

## District Responses



Four Rivers Vector Control <fourriversvectorcontrol@gmail.com>

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## Notice of Formal Complaint

1 message

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Duncan Atwood <duncanjatwood@gmail.com>

Wed, Apr 23, 2025 at 3:26 PM

To: Vector Control Four Rivers <fourriversvectorcontrol@gmail.com>

Hello Myles,

Thank you for sending this information regarding the formal complaint made. As a board member, I want the district staff to feel like I have their best interests, as well as the district community's best interests at heart. Both groups are extremely important towards the success of the vector control district.

I would like to make this abundantly clear: I do not agree with the way that board member Amy Varner has characterized any of her complaints and I do not agree that there is any reason for her to have made this formal complaint.

I do hope that this can all be sorted out fairly and quickly as I believe our focus and yours should not be on this. I believe that what Amy Varner has requested, regarding bills, receipts, etc, falls entirely in the general manager's (yourself) scope of responsibilities to make decisions. That is the job we have hired you to do. As long as you are making decisions with the community's best interests at the forefront and making sure your staff is appreciated and supported, I believe strongly that we should allow you to do the job you were hired to do.

This year has a possibility to be one of the worst mosquito seasons we've had in awhile, and I wish we didn't have this hanging over all of our heads going into the mosquito season. Please let me know how I can support you and your staff through this mosquito season.

Sincerely,  
Duncan Atwood

Four Rivers Vector Control  
56478 Solar Drive  
Bend, OR 97707  
[fourriversvectorcontrol@gmail.com](mailto:fourriversvectorcontrol@gmail.com)  
04.03.2025

Patti Adair  
Tony DeBone  
Phil Chang  
1300 NW Wall Street  
Bend, OR 97703

Subject: Response to Concerns Raised by Amy Varner

Dear Commissioners Adair, DeBone, and Chang,

This letter serves as an official response to the concerns raised by Board Member Amy Varner regarding the operations and governance of Four Rivers Vector Control. The statements made in her email contain inaccuracies and misrepresentations that require clarification.

First and foremost, there is no conflict of interest or nepotism within Four Rivers Vector Control. While Sierra Dieckhoff, Rodney Dieckhoff, and Lawrie Dieckhoff are related, the board does not have the authority to hire or supervise the Office Manager position. That responsibility falls under the jurisdiction of the Operations Manager. The hiring and supervisory process is conducted with transparency and adherence to all applicable laws and policies. We have confirmed this with the Special Districts Association of Oregon.

Additionally, all members of the public, including board members, are required to follow the public records request policy as set forth by both the district and state regulations. According to Oregon law (**ORS 192.318**), no board member may use their position to access documents in a manner that would not be available to them if they were not a board member. The district has procedures in place for reviewing documents, and any review must be approved by the board as a whole. In this case, Amy did not seek board approval before requesting documents. Instead, she acted independently, which classified her request as a public records request, subject to standard processing and fees. **ORS 192.324** allows public entities to establish reasonable fees for the actual costs incurred in fulfilling records requests. Since the estimated cost exceeded \$25, a written estimate was provided, as required by law. Despite this, Amy argued that she should not have to pay because of her board position, which constitutes an attempt to use her role for personal financial benefit—potentially violating **ORS 244.040** (Ethics Law prohibiting financial gain through public office).

Four Rivers Vector Control has only one staff member responsible for handling public records requests, in addition to their daily operational duties. We made every effort to provide the requested documents in a timely manner. However, additional time was needed to ensure compliance with **ORS 192.329** and to clarify with the Special Districts Association of Oregon

(SDAO) that no personal information required redaction on the bank statements. The delay of several days was due in part to awaiting a response, as well as seeking guidance from the Oregon Public Records Advocate on the correct process for handling public records requests involving a board member. Ms. Varner's request was acknowledged within the statutory timeframe.

Regarding the matter of Rodney Dieckhoff's inquiry with First Interstate Bank, this was necessary due to concerns surrounding Ms. Varner's request for bank statements and credit card records to be emailed directly to her, as she is an employee of the bank. This raised questions about the bank's internal policy on employees accessing customer information. Rodney Dieckhoff sought clarification from Ms. Varner's superior because the teller and branch manager were unable to provide a definitive answer. This action was taken to ensure compliance with banking regulations and to prevent any unauthorized access to financial records.

