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Published April 27th, 2011

## Gerringer's Day Job

*By Cathy Tyson*

Teresa Gerringer, a member of the governing board of the Lafayette School District since 2000, also has a day job - since March, 2010, Gerringer has worked with Tramutola, LLC, a small political consulting firm in Oakland. She's responsible for a number of things there: business development, marketing, communications and administrative support.

"Teresa is a great employee, and committed to her school district," said Larry Tramutola, President and CEO. "This firm was established to help school districts," he explained. Indeed their roster of school clients is in the hundreds and they have expanded their services to include healthcare, local government and corporate entities. He added that, "We do lots of pro bono work; it's just the right thing to do."

A number of months ago, given its continually shrinking revenue from the state, the Lafayette School District asked two independent polling companies to submit proposals to Superintendent Fred Brill about the possibility of a parcel tax. Both proposals were presented to the Governing Board. The Board voted unanimously to select True North Research.

Based on the encouraging polling results of True North Research, Brill put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) for consulting services related to placing a parcel tax measure on the ballot. Five firms submitted proposals; one of those firms was Tramutola. Gerringer recused herself from the vote.

"Due to the long relationship that Tramutola has had with the Lafayette School District, and the potential conflict of interest related to my Board position - Tramutola offered to do the work at no cost to the district. All services provided to the Lafayette School District by Tramutola were pro bono. The board elected to accept this generous offer based on the fact that the Lafayette School District has worked with Tramutola on every tax election measure since our first parcel tax in 1992 and, of course, the cost savings."

"No funds have passed between Lafayette School District and Tramutola with respect to the parcel tax consulting services. Furthermore, under the current arrangement, no contract was brought before or approved by the Lafayette School Board for Tramutola's services. The decision to pursue a parcel tax was based on the polling information provided by the independent polling firm, and frankly, by the real need for additional sources of revenue to fund our educational programs," said Gerringer.

"The Measure B committee," said Brill, "an independent citizen's campaign committee, without input or direction from me or the Lafayette School District governing board, chose Tramutola as the campaign consultant. No funds have passed between the Lafayette School District and Tramutola on the Measure B campaign."

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