Florida Bridge Painting Company Guilty of Fraud

At the same time owners of a Florida bridge painting company plead guilty to fraud on one West Virginia project, their other company is working on a new bridge painting project.

Nomiki Vavlas, 50, and Michael Vavlas, 52, of Tarpon Springs, Florida, pled guilty to committing fraud against the United States on Wednesday, August 31 according to a release from U.S. Attorney William J. Ihlenfeld, II.

Nomika and Michael Vavlas own and operate VHP Enterprises, Inc, a company that specializes in painting and sandblasting.

Nomika Vavlas is also listed as a Member of International Rigging Group LLC which was awarded a $980,000 contract by the West Virginia Parkways Authority to paint the Yeager Bridge on Interstate 64 in Kanawha County at the end of April this year.

Painters District Council 53 representative Brian Stanley has been monitoring the job and believes International Rigging is in violation of the West Virginia Jobs Act, which requires 75 percent local hiring.

Stanley was also the one who pointed out payroll violations by VHP to the WV Division of Labor back in 2012.

“A fair company from Ohio lost the bid for the Yeager bridge by only $7,000,” said Stanley. “I was sick when I saw the very same people we caught defrauding the government getting another project simply under a different company name.”

Nomika Vavlas was listed as one of the original Members of International Rigging when the company was formed in Florida in 2006. In 2013 her name was removed from the Florida LLC records, but remains on the West Virginia listing.

In the fraud case VHP Enter-

WVBrokenPromise.com - New Web Site

A new web site has been set up to get more facts out about prevailing wage and the effects of its repeal.

The site - WVBrokenPromise.com - will document tax funded projects that no longer have a prevailing wage requirement.

“Instead of the 25 percent savings promised by politicians, we are finding no savings at all,” said Steve White, ACT Director.

“Unfortunately we are finding plenty of lost jobs and problems.”

Proving the lack of savings is relatively easy because public projects are still subject to the Freedom of Information law, so bid results are public documents.

According to White, the site will also be used to expose the many lies being told about supposed savings due to the repeal of prevailing wage.

“Every single time we investigate a story about savings we find exactly the opposite,” said White.

An example is a claim of a million dollar savings for a Morgantown paving contract.

The claim was made by a city engineer and widely reported.

However, the bids tell a very different story.

If the claim were to be true, with two nonunion and one union bidder, it might be expected that the two nonunion bids would be a million dollars less than the union bid.

However, the biggest difference was between the two nonunion bidders, meaning wages had little to do with the bid difference.

Further, none of the bids had anywhere near a million dollars in labor costs, so saving a million dollars would be impossible.

The news story and bid tabulations are all found at the web site.

“We plan on continuing to document the facts about no savings, job loss, poor quality, out-of-state workers and contractors, and other problems,” said White.
Ten Building Trades Candidates on Ballot

Among some very talented candidates for State Senate and House of Delegates offices in November are a record number of trades’ members.

Ten members of the Trades are on the ballot and two wives of Trades members as well. Below is a list in district order, with Senate then House of Delegates candidates.

Scott Brewer is a 38 year member of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and is running in the 14th District, parts of Mason and Putnam.

Melissa Riggs Huffman is a teacher and married to Neil, the assistant business manager of Operating Engineers Local 132, and is running in the 40th District, part of Kanawha County.

Many more members chose to run in the primary, which is evidence of a great response by members of the Trades, according to Bill Hutchinson, President of the WV State Building Trades.

“That so many of our members have stepped up to try and change the system is something we greatly appreciate,” said Hutchinson.

“Now it is the job of all members to make sure they and their family members help in the weeks leading up to the election and go to the polls in November.”

Florida

Continued from Page 1

prises was awarded a federal contract to paint bridges in Braxton County from August 2011 through September 2012.

The project was subject to the Davis-Bacon Act, which requires employers to pay a minimum hourly wage rate to all employees.

According to the press release, the Vavlas’ did not pay the full wage rate to all employees.

