

Council denies interfering in the Ballot Issue 300 election, yet according to the Mountain Mail:

“Shore said that in the weeks leading up to the first reading, he received emails from community members asking why the council was considering lowering the STR tax, to which he replied that during election season, voters who would have voted “yes” on Proposition 300 voted “no” instead because of council’s promise to look further into reducing the nightly tax rate following the election. “

Offering to use the power of office in return for a desired vote sure sounds like interference!

City Attorney Geoff Wilson gave us gibbering hypotheticals, camouflaging his inability to defend the indefensible.

Council influenced the election by fostering this now widely held belief: the sponsors of 300 hate affordable housing! How dare they petition voters to retain their own money-that’s stealing from the houseless! Never mind the reality: some local STR owners barely scrape by.

But if harming housing affordability is the issue, who are the biggest offenders? Council for starters. The money spent on recreation dwarfs the STR Tax. Why not vilify the council for repeatedly prioritizing luxuries over necessities? Why wasn’t the \$500K spent on the goofy Scout Wave used for housing instead? Or in-lieu-of fees collected from developers-where did that money go? The 2024 Salida budget is \$49M. Is focus on the paltry \$0.7M STR Tax a purposeful distraction?

Council also allowed STRs to proliferate unchecked for years, then suddenly overtaxed it and damaged the local economy. And what about the realtors who lined their pockets selling local’s housing to outside investors for the express purpose of converting into STRs?

Not content to campaign on the factual pros/cons of 300, the personal lives of the sponsors became fair game. Officials actively participated in the politics of personal destruction, spreading this venom to supporters. But the hatred ginned-up during the election did not dissipate after the election, instead taking on a life of its own.

The sponsors of 300 are being scapegoated as if they personally created the housing quagmire. Meanwhile those who should bear the brunt for mishandling the crisis walk this community with heads held high.

Please reject serving as instruments of retribution for callous, self-absorbed city officials deflecting attention from their own failings.

“Hate, it has caused a lot of problems in the world, but has not solved one yet.” – Maya Angelou

Vince Phillips, Salida