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SPARTANS

Wife of ex-MSU AD questions Bill Beekman hire, calls on board to release Nassar documents

Mark Johnson Lansing State Journal

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LANSING — Nancy Hollis, the wife of retired Michigan State University Athletic Director Mark Hollis joined the call for MSU to release thousands of documents related to the investigation of serial sexual abuser Larry Nassar.

Nancy Hollis spoke during the public comment period of the MSU Board of Trustees meeting Friday, calling on trustees, and specifically calling out board chair Dianne Byrum and trustees Brian Mosallam and Renee Knake Jefferson, to release the more than 6,000 documents.

Those documents were requested by the Michigan Attorney General's office as it investigated the case. MSU has said the documents are protected by attorney-client privilege.

Hollis criticized the process that led to Beekman's promotion from interim to permanent athletic director in July 2018 after former interim MSU President John Engler had announced plans for a national search in February. She also said the documents in question would shed light on that process.

"The legacy members of this board approved and endorsed the prior administration's vice president and your very own secretary to this Board of Trustees as first the interim president and then onto his current position as athletics director," Hollis said. "I believe his role within the administration should be disclosed by the release of the over 6,000 emails you are withholding. This board strongly endorsed and vocally supported this hire with apparent disregard for transparency and accountability."

Hollis additionally called on Byrum to answer for Beekman's hire and to reveal to the public "what you told me in our phone conversation last year."

Byrum confirmed that she'd had a conversation with Hollis but said she doesn't remember what was said.

"I don't recall the exact conversation, but I can say that I wouldn't have told her anything that I haven't publicly stated," Byrum said. "Beyond that, I have no idea what Nancy Hollis is talking about."

Byrum reiterated her support for Beekman's hire and said Beekman fully complied with the Nassar investigation.

Neither Beekman nor Nancy Hollis immediately responded to requests for comment left Friday morning.

Mosallam previously committed to reviewing the Nassar documents but admitted that, for "family reasons," he hasn't had a chance to yet. He said he has been receiving updates from Knake Jefferson.

He continued his call for the documents to be released once litigation with Nassar survivors and insurance litigation concludes.

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