



Anders Sorestad <anders@ci.stevenson.wa.us>

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## Ben Shumaker and Ryan Taylor

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Perry Colburn <perryleecolburn@gmail.com>

Mon, Sep 9, 2024 at 4:52 PM

To: City of Stevenson <citycouncil@ci.stevenson.wa.us>, leana@ci.stevenson.wa.us

Dear Stevenson City Council:

I just finished reading City Manager Leana Kinley's memo online that concerns your upcoming Wednesday night meeting. I am surprised, but yet not surprised, that it would be put before you to hire Ben Shumaker as your interim city manager. Skamania County is known for ignoring the huge 3000 pound gorilla in the room. If you want specifics of what I am talking about, read what Nick Hogan, your former city manager, wrote about Mr. Shumaker. I am including my copy as part of this email.

From talking with folks around the community and spending time at one of our local watering holes, Walking Man, it's a matter of common public knowledge that the problems Mr. Hogan wrote about in 2017 haven't gone away and still exist to this very day. This is why you would be making a huge mistake putting Mr. Shumaker in as your city manager for even a few days. Why give someone who lacks "common sense" more control and power over citizens?

I hope and pray that you DO NOT put Mr. Shumaker temporarily into the role of city manager. While I am at it, I also hope and pray that when you negotiate with the Sheriff's Department over what you will pay them for police services, that you require that any deputy on the Brady List, NOT patrol any of your city streets. This would provide protection to your citizens; protection I was not given when when I had the misfortune of having two bad interactions with Mr. Taylor, one while walking my dogs alone in an open field during COVID, and the other time when he gave me a citation because he didn't like my lighted "Waymire for Sheriff" sign. The first citation was dropped, and I beat the other one in court while representing myself.

I know all about people who hold positions of power who should not.

Please make these comments, as well as the two attachments about Mr. Shumaker and the Brady List deputy, part of the official public record by including them in your city council packet update.

Perry Colburn  
North Bonneville

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### 2 attachments

 **Ben Shumaker-Nick Hogan's Written Direction.pdf**  
272K

 **What Adam Kick thinks of Sgt. Ryan Taylor.pdf**  
59K



# City of Stevenson

(509) 427-5970

7121 E Loop Road, PO Box 371  
Stevenson, Washington 98648

To: Ben Shumaker

Date: May 10, 2017

Re: **Written Direction**

You do great work for the City most of the time Ben, and I appreciate your input and help with the many areas outside of planning that you help with. Your work facilitating the fire hall site selection process was outstanding. You are currently heading up grant and funding opportunities for our sewer plant expansion, which I also greatly appreciate. I am concerned, however, about one specific issue – your apparent lack of concern for the consequences of saying “no” or otherwise denying a citizen request. As the Planning Director for the City of Stevenson, you are not an autonomous agency but a representative of the City of Stevenson. Your decisions reflect not just on the Planning Department, but on the City.

I’m asking you to interpret all rules with a strong dose of common sense, and to be more sensitive to how you say “no” when you have to say it. You go out of your way to give great customer service most of the time, but occasionally take a stance on a technical issue that we end up losing on appeal. Significant portions of your administrative decision in regard to the Remi Short Plat were overturned by the Hearings Examiner. The applicants (Lasher LLC) met with the Mayor and me to complain about what they perceived as unreasonable decisions you made, which were then overturned by the Hearings Examiner. Having a planning decision overturned on appeal causes the City to incur unnecessary legal fees, but more importantly damages the City’s reputation with our citizens.

In the three years I’ve worked for the City of Stevenson, your decisions have been formally appealed three times and we have lost all three appeals (or the significant portions of them). Please take the following actions with regard to decisions you make in the future:

1. You have a reputation for being overly rigid in your interpretation and enforcement of the rules. Please make a conscious effort to improve this perception. If you’re not sure whether or not a rule or law applies, check with the City Attorney before enforcing it.
2. All decisions are to be made with a strong dose of common sense. If a rule applies, of course we need to follow it. But if the rule doesn’t apply, rely on common sense and try to err on the side of the customer (citizen) when in doubt.
3. Most importantly, be more sensitive to how you work with our citizens when the rules or good practice require you to say “no”. Our citizens need to know that you will work with them when you can. Request pre-meetings for large projects such as short plats and BLA’s so that we can help the customer as much as possible. Similarly, request meetings with applicants when possible before issuing a final decision when the decision adversely affects them. (i.e. to explain to the customer the direction you are heading and why, and to give them a chance to provide additional information that might change your decision).

You are a very knowledgeable planner Ben and an exceptionally smart person, but you have an increasing number of citizens dissatisfied with you. Their dissatisfaction with the planning department reflects negatively on their perception of the City as a whole. I am confident you can reverse this trend by being more sensitive to the needs of our citizens, the importance of making sure they know you are trying to work with them, and ruling against a citizen only when it is required by rule or law or clearly in the City's best interest to do so. It is not enough to give them excellent technical answers to their questions – they need to know that you care about them and are doing everything you can to work with them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nick Hogan".

Nick Hogan, City Administrator



# PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

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ADAM N. KICK, PROSECUTOR

## Memorandum Regarding Potential Impeachment Information

Deputy Ryan Taylor was previously employed as a Clark County Sheriff's Deputy. While employed by Clark County Sheriff's Office (CCSO), Deputy Taylor was investigated for using the ACCESS and MDC databases for his personal use in 2008 and 2011. Deputy Taylor was also investigated for using his CCSO issued Ford Expedition vehicle from March 2009 – March 2011 for personal use that was beyond de minimus, including transporting his children in that vehicle in violation of CCSO policy. Deputy Taylor was also investigated for using his CCSO issued mobile phone to make personal calls in 2009 – 2011 without accounting for and reimbursing the CCSO. During the Internal Affairs investigation, Deputy Taylor admitted to using the databases for personal reasons, admitted to some personal use of his vehicle, and admitted to making personal calls on his CCSO mobile phone. The CCSO found that the allegations were "sustained." Deputy Taylor was terminated by CCSO in July of 2011. A reasonable person could conclude based on the findings of the IA investigation that Deputy Taylor was dishonest in the performance of his duties as a CCSO deputy.

If you have any questions regarding any of these issues, please contact me.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adam N. Kick".

Adam N. Kick  
Prosecuting Attorney  
Skamania County