

MORE BROCCOLI SOUP FROM THE WAPO

Media Matters notes that Marcus Brauchli offered—then withdrew—an offer to answer readers’ questions about the WaPo’s Pay2Play scandal.

Is Washington Post executive editor Marcus Brauchli laying the groundwork to duck questions about whether he was honest about his role in the Post’s access-for-cash scandal?

[snip]

Note that the formerly broad wording (Brauchli was going to take “questions about the newspaper and washingtonpost.com”) has now been narrowed (Brauchli will take “questions about The Post redesign.”)

Is that an effort to discourage questions about Brauchli’s honesty and other sticky subjects?

I’m guessing the answer to those question is “yes.”

But I also think it time to shift focus away from the inconsistent story of the WaPo’s Executive Editor to what his role says about the institution of the WaPo as a whole.

As I noted over the weekend, the WaPo put Brauchli himself in charge of its internal investigation aimed at “avoiding another episode that could damage the paper’s reputation.” But we now know that Brauchli was always a party to these discussions, up to and including making the salons off the record. They put the guy at the center of the scandal in charge of figuring out how to avoid such scandals in the future. And now they’re trotting out the same guy to do a chat that might have—but apparently will no longer—addressed these questions.

This is, by all appearances, an institutional whitewash, not just Brauchli's inconsistent story. And we ought to be focusing on that fact.