

# Manatee County Commission Chair Vanessa Baugh Is Focused On The Future

After a thorough investigation by the Manatee County Sheriff's office into allegations of criminal wrongdoing by Manatee County Commission Chair Vanessa Baugh, they produced a 113 page report concluding she did not commit any criminal offenses.

The investigation was to determine if her efforts to bring a COVID-19 pop-up vaccination opportunity to Manatee County at a time when vaccines were difficult to get was a criminal act.

Baugh told Manatee Herald that the object of the event was to simply follow what the governor wanted to do for our seniors over 65 since they weren't getting the calls quickly enough and wanted to get them vaccinated ASAP. Unfortunately, she didn't get the pop-up event confirmed until the weekend before, giving everyone short notice. This event ended up giving roughly 3200 people the vaccine. This pop-up event made more room in the general pool by reducing the number of people.

The report from the Sherriff's office stated, "Barring new evidence, no probable cause exists to charge Manatee County Commissioner Vanessa Baugh with a criminal offense."

The report also included, "There is no evidence to suggest she falsified or caused any other person to falsify any official records or documents. Additionally, while it appears she did not readily make it known to her fellow commissioners, there is no evidence to suggest that, in regard to the PSC vaccination event, Baugh concealed, covered up, destroyed, mutilated, or altered any official records or documents." "Finally, no underlying felony exists to substantiate the

indictment of Official Misconduct.” Baugh added, “I never lied when interrogated. Everything I said was true and I answered every question.”

When Manatee Herald asked Commissioner Baugh about how the findings made her feel she didn't say much about herself but instead said she “feels sad the way things have been turned around and put an unfair spotlight on the citizens in Lakewood Ranch.”

Baugh continued, “The new conservative Board has been attacked since day one without any wrongdoing ever being proved.” She is hoping lawsuits like this will end so the commissioners can do their jobs. Baugh shared, “We have many great things to get done. Things like a lot of road improvements, parks changed, and more. We are working to improve the quality of life for all citizens of Manatee County and want to be able to focus all efforts on getting that done.” Baugh concluded by adding, that she is “excited about the opportunities ahead and focused on the future.”