

January 19, 2012, Excerpt from Westfield Leader article by reporter Dell Simeone:

Mr. Murray had been with the Alliance for several years, and previous to that, had been the Union County information officer for several years. He is a graduate of Kean University in Union.

The Westfield Leader reached Mr. Murray on his cell phone on Monday. He declined to say how much money the Alliance receives from the Freeholders in contracts, and when asked how many employees the Alliance has, he said “none of your business.”

“You know, people knock the Alliance, but it has done a lot of good for Union County over the years, such as, the health evaluations, the newsletter Directions, and its part in many business initiatives,” Mr. Murray said.

Mr. Murray said he was upset by “this woman” (Tina Renna), who started the suit, and by the amount of calls he received from the press regarding the organization. “How did you get my cell phone number anyway?” he asked The Leader reporter.

Mr. Murray was reached by calling the Alliance phone number, which had a message from Mr. Murray saying, “You can reach me on my cell phone” followed by his cell number. Then, he suddenly said, “I quit,” and when asked, “what, you quit, when?” Mr. Murray said, “last month.” He suggested The Leader call Mauro Checcio, the Alliance treasurer and a former Scotch Plains mayor, for any further information. Several attempts were made on Monday and Tuesday to reach him and were unsuccessful.

The Alliance maintains an office at 1275 Westfield Avenue, suite 4, Rahway.

Ms. Renna was called several times, but did not respond to phone calls seeking comment.

UCWA is seeking the judge declare the Alliance a public agency subject to OPRA and if so order the Alliance to turn over the records requested as well as UCWA’s costs and attorney fees.