Furthermore, neither Rodney Dieckhoff nor Lawrie Dieckhoff have unrestricted access to district banking documents. As Board Chair, Rodney serves as an authorized signer for financial transactions, including payroll. This oversight mechanism was implemented prior to Ms. Varner's tenure on the board as an added layer of financial control. Previously, the former manager was the sole individual writing and signing checks, a practice that was revised to enhance accountability. The assertion that Rodney Dieckhoff unilaterally approved employee bonuses without board consent is inaccurate. Employee compensation, including any bonuses, was reviewed and approved during the budget approval process by both the budget committee and the board.

It is concerning that Ms. Varner continues to levy unfounded accusations against employees who do not report to her. If she had legitimate concerns about financial mismanagement, the proper protocol would have been to bring these concerns to the Operations Manager, who oversees employee conduct. Instead, she has chosen to publicly question the integrity of employees without substantiating her claims. Moreover, her repeated disparagement of Sierra Dieckhoff during board meetings, where Sierra is not given an opportunity to respond, constitutes inappropriate and unprofessional conduct.

Ms. Varner has also spread misleading and unverified information regarding Rodney and Lawrie Dieckhoff's personal friends and family members at First Interstate Bank. Such statements have led Lawrie Dieckhoff to file a personal complaint against Ms. Varner, an action entirely separate from district matters.

Four Rivers Vector Control remains committed to transparency, ethical governance, and the responsible management of public resources. The board will continue to ensure that all policies are followed, and that all members, including Ms. Varner, adhere to the appropriate channels for raising concerns and accessing information.

Sincerely,

Four Rivers Vector Control Staff

Myles Bowlin  
Operations Manager

Four Rivers Vector Control  
541-593-1689

[fourriversvectorcontrol@gmail.com](mailto:fourriversvectorcontrol@gmail.com)

Sierra Dieckhoff  
Office Manager

Sierra Dieckhoff  
Office Manager  
Four Rivers Vector Control District  
fourriversvectorcontrol@gmail.com  
04.10.2025

Patti Adair  
Tony DeBone  
Phil Chang  
1300 NW Wall Street  
Bend, OR 97703

Subject: Response and Complaint Regarding Concerns Raised by Board Member Amy Varner

Dear Commissioners Adair, DeBone, and Chang,

I am writing this letter as both a formal response and a complaint regarding the recent concerns raised by Board Member Amy Varner. Her behavior as a board member has been unprofessional and inappropriate, and it's having a serious negative impact on both my work and the workplace as a whole.

Amy consistently ignores the board meeting agenda and brings up off-topic issues that slow down and disrupt meetings. She has tried to use her position to get access to information and make decisions that go beyond the role of a board member. This includes attempting to benefit personally in ways that appear to violate Oregon ethics law (ORS 244.040) and not following public records laws.

She has falsely accused me, Sierra Dieckhoff, of misusing district funds. These claims were made without ever speaking to Myles Bowlin, the Operations Manager, who is my direct supervisor and responsible for overseeing district spending. Instead of following proper channels, she has gone out of her way to accuse and target me in public meetings.

Amy has requested credit card receipts and bank statements not out of concern for the district's finances, but because the card is in my name. She seems more interested in micromanaging my actions than supporting the district. All expenses are within budget and handled according to procedure. Her actions are overreaching and unnecessary.

This situation appears to be more about Amy not getting her way rather than having legitimate concerns. Her behavior has become increasingly petty and disruptive, and she is going to great lengths to file complaints that do not serve the best interests of the district. Rather than working collaboratively, she chooses to act in a combative and unproductive way that resembles immature behavior.

It's clear that this is rooted in her belief that there is nepotism because I am related to Rodney Dieckhoff, the Four Rivers Vector Control Board President. However, Rodney has been nothing

but professional and helpful. He has worked hard to help stabilize the district and improve operations. He is always available when staff have questions or need assistance, and he listens to concerns and supports us in a respectful and appropriate manner. The board has also confirmed with SDAO that there is no conflict of interest, as my position is supervised by the Operations Manager, not the board.

Amy, on the other hand, has not contributed anything meaningful to the district. Instead, she regularly disrupts our work. Staff, including myself, are constantly being pulled away from our job responsibilities to address her demands, which are often not relevant to our duties or the district's needs. Her actions are making the district less efficient and more stressful for everyone.

Amy continues to speak negatively about me in public meetings but has never come to Myles with any concerns. Her ongoing behavior is creating a toxic work environment.

Because of this, I no longer feel comfortable going to work or being around her at meetings. It's stressful, uncomfortable, and has made my job extremely difficult. Other employees have shared that they feel the same way — her actions are affecting their ability to do their jobs and making them not want to come to work.

