

Greg Landsman was caught illegally conducting city business with Cincinnati's corrupt 'Gang of Five.' They admitted they broke Ohio law and a judge said they should resign and that quote "no city voter should ever vote for them again."

In 2018, Greg Landsman, Along With Four Other Democrat City Council Members, Was Accused Of Violating Ohio Law By "Holding Illegal, Secret Meetings Via Text And Email" To Discuss The Resignation Of The Mayor

In 2018, Greg Landsman, Along With Four Other Democrat City Council Members, Exchanged Text Messages In Which They Discussed How To Keep The City Manager And Potentially Regain Power From The Mayor. "Five Democrat council members: Wendell Young, Tamaya Dennard, P.G. Sittenfeld, Chris Seelbach and Greg Landsman, exchange text messages discussing how to keep the city manager and potentially regain power from the mayor. Young writes in one: 'Amen! We're the new gang of five. I pray we stay strong and continue to trust each other. We have the power to move this forward.' Sittenfeld texts in response: 'I'm game to make it a gang of 7 even! I know Mann and Pastor must be lonely over there!'" (Jennifer Edwards Baker, "Gang Of Five Special Prosecution: Timeline," [Fox19 Now](#), Updated 4/15/21)

- **Between March 1 And March 18, 2018, Landsman And His Four Colleagues "Text Among Themselves About How To Keep City Manager Black And Perhaps Regain Power They Felt [Mayor] Cranley Had Usurped."** "March 1 - March 18, 2018: Five members of Cincinnati City Council - Dennard, Sittenfeld, Wendell Young, Greg Landsman and Chris Seelbach - text among themselves about how to keep city manager Black and perhaps regain power they felt Cranley had usurped. Young, in texts which later become public, says, 'Amen! We're the new 'gang of five.' I pray we stay strong and continue to trust each other. We have the power to move this forward.' Young's 'gang of five' comment references a former council coalition - Ken Blackwell, Steve Chabot, James Cissell, John Mirlisena and Charlie Luken - who were were [sic] often called the 'gang of five.'" (Sharon Coolidge, "From 'Gang Of 5' To Federal Indictments: A Timeline Of Recent Cincinnati City Hall Corruption," [The Cincinnati Enquirer](#), Updated 6/16/22)
- **The Five Council Members Released A Statement In Which They Declared They Didn't Support Firing The City Manager, Which Made Anti-Tax Activist Mark Miller Wonder When The Group Met To Discuss Their Decision.** "The 'Gang of Five' put out a news release saying they don't support firing the city manager, which gains the attention of Mark Miller, an anti-tax activist and treasurer of the Coalition Opposed to Additional Spending and Taxes (COAST). He wonders when they publicly met to decide this since there had been no public meetings about the city manager. He suspects they violated Ohio's Open Meetings Act by conferring privately to decide public business. A public records request is filed for their text messages, emails and other communications." (Jennifer Edwards Baker, "Gang of Five Special Prosecution: Timeline," [Fox19 Now](#), Updated 4/15/21)

Miller Claimed That The Five Council Members Violated Ohio Law By "Holding Illegal, Secret Meetings Via Text And Email" To Discuss The Resignation Of The City Manager. "Miller sues when six weeks go by without the city releasing the records. The lawsuit describes the Democrats as a 'cabal of five rogue members' of council holding illegal, secret meetings via text and email to discuss the mayor asking Black to resign in violation of the state's Sunshine law and Cincinnati's city charter. The city contends texts and emails sent from council members' personal phones are not public records." (Jennifer Edwards Baker, "Gang of Five Special Prosecution: Timeline," [Fox19 Now](#), Updated 4/15/21)

Miller Filed A Lawsuit Against The Council, Accusing The Gang Of Five Of Violating Ohio Open Meeting Laws. "Taxpayers will pay \$150,000 for outside counsel for the city and five councilmembers in what's become known as 'Textgate.' Cincinnati City Council approved Wednesday paying \$75,000 for lawyers to represent the city in the case of Miller vs. Sittenfeld, et al., and another \$75,000 to represent the self-proclaimed 'Gang of Five.' Miller's suit accuses the five

councilmembers of violating Ohio open meetings law by texting each other to form a joint position on Mayor John Cranley's request that City Manager Harry Black resign. The councilmembers created two news releases that were sent to the media on March 16 and March 18." ("Cincinnati City Councilmembers Approve \$150,000 To Defend Themselves, City Against Lawsuit," [WCPO](#), 9/19/18)

The Council's Progressive 5 Assumed Their Text Messages Would Remain Secret.

