

## **Political Party Geronto Housekeepers Visit the Deceased**

The tender for financing projects in the field of social protection in 2025, which was announced by the city of Leskovac, officially ended on February 14, 2025. The result of the tender was not announced until March 25, at the time of writing this text, although the mayor of Leskovac, Goran Cvetanović, announced that it would be announced at the beginning of March.

It is planned to spend 38 million from the city budget, or, more precisely, from citizens' money, on this tender. The decisions of the committee related to this tender have been causing violent reactions in Leskovac for years. So far, there has been mostly talk about abuses at the tender and the allocation of citizens' money to associations that serve to "pacify" SNS activists on the ground and that buy votes for this party in the elections. And then the papers that prove it started to appear.

The most drastic case of these abuses is the "Grad Jelica" association.

In 2017, the tender committee allocated money to them even though they were not officially registered in the Business Registers Agency, which is a prerequisite for applying. The opposition councilors then reacted at the session of the City Assembly and the proceedings were suspended. However, after a few months, the money was distributed and the "Grad Jelica" got its piece of cake.

"The association 'Grad Jelica' was purposely created in order to put money in the pockets of eligible persons", believes Nenad Zdravković, councilor of the opposition group of citizens "Za Leskovac ZAJEDNO". He adds that the decisions on projects at city tenders are confirmed by the members of the City Council, who are appointed by the party, and thus the councilors are not in a situation to analyze and check them.

This indicates that the association was founded by Mirjana Stanojević, the daughter of Novica Stanojević, the president of the Grdelica Local Community Council.

The association received money for the realization of projects providing services to geronto housekeepers.

In all projects of that association supported from the budget of the city of Leskovac from 2017 to 2023, compensation was received by Svetlana Gavrilović, the sister of Perica Gavrilović, the twice-arrested assistant of the mayor of Leskovac. He is Cvetanović's most trusted man, and for that he officially awarded him an award, explaining that he is giving it to Gavrilović because he is his most loyal associate. And the "most loyal associate" went from being the mayor's driver for many years to being his assistant for economic affairs, because in the meantime a diploma from the Faculty of Economics appeared. Gavrilović was also a long-term trustee of the SNS for the town of Grdelica and all the surrounding villages, and he was known as a person without whose knowledge or approval nothing could be done in that area for more than a decade.

His sister also received the most money of all the hired geronto housekeepers. She lives in Leskovac, and it is stated that she visits users in Grdelica, about twenty kilometers away.

Aleksandar Stojković, founder of the "AMG" company, was also a Geronto housekeeper, and received compensation for it, who was also arrested in the scandal of misuse of money from the budget for local roads in the villages around Grdelica.

According to the testimony of the locals, he used to visit his grandmother and grandfather, with whom he lives in the same house.

At the same time when he was employed as a geronto housekeeper, he was employed at a school in Grdelica, and after that at the House of Culture in that place. At the same time, he was also the owner of a company with one employee, which was hired to fix local roads with money from the city budget.

He received 500,000 dinars through projects, and another 360,000 dinars through travel expenses, according to reports on the implementation of the project.

### **Geronto housekeepers visited the deceased?**

Some geronto housekeepers stated in their reports that they visited people who turned out to have passed away before the start of their employment. People in Grdelica talked about this, but no one wants to testify about it publicly because they are afraid of the mayor and SNS.

Opposition councilor Nenad Zdravković says that one of those geronto housekeepers is Milena Stanković, the wife of Bratislav Stanković, who is, as he states, "one of the important coordinators of the SNS for the Grdelica region and who is considered a Roma coordinator."

"She signed the contract for the geronto-housekeeper on May 3, 2023. In the report submitted by the project coordinator, which we eventually got, for the year 2023, the names of the people the geronto- housekeeper visited were entered, and among other things, there is the name of Zlatan Vasić. The strange thing is that Vasić died on August 21, 2022, so I don't know how and where she visited him" says Zdravković

"When we were looking for these papers, because we are very interested in how the government in Leksovac spends citizens' money, they probably tried to 'fix' them, so Zlatan Vasić was replaced by the beneficiary Zorica Ristić. However, I don't know how they got around her either, because she passed away on January 14, 2023, five months before Milena Stanković became a geronto- housekeeper," Zdravković continues.

The family of this woman is ready to testify before the investigating authorities that no one has ever visited them in the capacity of a geronto- housekeeper.

