
Consulting Fees: Shafer, Bolia, & Tyrone Brooks

A Question Of Judgement

May 26, 2001

Editor's note: Over the last few months of the Chairman's Race, there have been multiple references to David Shafer's involvement in the Georgia Republican Party's decision to give more than \$50,000 to Democrat State Representative Tyrone Brooks back in 1994. In order to get to the bottom of the rumors, we began an investigation that has flushed out some relevant information. We have been able to document our findings via news sources and other documents that have come into our possession.

On a Saturday morning October 22, 1994, Chairman Billy Lovett held a special called meeting of the State Executive Committee in the Georgia Republican Party's Atlanta offices on Maple Drive. On the agenda was a motion to borrow \$400,000 for the election just weeks away. After general discussion, Lovett tabled the motion in effect killing the \$400,000 loan. That same morning in the same Party offices virtually under the noses of the Executive Committee and without their permission, the State Party paid the infamous \$52,000 in "walking-around money" to Democrat State Representative Tyrone Brooks.

While the Executive Committee was asked to go \$400,000 in debt to supplement a multi-millionaire's political campaign, it wasn't asked about spending \$52,000 to buy a liberal democrat's support. Even the AJC took notice of this. It should also be noted that the stated reason for the \$400,000 loan was to shore up fundraising shortfalls in 1994 victory plan. So if the Party was short of funds, why pay out \$52,000 in walking-around money to Tyrone Brooks?

Both schemes, the \$400,000 loan and the \$52,000 buyoff, represent bad decisions on several different levels. The question is, what did David Shafer have to do with either? Some would say the two incidents involved the Party, and Shafer had nothing to do with them since he had resigned his position as State Executive Director to become Guy Millner's campaign manager in December 1993. A relevant piece of information is that Millner's campaign headquarters had offices in the same building and on the same floor - virtually next door to the Party's offices.

Our investigation leads us to believe David Shafer was directly involved and was the key player in developing and implementing the schemes. Shafer was the pivotal figure in bringing the individuals and events together. Our case is based on the following sequence of related players and events.

1. David Shafer managed Billy Lovett's unsuccessful 1990 campaign for Georgia Insurance Commissioner.
2. Shafer served as Executive Director of the Georgia Republican Party under Billy Lovett after he won the chairmanship in 1993.
3. At an undetermined date, Don Bolia became Political Director of the State GOP working for Shafer. Bolia is a long time friend and continues to be a close associate of Shafer.
4. In early 1993, Senator Sally Newbill reportedly forced Bolia out of the political director position due to his interfering in the State Senate leadership battle. Bolia became Fulton GOP Executive Director.

5. Later in the Fall of 1993 reportedly because of an unsuccessful fundraiser held by Fulton County GOP in partnership with the State Party, Bolia resigned.
6. In December 1993, David Shafer resigned as E.D. to manage Guy Millner's 1994 Gubernatorial campaign. Justin Durrance replaced him as Executive Director.
7. By Fall 1994, Don Bolia was back at the Georgia GOP and had been promoted to Executive Director.

To Recap: In the Fall of 1994 ...

- Shafer was manager of Guy Millner's campaign
- His close associate Don Bolia was back at the Party as Executive Director
- His former boss Billy Lovett was Party Chairman
- Both the Party offices and Millner's campaign offices were in the same building and on the same floor (Suites 310 & 315).

8. October 4, 1994 - Lee Oxendine sent a memo to Billy Lovett and Don Bolia discussing Shafer's letter of inquiry (dated 10/3/94) regarding issues that the Georgia GOP would have to deal with should it take out a formal bank loan. In the letter, Ms. Oxendine acknowledges that she had been General Counsel for the Georgia Democratic Party in 1990. Shafer was copied on the letter.
9. October 13, 1994 - David Shafer writes Bolia for an update on the proposed \$400,000 loan that Bolia, Millner, Lovett and he had discussed two weeks before during lunch. Lovett and Millner were copied on the memo.
10. October 17, 1994 - Lee Oxendine writes another memo to Lovett advising him of the steps necessary to go forward with the proposed \$400,000 loan. One key step mentioned was the requirement to get Executive Committee approval; on that point, she advised a lobbying effort to get the 18 votes needed and that he should obtain as many proxies as possible. Millner and Shafer are mentioned as having prodded Oxendine to offer her assistance in consummating the \$400,000 loan.
11. October 22, 1994 - Saturday morning, attendees of the State Executive Committee meeting observed Tyrone Brooks going first into the State Party offices (Suite 315) then coming out and walking down the outside walkway to the Millner campaign offices (Suite 310).
12. October 27, 1994 - The Atlanta Constitution breaks the headline, **"GOP pays Brooks firm \$52,000"**. Quote from article: Millner aides defended the spending. "I don't just defend it, I am proud of it," said Rep. Matt Towery, (R-Vinings), a top Millner adviser.
13. November 3, 1994 - A memo from JacksonHeath, a black owned public relations company, sent to Don Bolia, David Shafer, and Matt Towery updating them on activities to date. In addition to the \$52,000 paid to Tyrone Brooks, the Republican Party and the Millner campaign paid JacksonHeath \$22,500 for an African American outreach program. Among the activities mentioned in the memo:
 - Helped draft Tyrone Brooks' letter to Atlanta Journal and Constitution
 - Helped orchestrate media interviews with Tyrone Brooks

We've presented the facts with as little commentary as possible, so that you may analyze them and

come to your own conclusions. However, our analysis of facts leads us to believe that:

- David Shafer pushed Lovett and Bolia into attempting to railroad a \$400,000 loan past the State Executive Committee, to supplement Millner's campaign.
- David Shafer was the driving force in the decision to pay \$52,000 in walking-around money to Tyrone Brooks.
- David Shafer pushed for the payment to Brooks, knowing the Party could not meet it's financial obligations for the Victory '94 campaign plan.

This brings into question a method of operation that involves deceptive behavior and financial risk, one that the State Executive Committee members rejected on Saturday October 22, 1994. Is this the Judgment, Values and Integrity that might be expected from a present day Shafer administration?