

OPINION/EDITORIALS

Editorial: The St. Petersburg Housing Authority's sweet deal for Love

The housing authority's CEO got a pay raise and other perks in a contract never approved by the full board. That's not right.

Tampa Bay Times, Published June 7, 2019

They just did not like following the rules at the St. Petersburg Housing Authority. The latest outrage involves the two most senior members of its board deciding CEO Tony Love should get a raise and other perks in a revised contract that never has been approved by the full board. That's even more evidence that St. Petersburg Mayor Rick Kriseman and the City Council acted correctly by removing those board members and seeking a thorough housecleaning.

As the *Tampa Bay Times*' Christopher O'Donnell reported this week, former board members Harry Harvey and Delphina Davis recommended last year that Love receive a 5 percent pay raise, an increase in his car allowance and a monthly payment of about \$800 into his retirement account. Those perks were added into a new three-year contract for Love that Davis signed as board chairwoman in January but that the full board still has not approved.

That is not the way government works. A lawyer for the **Tampa Housing Authority** says Love's new contract should not have been signed unless it was approved by the full board. One of the St. Petersburg Housing Authority's new board members agrees that it appears the contract "was approved outside of the process of the bylaws." No kidding.

There is every reason to question the validity of this contract, which is perhaps the most egregious in a long list of improper actions at the housing authority.

Fortunately, Kriseman has moved to replace five of the seven board members. The new board will have its hands full, and rejecting Love's latest contract and finding a new CEO should be at the top of its agenda.



DIRK SHADD | Times (2018) Former St. Petersburg Housing Authority board Chairperson Delphina Davis, left, during a 2018 meeting. Davis has been removed from the board by the City Council at the recommendation of Mayor Rick Kriseman.