

FW: Ellenville Rising Project



Reply all |  
Yesterday, 10:30 AM

...

Flag for follow up. Start by Thursday, May 02, 2019. Due by Thursday, May 02, 2019.

[Social Media Proposal- Aga and Pawel.pdf](#)  
[2 MB](#)

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FYI

**From:** aga ratajska [mailto:aratajska@yahoo.com]

**Sent:** Wednesday, May 1, 2019 9:53 AM

**To:** Eric Cafaro <Ericcafar@mac.com>; Chris Ramirez <Chris@ramirezpix.com>; Iramirez@ecs.k12.ny.us; TJ Briggs <wawcouncilmanTJ@gmail.com>; Phil Mattricion <pmattricion@aol.com>; Wiles Lisa <lwiles@ecs.k12.ny.us>; Debbie Briggs <dbriggs@hvc.rr.com>; Ray Younger <ryounger@ecs.k12.ny.us>; Martin Rabkin <mrabkin@martinrabkinink.com>; Francis Roller <roller9905@gmail.com>; Rebecca Rivera <rivera9905@gmail.com>; Willie Bruce Jr. <williebrucejr@gmail.com>; Willie Bruce, Jr. <wbruce@ecs.k12.ny.us>; Steinhoff <steinhoff647@yahoo.com>; Gavaris John <john@johngavaris.com>; Roger Buckwalter <rogerbuchwalter@gmail.com>; Richard Travers <Rtravers@travers-okeefe.com>; Gerald Berliner <geraberl@me.com>; Jeffrey Kaplan <jkaplan.kkzf@gmail.com>; julie@signallaw.com; shol@co.ulster.ny.us

**Cc:** Pawel Zolynski <pawel.zolynski@gmail.com>

**Subject:** Ellenville Rising Project

Good Morning,

We are writing this letter to inform you that we are resigning from the Ellenville Rising Project.

We would like to explain what led us to make this decision concerning a project that we care deeply about, have invested a lot of time into, and had great hopes for. We also felt that we would be a great choice for this project, not only because of our extensive experience as designers but also because we live here in Ellenville, have moved from NYC, bought a house here and enrolled our kids into the Ellenville Elementary School (we understand the target group very well).

Last November we received confirmation from Mr. Kaplan and Suzanne Holt that we would be responsible for running the social media accounts for the Ellenville Rising Project. We were also informed that Mr. Berliner would contact us shortly. He did not, so we approached him in order to set up a meeting and figure out the next steps. He never got back to us.

Fast forward to April (5 months later), Mr. Berliner sent his proposal to us where he assigned the whole budget to himself. We also had a half an hour long meeting where he asked us to write our business proposal for social media which seemed strange to us since there was no more money left, but we gave it a shot (we feel that this should have been done 5 months earlier and be more of a team effort in order to reach common ground).

Then there is a bizarre twist. Mr. Berliner starts doing social media himself! Really? Can anyone explain why? Were we informed about this? No. Did Mr. Berliner consult the strategy with us? No. If Mr. Berliner is taking care of the social media shouldn't we be doing the branding as part of fair trade? And by the way, we don't have anything against Mr. Berliner crediting his photos on the official Facebook page but we do think that it is inappropriate that the majority of the posts he publishes lead directly to his website. Is he promoting Ellenville or himself? We have received comments about this, calling it shameless and ridiculous.

We were never informed about the process, or invited to any meetings with Mr. Berliner (except that 30 min. meeting mentioned above), the Village Board, the Town of Wawarsing or the School Board (yet the few emails we received from Mr. Berliner always ended with: 'Jeff (Kaplan) is in total agreement with me' or 'The Board agrees with me'... It all seems very strange that nobody wanted to know anything about the role and importance of social media in this project especially since it is the go-to place for information in our target group. It is standard procedure in any company that different departments work together to reach common ground regarding budget, and strategy, and to plan out steps for the future. Instead, Mr. Berliner has played a game of exclusion with us and never made us feel like we are in this project together. He has made it clear to us that he won the contest and it's his money.

Out of the \$200K budget, Mr. Berliner proposed \$15K. Now, this lowball offer is in total disregard to our experience. We have worked for global agencies: (e.g., Leo Burnett and Grey), won awards, and designed in London, Warsaw, Tel Aviv, Amsterdam, and NYC). This offer also totally ignores the amount of work that is put into social media. We think that there are two possible reasons for Mr. Berliner's strategy to exclude us from this project: either 1. he wants to do everything himself or 2. he specifically does not want to work with us because his friend, cousin or uncle can do it. We will soon find out. We do not think this past year has been a total waste of our time but rather, a learning experience. We are leaving this project with a bitter aftertaste and a notion that someone did not play a fair game with us.

