

DAVID BERMAN STATED ON APRIL 25,2008:
"Bob Frank Reveals Trumpets Conflict of Interest

At the April 24 Board meeting, Board member Bob Frank spoke positively about the strengths of Boulevard Gaming Group, accepted by the Board as the preferred applicant to operate a restaurant in the former Trumpets space at Anthem Center, subject to successful lease negotiations.

But then Bob Frank dropped what amounted to a bombshell in the judgment of this reporter and several incredulous residents who spoke with me after the meeting.

Bob Frank acknowledged a previously undisclosed personal relationship with Bill Goff, the principal financial backer for Boulevard.

In commenting on his knowledge of Mr. Goff, who did impress the members of the Trumpets Working Group who had met him, Frank claimed that our lease negotiators would be at a disadvantage because of Goff's financial expertise and all-around toughness. "They have the advantage, and will have too much leverage," Frank said.

So now the truth comes out. All along, while Bob Frank was vilifying former Trumpets Working Group Chair Patti Shock because of her relationship with one of the Trumpets applicants, and was also attacking this reporter because I am a friend of Ms. Shock's, Frank himself was concealing the fact that he knows a key member of another bidding team.

There is a difference between the issue Bob Frank raised and what we have now learned: Patti disclosed her relationship early in the game, as I acknowledged my friendship with her. But Bob Frank, while all the while attacking our process and being argumentative at TWG meetings, was undoubtedly worried that the applicant he would favor due to his relationship with one of its principals would not be picked, and he kept his information secret from everyone.

Did Bob Frank's conflict of interest affect the TWG's work and its ultimate recommendation to the Board? Of course not, because we didn't learn about it until the April 24 Board meeting.

But the greater danger now looms if Bob Frank plays any role as a Board member in the dealings of the Lease Negotiation Team with Boulevard. I urge the Board majority to not allow him to participate in any discussions or issuing of guidelines to our negotiators, as we now know that as Bob Frank himself has argued on many occasions in the past, even the appearance of impropriety must be avoided.

We had too many problems in the past, related to questions of dealings with the previous Trumpets operator, to allow us to be in a situation where such problems could be repeated. Bob Frank is simply too close to a key player to allow this to happen. Our dealings must be on an arms-length basis, and Frank has himself acknowledged that he has something more than an arms-length relationship with this key player. He knew him well before any of us on the Trumpets Working Group ever met him or heard of him, and he never told any of us."