

# Hulme, Dorman, Gibbons Issue Statements About A Claim Of Open Meetings Act Violations

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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EDWARDSVILLE - Doug Hulme, Rob Dorman and Madison County State's Attorney Thomas Gibbons issued statements about a lawsuit filed by Hulme and Dorman that action at the April 16, 2020, Madison County Board Meeting violates the Illinois Open Meetings Act.

Former Madison County Administrator Hulme and County Information Technology Director Dorman received termination notices on April 27, 2020, from the county after a unanimous board vote approval. Both are listed on the same suit against the county. G. Edward Moorman of Alton is their attorney. The suit claims both were not allowed admission to a meeting where they were fired. They alleged neither was allowed to speak on their behalf when facts were presented. County officials alleged Dorman and Hulme improperly accessed county e-mails and other information for political use.

Hulme says as county administrator it was normally his job to prevent Open Meetings Act violations like this one, but during this meeting the board was operating under the advice of State's Attorney Gibbons.

"Public bodies have an obligation to comply with all aspects of the Open Meetings Act and to be transparent," Hulme said. "On April 16th Gibbons failed to protect the county and allowed the county board to vote on issues that were in violation of the Open Meetings Act, including submitting unseen resolutions during the meeting that his office created."

Madison County State's Attorney Thomas Gibbons said the State's Attorney's Office served as the legal counsel for the County Board and Government about the Hulme-Dorman situation and said: "Our actions in this and every matter are in service to them, according to their direction. Mr. Dorman and Mr. Hulme are free to espouse whatever they want in the public domain because we are a country and county that values free speech no matter how useless, senseless, baseless or wrong it may be. We disagree with their claims and will let the courts decide the matter."

Dorman and Hulme said on April 16th the county board rushed to have a special meeting electronically. The agenda contained an executive session and "action to be taken by the board on specific personnel" in open session. Under that agenda the board took four recorded votes in open session.

Dorman questions why the actions taken and all the resolutions created by Gibbons' Office were not placed on the agenda and instead were hidden from public view. According to the meeting minutes, Board Member Mike Parkinson (D- Granite City) was aware of the secret resolutions while many board members had not seen them.

"The Open Meetings Act is an important state law that prevents public bodies from conducting business without public notice and in the dark," Dorman said. "Gibbons had to email out his hidden resolutions during the meeting which speaks for itself. I took Gibbons to court before and won because he was operating outside of the law and he is doing it again."