

# The Greenville News

GreenvilleOnline.com

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2008 ■ FINAL EDITION

2A greenvilleonline.com

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2008 THE GREENVILLE NEWS

## LOCAL NEWS

# Troutman denies harming Clemson laptop

### Fired executive secretary responds to school's claim of computer fraud

By Tim Smith  
CAPITAL BUREAU  
tcsmith@greenvillenews.com

COLUMBIA — Former Clemson University executive secretary Eugene Troutman did nothing improper when he deleted files from his laptop computer and copied them onto a disk as instructed by the chairman of the school's trustees, Troutman's law-

yers said in court documents filed Tuesday.

Clemson's lawyers have alleged that Troutman, who has sued the school over his firing last year, violated a federal computer fraud and abuse law when he deleted all files on his Clemson laptop last year and copied them onto a disk.

Clemson's lawyers first

raised the issue of the missing laptop files at a hearing last month, at which Troutman's lawyers told U.S. District Judge Matthew Perry that their client had "wiped clean" the hard drive on the computer to protect personal information that was on it. They also said he had copied all the school's files and offered them to the school's lawyers.

However, Clemson said in its counterclaim that wasn't good enough and the school had no way of

knowing whether those files were all of those removed from the computer. The school also alleged that its costs in the matter exceeded \$5,000.

In Troutman's response, his lawyers said he was instructed to copy all of the computer's contents onto a disk by the chairman of Clemson's board, Leon "Bill" Hendrix Jr., in August 2007. Hendrix is one of the defendants in Troutman's suit.

Troutman's filing also said a former executive

secretary had copied his laptop's contents onto a disk and left it in a drawer. Troutman's lawyers denied Clemson suffered any damage by what Troutman did to the laptop.

Troutman's lawsuit alleges he lost his job, in part, after he spoke out about "excessive" salary increases given to some university administrators. Troutman also alleged in his suit that increases in tuition and fees at Clemson weren't justified by cuts in state appropriations, and

that trustees "hoarded" cash from tuition increases to build an unrestricted \$80 million fund.

Clemson alleged that contrary to Troutman's claims, he didn't raise the issue of the school's \$80 million fund balance until after he was asked to resign and had hired a lawyer. The response also denied a host of conversations alleged by Troutman, arguing he hadn't raised financial problems with trustees or school officials as he alleged.