I'm asking the board of commissioners to take this situation seriously and take action to address Amy's behavior. Whether that means a formal warning, an investigation, or possible removal, something needs to be done to protect staff and restore a healthy working environment.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,  
Sierra Dieckhoff  
Office Manager  
Four Rivers Vector Control District

Hello County Commissioners Pattie Adair, Tony Debone, and Phil Chang my name is Rodney Dieckhoff, current board President for Four Rivers Vector Control District, and I am writing you in response to a formal complaint filed against me from a current board member, Amy Varner. Let me start by saying I have been involved with a variety of voluntary boards over the last 30 years, the most recent being Special Road District #1 (approximately 12 years) which I recently stepped down due to new state laws that keep making it harder to be as transparent as possible. I am currently the Board President for Four Rivers Vector Control District and have been part of the board for approximately 9 years now.

When the board nominated Amy Varner for an open board position we considered a few things, the first being she had already been appointed to the budget committee by our previous District Manager (Chad Stubblefield) which she held for two 2 year budget cycles, so we felt she would have a better understanding of how the district operates than someone that thought we just kill mosquito's. Another reason we felt Amy Varner would be a good addition to the board was her occupation (employee of First Interstate Bank) having knowledge of financing, budgeting, and knowing how to work as a team. The other reason she was a suitable candidate was where she lives in the district. We were trying to find people from across the entire district instead of all the board members being within a mile or two of each other.

When Amy Varner first joined the board, she would attend meetings and arrive early. It looked good if the board were there early to greet guests when we had them and start the meeting as scheduled. Then the arrival time started becoming right at the start of the meeting, then she would attend meetings via phone or just not attend from time to time, preplanned obligations which I do not have a problem with because these are volunteer positions to begin with. During her time on board, she has never not once voted against approving a proposed budget or financial report at a meeting, she has even gone as far as making a motion to approve or second a motion to approve the financials.

This all changed about a year ago when the discussion about giving our office manager a raise, a conversation that should never have been discussed. This was not because of a conflict of interest on my part but because our office manager (my daughter-in-law) was hired by the District Manager and is overseen by the District Manager. We as a board have no management authority over employees beyond the District Manager. There were several emails directed at our Office Manager from Amy Varner and one other Board member stating that they would be determining her wage, and they felt she was already being paid enough for her position and what she does.



From that point on Amy Varner would refer to the Office Manager by name during meetings and even went as far as belittling and defacing the Office Manager during a special meeting that Amy Varner and one other board member requested and then proceeded to fill the room with anyone, they knew that they would stand behind them. Amy Varner has also demanded that we say exactly how much our Office Manager earns on a biweekly paycheck during meetings this is a huge Ethics violation. Now after all the proposed budget and meeting financial approvals, some of those being a 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> on the motion, she has requested all bank statements and credit card statements, and itemized receipts later, from present back to June 2023. This is when our previous District Manager (Chad Stubblefield) left the district in shambles my wife and I were the only two board members left on the board. As it turns out after having Board work session on Wednesday April 2, 2025 all of Amy Varners questions regarding credit card charges and checks written are directed at our Office Manager and claims that my wife and I must deem a conflict of interest and shouldn't be allowed to view any of these records.

I was personally accused of going to Amy Varner's place of employment and defacing her with co-workers. It is true I went to her place of employment because that's where Four Rivers Vector Control District does their banking. I did ask the Branch Manager at the bank about their policy for tracking account access by employees and I was told they do not have a policy and unless there is a change made to the account there is no documentation showing who at the bank has browsed your account. I asked if there was a way we could block our account access because I felt Amy Varner was becoming Toxic to the Board and if she didn't get the documents, she requested she could just look them up herself and no one would be the wiser (she is not a signer on the account so legally she shouldn't have access to the accounts).

Amy Varner then refused to fill out a Public Records Request, for which our District has a policy in place. She said she was above district policy and she as a board member had the authority to look at and take any documents at any time free of charge. She made these demands and threatened both me and the Office Manager with Legal accusations if we did not grant her demands. The Office Manager and I both reached out to SDAO for advice on how to resolve our situation. Through many emails back and forth it was suggested that we stick to our District policies and follow the Public Records Request. It was mentioned several times in emails to Amy Varner that as per SDAO we must follow District Policy. Let me add that the district paid Amy to attend a SDAO annual conference and has been encouraged to attend other one day classes locally in central Oregon to help her better understand how a board is supposed to work.

