

## *Editorial*

### **What else is Lucas not yet ready to reveal?**

From *The Hattiesburg American*: “Lucas addresses Johnson contract buyout” [by Ed Kemp](#):

Just because Ellis Johnson has landed on his feet with an \$800,000 per-year contract at Auburn University doesn't mean that Southern Miss is off the hook for any of his \$2.1 million buyout.

How did the University of Southern Mississippi's disadvantageous financial arrangement with its former head football coach come about? Aubrey Lucas challenged faculty members to ask that very question Friday during a meeting of the Faculty Senate.

Interim President Lucas should challenge faculty members to ask what other not-yet-revealed financial debacles are facing USM. Dr. Lucas wants to appear open and faculty is gullible to be distracted by the issue Lucas wants to discuss. Nice trick on Lucas' part and his audience fell for it hook, line, and sinker.

The article goes on to quote Dr. Lucas: “You should be asking who dropped the ball in that contract,” he said during his remarks.

Given the millions squandered **AND** discovered to date, the challenge—if Lucas were candid—would have been to ask Lucas: What else don't we know **YET**? What other financial “disadvantages” have USM's incompetent, greedy or simply indifferent administrators perpetrated? Keep in mind that [former President Saunders](#) made other decisions that cost many millions of students' and taxpayers' money: “[her](#)” airplane, “[her](#)” tablets handed out to favored faculty and students, “[her](#)” [well-paid PR friends](#), redecorating the [president's mansion](#), to name a few. IHL didn't hold her accountable. Some were [flying](#) to ball games on N777AQ, USM's multimillion dollar airplane, Saunders bought through the Foundation, then leased with student and taxpayer money.

What else, Dr. Lucas? Going to feed each financial debacle to the faculty one at a time so they can digest them better that way? Great trick given that the faculty appears not to connect the financial “disadvantages” of the past, current, and future.

It's not administrators' money, so they don't care for it in the same way you do your own money. It's just very easy to spend someone else's' (students and taxpayers) money. After all, what can any of us do about it?

For all the supposed sophistication of USM faculty, members of the Hattiesburg community commenting in [The Hattiesburg American](#) made keener observations:

**Jeff Farris** · Hattiesburg High School

This is the reason our university gets laughed out by the other university fans because we do such ignorant backwards things like this. I usually don't comment being a business owner in hattiesburg but this football season wasn't good for the wine and liquor business. I hope we get these contracts looked at by someone with some knowledge of what is right. I mean if Ellis' agent wouldn't have him sign it without it being in there then we didn't need him here coaching! He didn't trust his ability as a coach if he had to have that guarantee. Now Ellis johnson is the highest paid assistant coach ever in college football! I hope the university will hire Bus Cook or somebody like that who can look at the contract and have it in our favor and protect the University of Southern Mississippi.

[Reply](#) · 8 · 5 hours ago

**John Adams** Did anything Martha touched not turn to crap? [Reply](#) · 2 · 4 hours ago

**Joe Barnett** · Univ of Southern Mississippi Jeff, I agree.....it has all the trappings that no one is watching the store!! But the store don't have much left in it now....