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March 30

Has replacing the City manager become a joke?

I have been watching the shenanigans going on at the council table concerning finding a new city manager and just cannot believe my eyes and ears. What a Joke!!! The joke isn't limited to one faction at the council table. As many of you are aware, there seems to be two groups or factions sitting at the city council table. Both sides taking jabs at each other. I will join the fray and take jabs at both sides.

Let us begin with the rubberstamp faction.

We have some council members who do not want to look beyond the two assistant city managers we currently have to fill the upcoming vacancy. DUH.

Council woman Kerwin is emphatic about that point and doesn't want to spend any time or money to pursue finding anyone that may be better suited for the job. My dealings with her first choice, as a result of my position on the Troy Brownfield Authority, make me want to jump at the opportunity to look outside the current staff. She also stresses that we are in a financial crisis and shouldn't spend any money to find the most qualified applicant. She wasn't too concerned about the finances when she voted to spend \$500,000 on a design study for the transit center. That is money that will not be reimbursed. A transit center that was never part of any transit study until the land it was to be built upon was about to revert back to the donators of the land. Yes, A transit center that is only being discussed because three acres of land was given to the city for that purpose and would revert back to the givers if a center isn't being built on that land by 2010. Where was her concern for money then as it is now with the manager search? [The transit center is another whole issue that needs to be commented on.]

There are many reasons why we should open up the city managers job search to the outside. There are also reasons why we might promote from within. Saving \$30,000 when we just blew off half of \$500,000 (50% covered by Birmingham) isn't one of them. Don't forget our half of \$7,500 a month lobbying effort to get funding when the Obama administration told those seeking stimulus package money not to lobby the government officials on behalf of projects for that money. Who listens?

The other point she makes is that the current staff is qualified to do the job and thus lets pick one of them. DUH. If they weren't qualified, why are they still working for the city. Why is it that we always hear such wonderful praise about our staff when the cameras are rolling. Why not the criticism when they screw up. Believe me, there have been screw-ups. I have no problem when they praise someone for some activity they accomplish. But the heaping on of praise for the sake of looking good and to divert attention or blame for your upcoming comments makes me want to puke. Both sides were laying on the praise of what excellent jobs these two assistant managers are doing these past few meetings. They are doing a good job as assistant managers go, but they also have some shortfalls. Are they the best choice? Let them throw their hats in the ring and lets find out.

Oh, they were just given a free pass by the other faction. Councilwoman Broomfield who wants to have a national search just resolved that those two can submit their applications and are automatically finalists in the selection process. We are hiring a search firm that is to take all the applicants, screen them pursuant to the city council guidelines and oh by the way 2 of your top 3 (possibly 4) candidates have to be our two existing assistant city managers. What a joke. Let them throw their applications in with the rest of the applicants and if they past muster, they will be selected as one of the finalists. Isn't that why we are hiring the search firm?. To look at all of the applicants and give us the top 3 (possibly 4). What I have read and heard as far as recent searches has been that the search firm providing the top three candidates. Why hire a firm if two of the top three are pre-selected? If you are going to dictate who the firm is to select, don't hire a firm. Do your own selection from the applicants.

Councilwoman Broomfield does this right after she pulls off one of the sleaziest political moves I've seen done at the City of Troy council table, embarrass an individual by nominating them for a position that they will NOT be selected for and cast the deciding vote that denies them the position. She does this AFTER, YES AFTER, she has him reconsider his letter to council NOT to consider him for the position. What a sleazy maneuver.

I could go on, but I think you can get my drift. Both factions are up to shenanigans and both sides are doing a great disservice to our community. This makes me wonder, when Phil Nelson was selected for the city managers position, who originally voted for him and who voted for someone else. In the end, they all voted for him as a sign of solidarity but who were his original supporters. Let's hope they don't make the same mistake in their selecting a new city manager this time around.

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March 12

Goodby Phil, we're glad to see you go.

I will be up front, I am glad to see Phil Nelson go. Why? Because it was blatantly obvious that he did not want to work for Troy.

On June 29, 2006, the Troy City Council officially appointed Phil Nelson to begin work as the City Manager for Troy when they approved his employment contract. On March 3, 2008, The Arizona Republic reports that Phil Nelson was a finalist for the Goodyear, Arizona city managers job. Since this position was reopened for applications on December 21, 2007 and they had to be received by mid February 2008, Phil was only on the job for a year and half before he was looking for a new job. Who knows, he may have been looking sooner but this was the first job opening that I am aware of.

When did city council first know that Phil was looking for another job? Did they know last summer when they evaluated him? As soon as they were aware that he was applying for another job, they should have started the search for his replacement. If they knew last year and did nothing till now, shame on them. They should have given him notice that his job was over as soon as they found his

replacement. That would have given him more time than what he gave us. Hell, he initially didn't even want to give us the proper 30 days notice that was required in his contract. He initially only wanted to give us two weeks notice. I guess he thought he could ignore his contract and give us what most people consider the "Two weeks notice" routine. If city council (or even one member) knew in July, they should have given him until the end of the year and hired a new city manager to start the New Year.

