

To: Lauren Ames, Project Manager
Re: Texas Racing Commission – IT Contract

Patricia Fitch Nalle, IT Director and Executive Director, Chuck Trout, initiated a contract in FY 2018, to upgrade the agency's racing database. She was to oversee the implementation of this contract. However, after initiating this major contract, Patricia Fitch Nalle then decides to retire from TxRC on August 31, 2018. A few months later, she was hired by the same IT company (RFD & Associates) that was awarded the contract. This wasn't just some lowly programmer, but the IT director, who was pushing for the upgrades.

Her position as I.T. Director was never filled, so she is overseeing her own work, and she still reports directly to Chuck Trout, Executive Director. Even though Chuck Trout is claiming to be the interim IT director, he relies upon Patricia F Nalle for direction so she never left the agency.

This appears as if this was all planned; initiate a large contract, retire, return as a contractor making 2-3 times more money, and continue to report to the Executive Director and not to some new IT Director who might actually ask questions.

Was this upgrade out of a dire necessity, or simply a luxury? The agency hasn't been in a good financial shape for the past few years so that question begs to be asked. Also, is Patricia F Nalle creating a situation where she ends up with a long-term contract with the agency to maintain/update these new IT upgrades?

During the two years before Patricia F Nalle's retirement, she attended an unusual amount of training, and it is questioned whether this training had anything to do with her future plans. Did the agency pay for any of this training?

During past ethics training, we were given certain scenarios, and asked if they would pass the look or smell test. To the casual observer, this entire ordeal regarding this IT contract does not.