

ADVERTISING AUTHORITY AUDIT



New Smyrna Beach Visitors Center has sent out two large boxes that were full with an assortment of documents and receipts to the Volusia County officials on Monday. They had to send out this information because of the audit that has caused the executive director of the visitor's center to be put on administrative leave for the time being. These files needed to be turned over because the county officials were questioning how exactly the visitors center were spending their money, which was tax-funded. This is a controversial situation that has already gone public. The audit had raised some red flags and concerns which is why the executive director, Nicole Carni, was put on paid leave. The SVAA Chairman, David Kosmas, has said, "Under the advisement of the county, Ms. Carni was asked to be put on administrative leave because of some red flags that were brought up in the audit." He finished his statement by saying, "That's all I know at this point." When contacted for comment, Carni was not available to leave comment or feedback on the current situation. Kosmas said that while he does not know much about the red flags and concerns of the audit, he was always impressed by the work of Carni, especially after being hired in August. He said that she was working well on tracking the spending of ad authority in attempts of making marketing very effective. The SVAA particularly markets tourists who visit the area and they have a \$2 million budget set. This money comes from bed tax revenues that are paid by different hotels and properties in the area. Kosmas says, "I can honestly say that Nicole Carni, in my opinion, worked her rear end off." In the meantime, the examination of the boxes full of documents and receipts have revealed a number of receipts for marketing contracts along with an assortment of other promotions. Some of the receipts were for renovations in which the center has paid more than \$8,000 for new furniture in the office. Some local painters were paid more than \$4,000 to paint the area. Kosmas says that the SVAA board approved about \$30,000 that could be used for office renovations. He says that these renovations were necessary for updating the outdated building, which needed some work. Kosmas says that Carni told him that the total of renovations was about \$27,000 and the funds were, in fact, approved. Kosmas says, "I'm not an auditor, I'm not an accountant, I can't go through and line-item everything." He also says, "There's certainly some level of faith and trust." It is obvious that he believes Carni has done nothing wrong and that she should be reinstated with her position instead of being out on administrative leave.

<https://blog.granted.com/>