

County councilors clash on growth, bridge

Arguments result in no action by county officials

By Kaitlin Gillespie, Columbian staff writer

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The tension between the Clark County councilors was on full display at its Wednesday board time meeting



Over the course of a nearly two-hour meeting, the council, absent Republican Julie Olson, bickered over a policy supporting a third bridge over the Columbia River and the county's 20-year growth plan.

But ultimately, the arguing resulted in no action on any topic, as Chair Marc Boldt, no party preference, reminded the council that he doesn't want to see the board taking action at its weekly Wednesday meetings.

West county bridge

Despite efforts by the current Clark County council to repeal eight resolutions written by Republican Councilor David Madore and approved by the then-three-member council last year, it was discovered last week that the council failed to rescind one of the policy statements: the creation of a task force to research a bridge across the Columbia River in west Clark County.

At its Jan. 5 meeting, the Clark County council, by a vote of 3 to 2 — with Boldt, Olson and Republican Jeanne Stewart in the majority and Madore and Republican Tom Mielke in the minority — took seven separate actions to repeal the resolutions. Originally, the council had intended to repeal all eight in one motion, but at the request of Madore handled each separately, failing to address the west county bridge task force.

Madore said he'd like to see the council revisit the issue in order to complement efforts in the Legislature to form a bistate bridge committee.

"I would encourage us to have that conversation and see what we can do to go to bat for a workable solution," Madore said.

Failure to repeal that resolution, however, was clearly an inadvertent oversight, Stewart said.

"It was the apparent intent of the council to repeal that resolution with the other resolutions," she said.

"We need to rescind the resolution," she added. "We failed to finalize a very clean process."

But the discussion quickly devolved into a lengthy debate over whether or not to rescind the resolution, how to do so and whether or not to handle it in a work session.

"I can give you a shovel and you can keep digging," Boldt told Madore at one point, as the councilor continued to push discussion.

The council is slated to have a work session on all eight policies later this month.

Growth plan

Madore also pushed back against what he described as a failure of Clark County Community Planning to provide the board adequate information on what they're working on

Madore, who in an extended metaphor compared county planning staff to the crew of a ship intentionally hiding its destination from its captain, said he wanted copies of policy statements that will be added to the Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update that planning staff are developing.

"It would be inappropriate for the executive branch to author policy," Madore said.

But those policy statements are unlikely to be controversial. Those policies are already existing standard chapters in the county's comprehensive plan, covering topics such as economic development, said Jeff Swanson, Clark County's economic development director. Planning staff are updating those policies, which will then be presented to both the Clark County Planning Commission and the council for further action.

"In other words, we'll be following, not leading," Madore retorted. "I have a problem with that."

Madore also accused Acting County Manager Mark McCauley of attempting to withhold the information.

But both McCauley and Deputy Prosecutor Chris Horne said that information is not available because it's still a working draft, and therefore not yet a public document.

"Our long-standing policy is that staff does the work, they submit it to the Planning Commission, at which time the council members receive the same product," McCauley said. "Long-standing policy, long-standing practice."

Madore attempted to make a motion for those drafts to be released in their draft form, but the motion died due to lack of a second.

Boldt suggested a work session to discuss the planning policies, but expressed frustration that these conversations are just happening now, with the county facing an April 30 deadline to finish the plan.

"The problem is with this plan, we're about two years late because of all this screwing around," Boldt said. "We should have had these work sessions done a long time ago, so here we are at the 12th hour of the game and we haven't even done plan policies yet, which is, in my mind, I'm not even going to say it."

9 Comments

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Stuart L. Riley · Vancouver, Washington

Here it comes. Wait for it. Madore's about to blame everyone else for his failure to get buy-in for his east-county fantasy. Lou may as well stop the clock now.

<http://www.columbian.com/.../east-county-bridge-countdown/>

Reply 6 1 hr



Harry Smith · University of Oregon

"We failed to finalize a very clean process."

This failure is caused because Bolt does not know how to run meetings. His casual manner causes

This failure is caused because Bob does not know how to run meetings. His casual manner causes more wasted time. He should at least follow basic rules of order about processing motions, conducting discussions, calling for a vote by repeating what they EXACTLY will be voting on!

Reply  1 2 hrs



Eric LaBrant · Receivables consultant at Labrant Receivables, LLC


In theory, I personally like the idea of an east-west corridor to handle Camas-to-Hillsboro traffic.. but does anyone think they're going to pave a freeway through Fruit Valley without talking to the neighborhood association, or the Port, or the residents, or the City of Vancouver?

Reply  5 7 hrs



Kurt Wolfe · Father Confessor at Church of Kurt

Oh, boy. Maybe Madore might get a clue. He's not in charge anymore and Staff no longer need to fear reprisals from him and his stooge Mielke. County Charter, the best thing that ever happened and to think, Madore was the spark that started it. Karma.

Reply  10 9 hrs



Sam Atkinson · Chambersburg Area Senior High School

Madore said he'd like to see the council revisit the issue in order to complement efforts in the Legislature to form a bistate bridge committee."

It's Official! The Flying Moneys have taken over.. He better check with Benton and Rivers ...since they just killed any hopes of Bipartisanship and PO'ed just about everyone.. Is anyone of them on the same page . or is this a wood chipper of stupid?

Reply  7 9 hrs



Thom Rasmussen · Salmon Creek, Washington

"Madore, who in an extended metaphor compared county planning staff to the crew of a ship intentionally hiding its destination from its captain,"

Still can't figure out that HE ISN'T the captain any longer

Reply  8 9 hrs



Sam Atkinson · Chambersburg Area Senior High School


Petty treason is the old term.

Reply · 15 mins



John Laird · Works at Retired Journalist

Madore got his clock cleaned today. Even Marionette Mielke refused to dance for him. Kudos to Chris Horne and Mark McCauley for their professional demeanor and calm presence at this afternoon's board time.


Reply  17 10 hrs



Mark Swenson

Love the politics. The push is to undue the past basically advisory votes. What a waste of time. I do

think that the council needs to understand its powers under the revised charter and also staff has to be responsive to council requests. The power game today is establish control limits and I am fine with that. Bolt and Olson have to understand that they may have stepped into a hornets nest that undoing everything is not practical and it takes a lot of time. This council is and will be as mess until the Chair establishes the agenda and holds to it. Desention is healty as long as it follows procedural processes (Robert's Rule of Order and council processes The Columbian editorial process and news reporters are just that. This council needs to learn to work together.


Reply  2 10 hrs



Lorretta Thomas

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This is new? How, exactly?

Reply  8 10 hrs

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