And this is not the end of the story about the "Grad Jelica" association and the spending of money by the citizens of Leskovac on their projects through which SNS activists were engaged.

This association received more than 13 million dinars from the city budget, but apparently they do not have their premises, because they are not at the address where they were registered.

And from 2017 to 2023, the association received money from the city budget for the same project, they didn't even change the name - "From us to you".

The association "Grad Jelica" was dissolved in 2023.

### **The SNS secretary was also a geronto housekeeper**

Slađana Mladenović from Dedina Bara, the secretary of the SNS board in Grdelica, received 1.176 million dinars as a geronto housekeeper, according to the reports. In order to be a geronto housekeeper, she must be unemployed, and she was employed at the time, explains Zdravković.

The secretary of SNS received 295,000 dinars from the city budget in 2018 based on the development of women's entrepreneurship, and according to the available information, she does not have a registered company or any other legal entity in the Business Registers Agency.

### **The mayor does not see a problem in the allocation of money to the "Grad Jelica" association or the engagement of SNS activists**

For the mayor of Leskovac, the fact that the "Jelica" association hired only SNS activists for money from the city budget is not a problem in any way.

In the explanation, he dealt with the amounts paid and the hiring of the sister of his longtime driver, who later became Perica Gavrilović's assistant.

"It is true that they received 13 million for a period of six years. When you analyze it a little, each year the number of hired persons in addition to the coordinator was 5-7, and the duration of the project was an average of eight months. If we assume that the average was two million dinars per year, and divide by the number of months and persons hired, the result is some 250,000 dinars, and 41,700 per hired person. This is not the data that has been discussed so far. Let's analyze the geronto housekeeper Svetlana Gavrilović, 1,176,581 dinars, an unemployed single mother who worked as a housekeeper for six years. In 2018, 30,000 per month for the 7-8 months she worked, 2019. 39.600 dinars below the average of salary. 2020 it was 44.000 dinars per month, 2021 the amount of 28.000 dinars, 2022 it was 31.000 per month, 2023 it was 36.000 dinars which is below minimum salary", explained Cvetanovic.

He does not deny that Aleksandar Stojković was also involved in the project, nor that he "visited his grandmother and grandfather, with whom he lives in the same house, but he says that he did not receive half a million dinars for that, but 224,000 dinars."

For Milena Stanković, a geronto- housekeeper, who signed the contract in May 2023 and visited the beneficiary who died in August 2022, and when he died, replaced him with Zorica Ristić, who also passed away earlier, Cvetanović claims that she was, in fact, hired in 2022 and that she visited Zlatan Vasić from April to August, when he died.

Councilor Zdravković, however, points out that "Milena Stanković, in her report submitted for 2023, even though she worked in 2022, mentions that she visited Zlatan Vasić in 2023 as well." And then they replaced him with a woman who died before signing the contract in 2023".

He added that, according to the data that his councilor group has, Aleksandar Stojković has a private company, he works in the Cultural Center, he took 500,000 as geronto housekeeper, 224,000 and 269,000, then supplemented it with travel expenses of almost 300,000 dinars, and he visited his grandparents with whom he lives".

Zdravković also claims that "the gentlemen from the Department for Organized Crime in Niš have had all the papers about the association "Jelica" for several months, and it is strange that they are not doing anything about this."

The "Jelica" case is the most graphic example of how the money of all citizens from the budget actually ends up with SNS officials and activists through the GONGO association, and for a service whose execution is very questionable – this is the opinion of non-governmental organizations that dealt with this tender.

But that's not the only case.

### **A man with two convictions for domestic violence receives money to support victims of domestic violence**

Two other associations regularly receive money at this tender: the Association of Single Parents, Fathers and Mothers (UTIM) and the Association of Pensioners' Unions Leskovac. These associations received a total of RSD 1,800,000.00 for six projects at the 2023 tender.

Last year, that amount increased to RSD 2,200,000. They received the largest amount for the project "We are here for you", for which the association "Jelica" received money from the budget of the city of Leskovac for six years.

These two associations were founded by the same person, Miodrag Stanković. The UTIM association received money at the city's tender for the provision of SOS telephone services for victims of violence, even though Stanković was personally convicted twice

for domestic violence, which was also reported by the media several times. Stanković is also an SNS activist.

## **Ljiljana Stojanović**

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