

Wednesday, June 24th, 2009

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Daley overseas another week amid Olympic flap

Posted by Greg H. at 6/18/2009 11:33 AM CDT

Alderfolk and others who want to question Mayor Richard M. Daley about his big new financial guarantee for the 2016 Olympics are going to have to wait awhile.

On the heels of meeting with the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne, Switzerland, the mayor is headed to Amman, Jordan, for a meeting with chief executives of other cities around the world. He won't be back in town and available to the media or aldermen until next Thursday.

The mayor's spokeswoman swears the Jordanian trip has long been scheduled, and I believe her. But it sure is a lovely coincidence, 'cause now Mr. Daley will have a week for everything to cool off.

The spokeswoman did say that Chicago 2016 boss Pat Ryan or another official from the city's bid committee is prepared to testify before the City Council, if asked.

"If they feel a desire to discuss things, we do," she said.

There appear to be lots of questions, including: Who is providing \$1 billion in private insurance and what are the terms? When did Mr. Daley decide to flip and back an unlimited city financial guarantee? Where will the city get the money if everything goes wrong, given a huge hole in its current budget? Will the city pony up subsidies for the Olympic Village and, if so, how much? Will Mr. Daley ask the City Council for approval before actually signing anything?

Et cetera. Et cetera. Et cetera. My prediction: Mr. Daley will try to ride out the storm without making any concessions. He wants these Olympics bad.

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Herbert C. wrote:

If "private" financing insurance was always available to protect the public from expense or loss, and Olympic games in Chicago pose no or little risk of loss as the 2016 Committee claims, why wasn't it just made part of the entire Olympic proposal from the git go leaving the taxpayers of Chicago totally out of it , without all the lies and money gamesmanship that has been the actual situation? They play, we pay.

6/18/2009 1:21 PM CDT

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Daniel M. wrote:

Look, the City Council is pontificating plain & simple. They get up on their soapboxes and feign outrage to assuage the anger of their ward constituents...but Daley will come back, say a few words to the aldermen behind closed doors about money that will flow into their wards and coffers...and the aldermen will come out of the closed door meeting with Daley stating that they have "reached an understanding," with the Mayor, and know and trust that he is doing what's best with the 2016 Olympic bid, and all is well in the world.

6/18/2009 2:07 PM CDT

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Jim B. wrote:

By what authority has Daley made this guarantee? He runs the City as if citizens and aldermen have nothing to say. Meigs, Children's Museum, Tollway, Midway, Meters, Receptions, 2010, 2016, Millinnieum and now this. I am for the Olympics but with out a taxpayer guarantee. Everything the Mayor constructs has ended in a cost over run. It is time he be sent a message that Chicago is not his own little private SimCity!! There is no longer a need for him to keep getting reelected on the basis under which he has been getting reelected.

Jim B

6/18/2009 3:53 PM CDT

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RALPH M. wrote:

Thank God I don't live in Chicago. The poor taxpayers just got the shaft again. Wonder how much the mayor's buddies will make off this Olympic ponzi scheme?

RM

6/18/2009 4:02 PM CDT

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Nancy McNeil wrote:

Can we afford this nonsense... NO!! I always felt there was a way to do almost anything in Chicago and the people would benefit one way or another.

This morning gave me a glaring picture of what our city really is. On one side of 1300 block of Chicago Avenue men were emptying the meters, filling bags with \$ and putting them into a (it looked like a rented) van.

On the other side of Chicago Avenue by Eckhart Park - people were lined up with children and wagons from the middle of the block by the park field house...down Chicago Ave to Noble then about 1/2 block down Noble waiting for food. It appears Eckhart is a once a month food distribution point for the community. All the money wasted and people have to wait for handouts of the basics.

6/18/2009 4:10 PM CDT

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ABU BAKR N. wrote:

This is going to become a tug-of-war between the mayor, aldermen, and community residents. The only entity that will make tractor trailer loads of money from the 2016 olympics will probably be the IOC and whatever backroom deal the downtown and northside business community come to? If it becomes a 'fact' that Chicago is going to be the parasite-host-city then we want the same type of: 'BENEFIT AGREEMENT' struck for the communities affected? By the way has anyone heard what 'IS' the seven-year (7 year) benefit for 'ALL' of Chicago by hosting the 2016 olympics? What about the for certain cost-over runs, who pays for it? At a 'projected' cost of \$20-\$30 Billion-Dollars, 172,000 part-time jobs ain't enough! How about Mr. Mayor and City Council each \$Billion-Dollars creating 200,000 permanent jobs? How about 4-6,000,000 (4-6 million) permanent jobs? Anything less ain't acceptable!

6/18/2009 10:25 PM CDT

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Ryan D. wrote:

Mayor Daley's international travel is clearly to lobby for the Olympic bid, but if I understand correctly, the IOC rules strictly prohibit such lobbying.

Why does the media just accept it's okay for Mayor Daley to be going on international travel all over with his wife when the city is in fiscal crisis?

6/22/2009 12:57 PM CDT

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Ryan D. wrote:

Between Daley's "flu" of a couple weeks ago, visit to Switzerland, Jordan and then South Africa, are taxpayers paying for all this luxury lifestyle for Richie and Maggie?

The mayor can't take unpaid furlough days off, but he can take international trips at taxpayer expense? Maybe it's time for the mayor to have his salary cut since he's busy schmoozing instead of working.

6/22/2009 1:00 PM CDT

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