"Council's Progressive 5 majority planned part of their coup to keep Black on the job longer in a secret text-message string in mid-March. Well, P.G. Sittenfeld, Wendell Young, Chris Seelbach, Tamaya Dennard and Greg Landsman thought it was secret. Oops. The group text constituted a public meeting, and those messages are public records. The Ohio Supreme Court's news website couldn't be more clear in its summary of the law: 'A private, prearranged discussion of public business by the majority of a public body's members either face-to-face or by other means such as telephone, e-mail, text or tweet violates the Ohio Open Meetings Act.'" (Jason Williams, "PX Column: 4 Takeaways From The Nasty Power Struggle Between John Cranley And Harry Black," [The Cincinnati Enquirer](#), 4/20/18)

Per The Released Text Messages, Landsman Even "Ponder[ed] Whether It Is Legal."

"Thousands of text messages are released. These messages are more candid than ones connected to the case that already were released in 2018. Those texts were on a group string among the five. The latest ones are between smaller groups, and one-on-one. They are more personal, with eye-raising insults, name-calling ('psychotic salty whiny nut'), plots and just plain gossip. At one point in all the private back-and-forth, Landsman ponders whether it is legal." (Jennifer Edwards Baker, "Gang of Five Special Prosecution: Timeline," [Fox19 Now](#), Updated 4/15/21)

In February 2019, A \$101,000 Settlement Was Arranged "In Which The City Admits Council Members Violated Ohio's Open Meetings Act Twice," And In March 2019, The Judge Approved The Settlement

In February 2019, A \$101,000 Settlement Was Arranged "In Which The City Admits Council Members Violated Ohio's Open Meetings Act Twice." "February 2019. A \$101,000 settlement is arranged in which the city admits council members violated Ohio's Open Meetings Act twice and Young deleted his texts. This includes \$1,000 for two Open Meeting Act violations and \$10,000 for Young destroying the texts." (Jennifer Edwards Baker, "Gang Of Five Special Prosecution: Timeline," [Fox19 Now](#), Updated 4/15/21)

In March 2019, The Judge Approved The Settlement, And Determined That The Five Council Members, Including Landsman, Should Step Down. "March 2019. Judge Ruehlman approves the settlement, telling the five council members in his courtroom they should step down." (Jennifer Edwards Baker, "Gang Of Five Special Prosecution: Timeline," [Fox19 Now](#), Updated 4/15/21)

The City Of Cincinnati Paid The \$101,000 Settlement, Which Brought The Question Of Why Taxpayers Were "On The Hook" For The Criminal Behavior Of Landsman And His Colleagues

Landsman Been Critical Of Ethics Violations Costing Taxpayers Money. "As Ohio politics has been under obvious public scrutiny for recent and repeated ethics violations, today during a press briefing Cincinnati City Councilman Greg Landsman introduced five new reforms 'aimed at restoring public trust not just in government but also the idea and potential of public service,' he said. 'Larry Householder's \$60 million corruption scheme in Columbus will cost taxpayers a \$1 billion if we don't succeed in court. There is a United States Senator trying to keep her seat in Georgia despite indications of insider trader. Her husband owns the stock exchange and the couple sold and bought millions in stocks after a classified briefing. Plus, what has happened here,' Landsman said, referring to the fact that two city council members have been arrested this year on separate and unrelated federal bribery charges." (Maija Zummo, "Cincinnati City Councilman Greg Landsman Introduces Five Reforms To Combat Corruption, Restore Public Trust," [CityBeat](#), 11/16/20)

