

# DOLCEFINO CONSULTING

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## “SHUCK AND JIVE”

Soon the commissioners of the Chambers Liberty County Navigation District will have to stop evading the whole story surrounding that back room oyster deal and swear what happened under oath. In the meantime, taxpayers should be warned they are scheming again to use your money to help a private company.

In 2014, a couple of politically connected oyster fisherman in Chambers County cut a secret deal with the commissioners of the local navigation district. Their lawyer gets really mad when we call it a “good ole boy deal,” but I always say “if the shoe fits.”

The deal stunk for taxpayers, but that didn't seem to be the goal of this deal. A company called Sustainable Texas Oyster Resource Management, LLC., or STORM would get a monopoly on oyster production in 23,000 acres of Galveston Bay for a small fraction of what it should cost. The negotiation was kept secret and no one else was offered a chance to play.

Part of the deal included a promise that when everyone started crying foul, STORM would even pay all the legal bills. Apparently the deal was worth a lot to this Chambers County crowd.

But shucks, now we have a plot twist that should outrage taxpayers.

First, the legal bills are mounting up and taxpayers are getting fleeced. The CLCND legal bills top \$128,000, and CLCND has paid it all.

But STORM has only paid the taxpayers back \$30,000 so far. Where's the other \$98,000? Who cut that deal?

CLCND blames a lot of the legal bills on public information requests from Dolcefino Consulting, but here's a tip about that. When you do a backroom deal to make someone's political buddies rich, people start asking questions. Shocking!

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But wait, it gets even better. An audio tape shows STORM lawyer Richard Baker is now trying to cut a new “business” deal with the CLCND commissioners. STORM will pay the legal bills they promised to pay when they got this sweetheart deal in the first place. Then, the CLCND will turn around and sue all the people who have state leases to harvest oysters in those 23,000 acres for trespassing! According to their half-baked theory, all those oyster farmers have been illegally making money on CLCND land for decades. If they win, the CLCND will then get back the money STORM is spending on all these legal fees with the money they make on the trespassing lawsuit, so that local Judge Tracy Woody and his kinfolk don’t have to pay.

Priceless. CLCND Commissioners are actually considering going into the business of filing government lawsuits against people who have invested millions into oysters in Galveston Bay, with the approval of the state and federal government, just to help a private company.

And they complain it is wrong to call that a good ole boy deal?

“Shuck and Jive.” How long can those guys evade the wrath of taxpayers!