

Tom Horan's 3 Minute speech to Jersey City Council December 14, 2022

I'm Tom Horan, Director of JCETV, YEARS AGO, I co-built the City Hall TV Station...

I'm also Chairman of the Board at the Kennedy Dancers

My wife is Diane Dragone, Artistic Director of the Kennedy Dancers

We are BOTH Life Long Residents of Jersey City.

Diane Began the Kennedy Dancers 8 Mayor's ago when Tommy Smith was Mayor.

The KD are An IRS Certified 501=C3 Non Profit Organization since 1976.

The Kennedy Dancers have received Federal, State, City and private funding and have fulfilled more than 400 grant guidelines, financial reports, inspections, and reviews since 1976.

NO AGENCY HAS Even ONCE CLAIMED THAT THE KENNEDY DANCERS ARE PROFIT MAKING...Until Ed Taloza, the Jersey City Tax Assessor who has never been in our buildings and, one day, just decided to declare The Kennedy Dancers, WFMU, The Ukranian Center and some churches as profit making.

The KD Are 3 things

A Professional Dance Company who performed at the White House as well as all around NJ including

60 free performances on the J. Owen Pier over the last 12 summers.

Diane's Choreographies tell Hudson County Stories such as

CAVEN POINT about her mother's WWII experiences in Jersey City

That's what ART does...It tells stories... It doesn't necessarily make money.

And 501s like the Kennedy Dancers are Not Profit Making!! PERIOD.

The 2nd thing that The Kennedy Dancers are is a training program for Inner City Youth Junior Dance Company . Full Scholarships enable Young teens to learn the discipline and technique to become dancers. They perform on the same stage as the pros

The 3rd component is a Dance School where more than 60% of the students are either fully or partially subsidized according to government guidelines. Senior Citizens take free classes 5 Days a week!

The people who's income falls above CDBG Guidelines pay market rates.

This is one of Ed Taloza's misled arguments accusing the Kennedy Dancers of being profit making! no other school has free or subsidized classes, only the Kennedy Dancers!!!

In 1996 Diane had an idea to stabilize the Kennedy Dancers by buying the Former Beacon Lounge Bar at Beacon and Central Ave.

It was known for Fights, Drugs, Stuff going on upstairs and a murder.

After securing an 18% loan She was able to buy it from the DEA...
The Arrival of the KD vastly improved the neighborhood.

In the early 2000s The Kennedy Dancers bought the house next door
from a county sale. The house had a known **pedophile**
living in it.

Again, The Kennedy Dancers Vastly improved the neighborhood.

During Co Vid The KD received a tax bill....

Not supposed to happen to a non profit, but

Ed Talozza from behind his desk, decided that all of a sudden

They were profit making and went to a county tax hearing and changed the status.

No Notice to us, no knowledge of this hearing,
just an after the fact bill.

In the one and only conversation Diane had with Talozza he said that he's going to prove the Kennedy Dancers
are unethical and that they are not an asset to Jersey City!!!

At the Hearing a few months ago with a judge in Newark , where the city usually walks away with a win 80%
of the Time... The judge put aside Talozza's sole 2 accusations

The Judge suggested we settle this or go to Trial In January.

The Kennedy Dancers offered more free programs and better communication about them.

But Ed Talozza Did not budge and wants \$79,000 by December 30th. or there will be a tax sale!!!

Totally Illegal while in litigation!

In other words.... DIE, Kennedy Dancers!

The Kennedy Dancers cannot afford to go to a full trial.... Yet it cannot afford not too!

There is no Profit Making at all in our universe!

AGAIN

I need this council to stop funding the law dept's persection of the Kennedy Dancers.

No AGENCY has ever accused us of being profit making except for this coward behind a desk who is Not
Doing his job assessing all of these new Multimillion Developments
with real potential tax revenue from millionaire developers.!

**Right Now he is trying to wear down the Kennedy Dancers with FREE Taxpayer Funded Lawyers and Facts
don't matter!...Sound Familiar?**

This is wrong and Shameful and EVIL!!!

Evil Prevails when Good People Do Nothing!

Do Something!! Quickly!

We need you to find a way to stop this shutdown of a 46 year old Art Institution..

The Taxpayers do not want their money spent on this execution!

RESTORE THE TAX EXEMPTION FOR THE KENNEDY DANCERS!