"City Taxpayers Will Shell Out \$101,000 To Settle A Lawsuit Over Secret Text Messages And Emails Exchanged By Five Council Members In Violation Of Ohio's Open Meetings

Act, According To City Records Released Monday.” (Jennifer Edwards Baker, “Gang of Five: Cincinnati Taxpayers To Pay \$101K In Settlement Over Secret Council Texts,” [Fox19 Now](#), 3/4/19)

Vice Mayor Christopher Smitherman Questioned Why Taxpayers Were “On The Hook” For The Criminal Behavior Of Landsman And His Colleagues. “Vice Mayor Christopher Smitherman called the entire episode ‘a waste of money.’ It’s not over yet, he warned. ‘They are north of \$200,000. Because this is criminal, it’s unclear why the taxpayer needs to pay the bill. That’s the question. The question is why are we on the hook for their criminal behavior?’” (Jennifer Edwards Baker, “Gang of Five: Cincinnati Taxpayers To Pay \$101K In Settlement Over Secret Council Texts,” [Fox19 Now](#), 3/4/19)

All Five Members Of The Gang Of Five Admitted To Breaking The Law And Landsman Said He Had No Plans To Step Down

All Five Members Of The Gang Of Five Admitted To Breaking The Law. “Five Cincinnati City Council members have admitted breaking the law and the city has agreed to pay \$101,000 to settle a lawsuit against them in the ‘Gang of Five’ text messaging scandal. The five Democrats - P.G. Sittenfeld, Greg Landsman, Tamaya Dennard, Chris Seelbach and Wendell Young – admit violating Ohio’s Open Meeting Act by conducting public business in private text messages and emails with each other. Furthermore, Young admits deleting text messages from his cell phone in violation of Judge Robert Ruehlman’s order.” (WCPO Staff, “Cincinnati City Council ‘Gang Of Five’ Admits Breaking The Law In Text Messaging Scandal,” [ABC 9 WCPO Cincinnati](#), 3/4/19)

- **“The Five Council Members – Wendell Young, P.G. Sittenfeld, Chris Seelbach, Tamaya Dennard And Greg Landsman – All Admitted As Part Of A Settlement Agreement That They Broke Ohio Open Meetings Law By Secretly Discussing Public Business In A String Of Group Text Messages.”** (Dan Horn and Sharon Coolidge, “Judge Tells City Council’s ‘Gang Of Five’ They Should Apologize And Resign Over Secret Texts,” [The Cincinnati Enquirer](#), 3/7/19)

“Landsman Said He Has No Plans To Step Down.” “Outside the courtroom after the hearing, Landsman said he has no plans to step down. ‘You have to take responsibility for your actions,’ he said, referring to the texts. ‘I’ve said they were a mistake from the beginning.’” (Dan Horn and Sharon Coolidge, “Judge Tells City Council’s ‘Gang Of Five’ They Should Apologize And Resign Over Secret Texts,” [The Cincinnati Enquirer](#), 3/7/19)

The Judge Determined That The Five Council Members, Including Landsman, Should Resign, As They “Essentially Lied To The People Of The City,” “The Trust Is Gone,” And He Said That “No City Voter Should Ever Vote For Them Again”

“You Essentially Lied To The People Of The City. The Trust Is Gone,’ He Says.” (Jennifer Edwards Baker, “Gang Of Five Special Prosecution: Timeline,” [Fox19 Now](#), Updated 4/15/21)

“Judge Robert Ruehlman In March 2018 Said The Five Council Members Should Resign And Reimburse What The City Spent On Their Behalf.” (Jay Hanselman, “No Criminal Charges For Council’s ‘Gang Of Five,’” [91.7 WVXU](#), 9/20/20)

The Judge Determined That “No City Voter Should Ever Vote For Them Again.” “I really believe the five City Council members should resign,’ Ruehlman said. ‘no city voter should ever vote for them again.’” (Dan Horn and Sharon Coolidge, “Judge Tells City Council’s ‘Gang Of Five’ They Should Apologize And Resign Over Secret Texts,” [The Cincinnati Enquirer](#), 3/7/19)