They each plead guilty to one count of “Conspiracy to Defraud the United States and Commit Mail Fraud.”

They face up to five years in prison and a fine of up to $250,000.
2016 General Election COPE Endorsements

U.S. House of Representatives
David McKinley* (R) - 1st District
Mark Hunt (D) - 2nd District

10th

9th

8th

7th

5th

4th

3rd

2nd

1st

Attorney General
Doug Reynolds (D)

State Auditor
Mary Ann Claytor (D)

Secretary of State
Natalie Tennant (D)

State Treasurer
John Perdue (D)

Agriculture Commissioner
Walt Hemlick (D)

State Senate
1st

2nd

3rd

4th

5th

6th

7th

8th

9th

10th

State Senate
1st

2nd

3rd

4th

5th

6th

7th

8th

9th

10th

House of Delegates
1st

2nd

3rd

4th

5th

6th

7th

8th

9th

10th

11th

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THE ACT REPORT

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ANNOUNCEMENT OF
APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

NAME OF PROGRAM: Charleston JATC of Plumbers & Pipefitters Local Union 625

WHERE TO APPLY: 3601 James Ave, Charleston, WV

WHEN TO APPLY: October 4th, 5th and 6th 2016
October 11th, 12th and 13th 2016
Applications only given out on listed days

HOURS TO APPLY: 8:00 AM to 11:00 PM, 1:00 PM to 3:30 PM
On listed days only

($35.00 APPLICATION FEE, WHEN YOU PICK UP YOUR APPLICATION)

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AS FOLLOWS:

AGE: 17 years of age at the time of application, and must be 18 years of age prior to being indentured by the JATC

EDUCATION: High School Diploma or equivalent

PHYSICAL: Must be physically able to perform the work of the trade. A Drug test will be required

DRIVERS’ LICENSE: Must have valid Driver's license

APTITUDE: Must score standard level on TABE test administered by Workforce WV

APPLICATION RETURN: Application must be returned by October 26, 2016. No applications will be accepted after the cut off date.

A copy of the applicant’s birth certificate, high school transcript of grades, high school diploma or equivalent, DD2-14 form if former Military, and valid driver’s license will be requested at the time of application. (ONLY COPIES WILL BE ACCEPTED)

The Recruitment, selection, employment and training of apprentices shall be without discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin or sex. The JATC will take affirmative action to provide equal opportunities in apprenticeship and training and will operate the apprenticeship program as required under Title 29 of the code of federal regulations, Part 30.
Walters Deceitful about RTW

Legal Case Against RTW Advances

A scheduling order has been issued on Laborers’ law suit against the so-called Right-to-Work law.

The scheduling order, dated August 23, states Discovery will close on September 30, Dispositive Motions are due October 4, with Responses by November 1, and final Replies by November 14.

Once those deadlines are met, Kanawha Circuit Court Judge Jennifer Bailey will likely have a hearing before deciding the case, and the WV Supreme Court will likely be asked to review her ruling.

While the case moves forward in court the public debate also continues.

In a recent project announcement for a new $100 million compressor stations in Kanawha County Delegate Ron Walters (R-Kanawha) was quoted as saying the passage of Right-to-Work helped the project move forward.

However when a company representative from Kinder Morgan was asked the same question he said Right-to-Work had nothing to do with their decision to move ahead on the project.

In fact, corporate records show planning for the project began in 2014, before the last election cycle.

“Delegate Walters got caught plain and simple,” said Dave Efaw, Secretary-Treasurer of the WV State Building Trades.

“He tried to take credit for a project he had nothing to do with, rather than take responsibility for his votes against working families.”

Dan Poling (left), Business Manager of Painters District Council 53, represented the Trades during a congressional field hearing held in Morgantown on August 29. Poling testified about the importance of local skilled labor when looking at the economic impact from energy infrastructure.

Senators Joe Manchin and Shelly Capito held the field hearing for the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The purpose was to examine the economic importance of modern, reliable energy infrastructure to West Virginia and the United States.