In conclusion I have done my best as an individual to be as transparent as possible and follow any and all district policies to the best of my ability and I will continue to serve as a board member to ensure that our district provides the well-needed service we are paid to do. I feel that Amy Varner is maliciously hindering the district's effort to control mosquito's by adding additional work load and mental stress to district staff who is currently filing permits and getting approvals with various agencies to allow the district to combat mosquito's this season, they are also coming into a new Budget process which has be slowed due to her actions. I would ask that Amy Varner voluntarily step down as she has become a liability to the wellbeing of the board and district.

Sincerely,

Rodney E. Dieckhoff

Four Rivers Vector Control District

Board President

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Eva Wild Crain and I am writing in response to a complaint at the Four Rivers Vector Control, where I currently sit on the Board. This is my response to the issue brought up by Amy Varner on April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2025:

Amy and I both requested bank and credit card statements. Amy requested them at a meeting, I later asked for them via email.

I was informed of the issues Amy had in receiving the statements. I was told that during the request of the statements Rodney had complained to the bank employees that "Amy and Eva have been nothing but toxic on this board". I was also informed that Rodney had asked the branch if there was a way to withhold the check images when the statements were sent out and was told no.

After I received the statements, I saw transactions that I wanted to understand more clearly. The items in question were many transactions to Fred Meyer, Costco, Safeway as well as some large purchases at Sportsman's. I also wanted to understand two transactions on Sierra's credit card, purchasing tools from her Father's business (Mac Tools).

In my review of the bank statements, I found that Rodney and Lawrie both signed checks to their daughter-in-law, Sierra. Rodney had been signing every payroll check to Sierra since she started (around two years of employment).

Amy Varner also asked to see receipts.

When I asked for itemized receipts Rodney sent me an email stating it would be \$400-\$500 for me to receive them.

When I spoke to Dave Doyle, he said that I could not be charged to see the receipts because I sat on the board. When I responded to Rodney in an email, I told him that I would not be charged that amount, that was the information I was going on.

After that email, I was informed by the SDAO that there are different rules for the Vector Control and Dave Doyle was unaware of these rules.

Rodney called a special meeting to address our requests for receipts. In this meeting we decided to have a work session to go over the statements and talk about what receipts we wanted to see. I agreed on the work session.

In this work session we were told that every transaction to Costco, Fred Meyer and Safeway were for water. Every transaction we asked about was explained by Myles, the operations manager, from his memory, for the last year and a half. I thought that it would be difficult to recall a year's worth of transactions from his and Sierra's credit cards and from the First Interstate Bank account.

I expressed my interest in seeing the receipts to see the purchases for myself.

At that time Rodney said, again, it would have to be voted on. (This will be voted on in our next meeting on May 21<sup>st</sup> 2025.)

During our discussion about district spending Rodney was asked about checks written to Sierra, signed by he and Lawrie. He admitted he had been signing checks to Sierra and knew it was wrong. He stated "there was no one else" (to sign checks).

We offered Myles, the Operations Manager, as an alternate to sign Sierra's checks. Rodney said "Myles is not a signer on the account." We asked to make him a signer. Rodney then stated that Myles could not sign his own checks. It was agreed upon that we would be comfortable with Rodney signing Myles's checks and Myles signing Sierra's checks to reduce risk for the district.

It is concerning to me that our board president admitted he was knowingly breaking rules continually, for two years. If I or Amy would not have asked for bank statements, we still would not know this was happening and it would have continued.

Before this issue came up, there were only two signers on the Four Rivers bank account. Those people are married and signing checks to their daughter-in-law.

After this Special Meeting on Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, we had a Board Training. Myles, and Sierra and Rodney scheduled a Budget Meeting and posted it online for April 30<sup>th</sup>. We attended the Board Training on Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, after the Budget Meeting had been scheduled. While attending this meeting, no one informed Amy or I about the Budget meeting that was scheduled one week later.

When Amy found the meeting posted online, she emailed Rodney about it, asking why we were not informed. He said it was posted online and, in the newspaper, as required. He was going to inform us with 48 hours' notice, as required.

When I asked Rodney and Myles why I was not informed of the meeting while we were all at the Board Training, they stated that it wasn't relevant to the training and because it had nothing to do with the agenda, they were unable to discuss it.

I have been on the Board for almost 2 years and I have never been given notice so late about a meeting. In the past, all Board Members are given notice as soon as a meeting is scheduled, not after it is posted online and advertised in the paper. It felt a lot like retaliation for me digging into the Vector Control Budget. It is my understanding that being a Board Member means asking hard questions and helping the District operate efficiently.

My intention is to mitigate risk for the district and myself. It is my responsibility as a board member to bring these issues to light and resolve them.

I am trying to uphold to the responsibility that was entrusted to me when I was asked to take this position.

I don't see my actions as toxic.