I keep on hearing what a good manager he was. This past year he did nothing at the city council table. Now we know why. More importantly, why did he start a new budgeting process when he knew full well he wanted to leave? What kind of manager is that? To initiate a new form of budgeting process, (which this city had never done in the past nor have many other cities), knowing full well that at the first opportunity he would leave, even if it was before the first years budgeting process was done, which he is doing. Remember, this is the third manager's position that he was a finalist for that we know of. How many other job openings did he apply for?

So I say, Good by and Good Riddance.

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March 10

[Cobo Hall fiasco](#)

I sent the following email to the Detroit City Council's Research & Analysis Division. I can't believe we are allowing the state to legislate a law that takes city property and give it to another entity without the city's blessing. Could you imagine if the state had legislated that the City of Troy give the Troy Civic Center land to an authority in order to build that Convention Center complex we the majority of Troy residents were opposed to and voted not to give our land away a few years back. Of course back then, there was a city manager pushing for it as well as several council members. Even today we have some members on city council that were in favor of that project back then. One even flip flopped on the issue to be against it in order to help get elected.

To whom it may concern,

I have been following the Cobo Hall fiasco and was wondering why there has been no mention of what the legislative act states concerning the denial process of the legislative body?

Sec. 19. (1) Within 45 days of the effective date of this act or the date on which a metropolitan area becomes a qualified metropolitan area and prior to a transfer date, **the legislative body of the qualified city in which a qualified convention facility is located may disapprove the transfer of the qualified convention facility to the authority by adopting a resolution disapproving the transfer.** If the transfer is not disapproved, the qualified convention facility is transferred to the authority on the ninetieth day after the effective date of this act or the date on which a convention facility becomes a qualified convention facility.

I know you all are clear on this aspect but the legislative body (i.e., Detroit City Council) did exactly what the statute allowed, they adopted a resolution disapproving the transfer. That being done, Cobo Hall should NOT be transferred to the authority and thus the authority should cease to exist. Nothing in the act states that if a mayor vetoes the resolution they have to override it, only that they had to pass a resolution disapproving the transfer. When the language of the law is clear the language rules. Nothing can be more clear, did the legislative body adopt a resolution disapproving the transfer? The only way that the results of this resolution could be undone is if the resolution passed was improperly passed (thus illegal) or a motion to reconsider and its subsequent failure. Neither of these actions occurred. A mayor's veto does not change the fact that a legally adopted resolution was made that disapproved the transfer thus the transfer of the convention facility should not occur to the authority.

All of this could have been avoided if the original language of the Act was approved that required the legislative body to approve the transfer in order for the authority to exist. I wonder what stupid legislator inserted this change which leads to another legal question, how can the state legislate a city owned facility to another legal entity without the city's permission? It is obvious that the city did not pass any resolution authorizing the transfer and only the mayor's action, who is not the legislative body, is allowing this fiasco to proceed. I am sure you will initiate the appropriate legal actions to delay the transfer until ALL legal issues are resolved including the last point.

Respectfully,

Victor Lenivov

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March 01

[Resurfacing Livernois before potholed John R](#)

I was just reading the March 1, 2009 online Troy Eccentric article "**Stimulus 'accelerates' road repairs**" and read that the resurfacing of John R between 14 mile and Maple Rd was to receive Federal stimulus funds and be moved up a year to be done in 2010. Sounds good to me. But as I read further, they mentioned that Livernois between Big Beaver and Wattles was scheduled to be repaired in 2012 for 1.59 million dollars. Maybe something has happened in the last few days on Livernois Road but driving on John R between Big Beaver and Wattles is a lot more treacherous than driving on Livernois between those same mile roads. Just because Livernois hasn't had work done on it as recently as John R should not be the main criteria for when repairs are done.

Yes, Yes road work is scheduled years in advance but that is surely a poor excuse. Fix the worst roads. Management at the local and county level needs to revisit how roads are selected and scheduled for repair work. Something needs to be done that would allow a city to redirect a project's fund to another county road that has deteriorated more rapidly and resulting in a greater need of repair than the one scheduled to be repaired, IF the costs are similar. If it costs more, the city would have to cover the excess. If less, the reduction should be deducted from the city's share.

Lets face it. The county keeps track of how much money is spent in each city or township. They also keep track of when each project is scheduled to receive funds. Let the local government swap their projects and their projects positions in the que if the project being swapped is in worse condition. Transferring money for one road project to another road project that is in more disrepair should be allowed. Fairness would still be intact since extra costs would be borne by the city and the project being swapped out goes to the place of the project being swapped in as far as scheduling. If the project being swapped in was not scheduled, then the project being swapped out would have to start from scratch with no doubt an additional burden that it was swapped out.

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