise choice to lead to succeed Shulkin, a former Obama administration official and the first non-veteran ever to head the VA. Trump had been considering replacements for Shulkin for weeks, but had not been known to be considering Jackson for the role.

In a statement, Trump praised Jackson as "highly trained and qualified."

Jackson has served since 2013 as the Physician to the President, and gained a national profile earlier this year for holding a sweeping press conference on the president's health.

Brigadier General Dr. Richard Tubb, who trained Jackson, said in a letter read at Jackson's briefing that the members of the White House medical team have been "figuratively



LEFT: Veterans Affairs Secretary David Shulkin speaks at a news conference in Washington. [AP PHOTO/ANDREW HARNIK] **RIGHT: White House physician Dr. Ronny Jackson speaks to reporters during the daily press briefing in the Brady press briefing room at the White House in Washington.** [AP PHOTO/MANUEL BALCE CENETA]

Velcro-ed" to Trump since the day after his election.

"On any given day," he wrote, "the 'physician's office,' as it is known, is generally the first and last to see the President."

A White House official said Shulkin was informed of his dismissal by Chief of Staff John Kelly before the president announced the move on Twitter Wednesday afternoon.

Shulkin is the second Cabinet secretary to depart over controversies involving expensive travel, following former Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price's resignation last September. Trump said in a statement

he is "grateful" for Shulkin's service.

A major veterans' organization expressed concern over the Shulkin dismissal and Trump's intention to nominate Jackson, whom they worried lacked experience to run the huge department.

"We are disappointed and already quite concerned about this nominee," said Joe Chenelly, the national executive director of AMVETS. "The administration needs to be ready to prove that he's qualified to run such a massive agency, a \$200 billion bureaucracy."

Shulkin had continued to insist he had the full

confidence of the White House amid continuing investigations over his travel and leadership of the department. He had agreed to reimburse the government more than \$4,000 after the VA's internal watchdog concluded last month that he had improperly accepted Wimbledon tennis tickets and that his then-chief of staff had doctored emails to justify his wife traveling to Europe with him at taxpayer expense. Shulkin also blamed internal drama at the agency on a half-dozen or so political appointees who were rebelling against him and Bowman, insisting he had White House backing to fire them.

Love wants City Council to stand in favor of keeping JEA

By David Bauerlein
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City Councilman Jim Love said Wednesday he opposes selling JEA and will ask fellow council members to officially voice support for keeping the utility so the city can unplug the current discussion on privatizing it.

Love's planned resolution would mark the first piece of legislation on the threshold question of whether the city should put the utility up for sale.

Love said he has found no support among residents for selling JEA.

"I've talked to hundreds of constituents: grass-roots constituents and people in the energy business," he said. "They all say don't sell it. All of them, 100 percent, and I understand why it's 100 percent. I get it."

When Love said at a Tuesday council meeting that he

will introduce the resolution, council member Reggie Gaffney immediately said he would support it. Council member Lori Boyer said she might back it as well.

But City Councilman John Crescimbeni, who is chairman of a special council committee examining the pluses and minuses of privatization, said even if City Council approved such a resolution, the JEA board has the legal authority to proceed with considering the sale of JEA and still could invite offers from private firms.

Whether the JEA board would continue down that path even if council is on record opposing a sale would be the board's decision.

JEA kick-started the discussion of whether it's the right time to put JEA up for sale to take advantage of a hot market for utility mergers and acquisitions. JEA board

members also say the utility's sales have flat-lined in recent years, making it impossible to guarantee the utility can keep contributing to the city as it historically has.

A consultant hired by JEA gave a report on Feb. 14 that said the city could net \$2.9 billion to \$6.4 by selling the utility to a private firm. The City Council Auditor's Office released a report last week that put the range at \$1.7 billion to \$5.2 billion.

JEA board Chairman Alan Howard said the board does not have a timeline for its own deliberations.

"Sometimes the board is called upon to lead on issues of strategic importance and educate stakeholders to both opportunities and risks," Howard said Wednesday. "I believe the current privatization discussion is a good example of that."

Howard said that under the City Charter, any sale of 10 percent or more of JEA assets ultimately would require City Council approval.

He said if Love's resolution were approved by council, "you would obviously have to question under our City Charter's requirements whether or not it would be of much use to continue discussions at the JEA board."

Love said he plans to file the resolution in the coming days, which would put it on track to go through the council's legislative cycle and come up for a vote in May.

He said that would be enough time for council members to do research and make informed decisions. He said the special committee examining JEA will be meeting weekly, so it could have six more sessions on the topic by the time his resolution comes up for a vote.

JEA

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to sell JEA.

Council members will be able to ask any questions related to the sale of JEA. There will be no restrictions on whom the committee can call to the podium. Based on city ordinances, city officials coming before the committee will have an obligation to speak truthfully.

But the threat of being prosecuted for perjury, which is a third-degree felony, will no longer apply.

City Council member Tommy Hazouri said administering the oath would cast a cloud over everyone who appears before the committee by making it seem like they were "presumed guilty" until proven otherwise.

Hazouri spoke in favor of council member Matt Schellenberg's motion to immediately terminate the

special committee.

Council member Lori Boyer then offered a substitute motion to keep the committee intact so it could continue to "gather the facts" but eliminate its ability to issue subpoenas and administer the sworn oaths.

Faced with a choice between the committee getting abolished versus losing those legal powers, the five committee members — Brosche, Danny Becton, Johns Crescimbeni, Garrett Dennis and Joyce Morgan — voted for Boyer's motion, which passed on a 13-6 vote.

That appeared to end the debate because the margin surpassed the two-thirds "super-majority" vote required to waive the City Council rule that allows council committees to issue subpoenas and administer oaths.

But council member Doyle Carter asked for a re-vote and flipped into the "no" column. That 12-7 vote fell short of reaching the super-majority.

The council then went back to Schellenberg's motion to

shut down the committee.

Before the vote on that motion, council member Sam Newby said he originally intended to vote for Schellenberg's motion because of concerns about the use of subpoenas and oaths.

But Newby said he changed his mind after seeing Schellenberg and others vote against the "great compromise" in Boyer's motion. Newby said that indicated there was more going on than just wanting to restrict that aspect of the committee's activities.

Supporters of Schellenberg's motion said the city needs to "hit the pause button" on assessing the sale of JEA.

The council voted 10-9 to reject Schellenberg's bid to terminate the committee. Newby voted against ending the committee, so he was the swing vote that keeps it alive.

Opponents of the special committee then pushed to expand the size of the committee to 19 members and take away the subpoena and

swearing-in powers.

That maneuver needed a super-majority vote and got it by a 14-5 margin.

On that vote, four members of the special committee — Brosche, Crescimbeni, Dennis and Morgan — were in the minority. Morgan said council committees typically don't include all 19 members and the move to expand the size of the special committee appeared aimed at her colleagues not liking whom Brosche picked for it.

Hazouri also voted against expanding the committee since he does not think there is anything for council to consider until a formal proposal comes from JEA or the mayor's office for selling JEA.

Curry has said repeatedly he is undecided on whether the city should put JEA up for sale.

The special committee is scheduled to meet at 2 p.m. Thursday in council chambers at City Hall.

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