

IMPERIAL VALLEY PRESS

IID responds to latest allegations

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The Imperial Irrigation District on Wednesday responded to more allegations of an improper relationship with former consultant ZGlobal made by Palm-Springs based newspaper The Desert Sun.

The Desert Sun reported that in 2011, the IID sold 1,400 acres of farmland to Green Light Energy — who is closely tied with ZGlobal — for \$5.77 million and just a few weeks later, the company resold the property to First Solar for \$14.2 million.

The land in question currently houses Solar Gen 2, a 150-megawatt solar farm in Calipatria. According to the reports, the district initially considered selling the property for \$8,000 an acre, but a month later, sold it for \$4,000 an acre with the board's direction.

IID's general manager Kevin Kelley responded to the latest reports Wednesday stating the newspaper made it seem as if the district "may have left millions of dollars on the table."

"This could only be true if IID were in the business of "flipping" solar projects, which it most assuredly is not," Kelley responded in a letter to The Desert Sun. "What is true is that the Solar Gen 2 project delivered tremendous value to the district, and not just in terms of the 150 megawatts of new generation that interconnected to IID at a time when virtually all other utility-scale solar projects were bypassing its system, but also through the land-use conversion that followed and the significant water savings realized by IID as a direct result of it."

As a result of reports of possible conflicts of interests were reported starting in August, the IID and ZGlobal terminated their \$9 million contract, a year before it expired.

Kelley also mentioned in his letter IID outside counsel is looking into these particular allegations.

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