Regards,  
Aga Ratajska & Pawel Zolynski

P.S. We have attached our social media proposal so that everyone can see the breakdown of our budget and costs. Mr. Berliner through his actions left no room for us to negotiate. All the ideas in this proposal and previous ones are copyright.

**From:** aga ratajska <aratajska@yahoo.com>

**Sent:** Thursday, May 2, 2019 7:48 AM

**To:** Eric Cafaro <Ericcafaro@mac.com>; Chris Ramirez <Chris@ramirezpix.com>;  
lramirez@ecs.k12.ny.us; TJ Briggs <wawcouncilmanTJ@gmail.com>; pmattracion@aol.com;  
lwiles@ecs.k12.ny.us; Debbie Briggs <dbriggs@hvc.rr.com>; Ray Younger  
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<geraberl@me.com>; Jeffrey Kaplan <jkaplan.kkzf@gmail.com>; julie@signallaw.com; Suzanne Holt  
<shol@co.ulster.ny.us>

**Cc:** Pawel Zolynski <pawel.zolynski@gmail.com>

**Subject:** Re: Ellenville Rising Project

Good Morning,

We would like to apologize for including people no longer associated with this project in our e-mail dated 05/01/19. We took the mailing list of Committee Members from Mr. Kaplan's mail dated 17 Oct 2018 (screenshot included) and it was to the best of our knowledge that they are still involved. The fact that we have sent this out to people not concerned with this project only heightens how out of the loop we are on what's happening with it, and we had no bad intentions to malign Mr. Berliner's personal and professional character.

We would also like to apologize to Mr. Berliner and retract any unintended assumptions and insinuations of nepotism and/or any underhandedness. Our frustration with the complete lack of information regarding the Ellenville Rising Project that we care so much about took the better of us.

Please disregard the previous letter because this is how it should have looked:

Good Morning,

We are writing this letter to inform you that we are resigning from the Ellenville Rising Project. The amount of \$15k offered to us is extremely low and we will not stand by anything that we know will not bring results.

We wish everyone success as they pursue the goal to Make Ellenville Great Again.

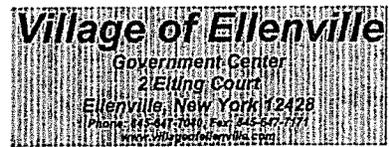
Best,  
Aga & Pawel



Councilpersons  
Stephen Bradley  
Dan Johnson  
Roger Buchwalter  
Thomas J. Briggs

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May 3, 2019

VIA EMAIL ONLY  
Aga Ratajska [aratajska@yahoo.com](mailto:aratajska@yahoo.com)

RE: Social Media Proposal

Dear Aga:

Let me start by first apologizing for any misunderstanding that may have arisen from comments made by either members of our committee or myself.

After a thorough review of the applications submitted to our committee to oversee our marketing campaign, it was the Board's decision to hire Gerald Berliner to oversee and move forward with this project. However, the Board liked both your proposal and your presentation and asked Mr. Berliner as part of his campaign, if he could retain your services to do some of the social media that was contemplated as part of our campaign. The proposal that you submitted to Mr. Berliner was comprehensive and very well prepared. However, our campaign budget for the entire project is \$100,000.00 for the first year a renewal option for a similar amount if the Board is satisfied with the first years results.

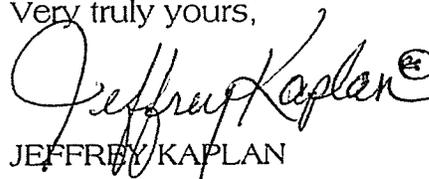
After receipt of your proposal, Mr. Berliner spoke with me and explained that while he was impressed with the proposal there was not sufficient funding to cover the comprehensive proposal you submitted. In response I advised Mr. Berliner that there was no additional funding available and asked if he could review his proposal, "sharpen his pencil" and advise how much would be available in the first year to retain your services. He advised after review of the proposal that he could free up \$15,000.00 and in response I asked if he could reach out to you to see if you could put together a \$15,000.00 proposal for the first year. As part of the renewal we could then sit down and see what would be available for the second year.

I am uncertain if there are any misunderstandings however, while the Board had hoped that arrangements could be made for you to be involved in the marketing campaign, we felt that Mr. Berliner's proposal was the most

comprehensive and he was chosen to lead the marketing campaign.

Your time and efforts in preparing your proposals and meeting with the Board were greatly appreciated and we hope that in the future we may be able again to consider you to play a role in our ongoing efforts to market our area and school.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeffrey Kaplan" with a circled "R" at the end.

JEFFREY KAPLAN

A small handwritten mark consisting of the letter "R" inside a circle.

JK: co