



In Our View: Madore Makes Council a Joke

Councilor's disregard for others' input, county process a mockery of leadership

By

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For many, David Madore's actions as a Clark County councilor often have been frustrating and flabbergasting. Last week, they moved into the realm of farcical



During a chaotic five-hour council meeting, Madore demonstrated little concern for accepted processes, little concern for those who disagree with him, and little attention to the details of governance when those details interfere with his agenda. With fellow Councilor Tom Mielke offering nothing in the manner of insight or thoughtful discussion, it was left to Councilor Jeanne Stewart to play the role of naysayer. Whether or not one agrees with Stewart's stance on the various issues, she deserves kudos for a willingness to raise important questions on behalf of citizens.

In the end, Stewart was on the minority side of a series of 2-1 votes as Madore pushed through plans that cut taxes, increased spending, and continued his determination to dominate the process of updating the county's land-use plan.

The most eyebrow-raising aspect is a revelation that Madore already had contacted a new consultant about being involved with the environmental review of the county's proposed land-use update. After approaching a Mercer Island-based company, on Nov. 24 Madore helped vote in a policy that would allow the county to select a new consultant for assistance with the environmental impact statement. He then used last week's meeting to raise the idea of contracting for a proposal. At one point, a frustrated Stewart said: "I have no idea what in the 'you know what' you are talking about. This doesn't mean I'm stupid. This means nobody is giving me the documents I need." At another point, she asked, "How can it be that I'm just getting this document tonight?"

Citizens would be wise to wonder the same thing, Madore unilaterally proposed an alternative land-use plan when those developed by county staff did not meet the demands of some rural landowners — a new proposal that Mielke went along with. Now he is attempting to alter the course of the environmental review despite the county's \$141,000 contract with another company — an action that comes across as an effort to shoehorn that review into Madore's version of reality.

It is odd behavior for a councilor who once pushed through an "Integrity Resolution" containing 23 "Whereas" statements and a definition of integrity complete with an extraneous word "honesty, soundness, trustworthiness to the fulfill commitments." In many cases, Madore's actions as councilor have been neither sound nor trustworthy in fulfilling his commitment to all citizens of the county, and those shortcomings were on display at Tuesday's meeting.

Despite pleas from county officials, Madore pushed through a proposal to reduce the county's property tax levy by 2 percent, reducing revenue by \$1.2 million. "The suggested 2 percent reduction in the county levy is a giant step in the wrong direction," said Clark County Treasurer Doug Lasher, who earlier had noted that it will amount to savings of about \$7.33 for the owner of a \$280,000 home. The council also approved \$3.57 million worth of new projects, creating a situation that will force budget writers to dip into general fund reserves while lowering those reserves to a level below stated county policy.

While arguments can be made on either side of Madore's policy decisions, his inattention to established process, lack of transparency, and unwillingness to consider dissenting opinions is a disservice to the community. And along the way he has turned the county council into a farce.

20 Comments

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Add a comment...



Toni Montgomery · Contra Costa College

He came into office with his agenda and he will leave with his agenda. It is a shame indeed that he can buy allegiance. Wonder how we can counter the Don Benton add I saw on T.V. today. I am sure funded by his M& M connection. We must get Benton removed from the job Madore gave him. Madore loves puppets and he is a super puppeteer. He is the Chuckie character that nightmares are made from. I do believe that the voting public see's through Madore. Better late than never.

Reply · 5 · 12 hrs



Robert Richer · WSU Vancouver

Hmm, cut taxes, increase spending, blame Democrats. Sound familiar.

Reply · 5 · 16 hrs



Tom Gibson · Camas, Washington

Right on, you called it. He is drawing a line in the sand so he can blame Democrats for saving money and paying the bills. It's completely back asswards.

Reply · 1 · 11 hrs



David Shehorn · Vancouver, Washington

There is an urgency to Madore's request. There is money on this table. A lot of smokescreen is being put up to distract the media from someone grabbing that money off the table.

Reply · 5 · 16 hrs



Ed Rutledge · Salem, Oregon

Clarkistsnis elected these clowns. They got the circus (and the rep that goes with it,) they deserve.

Reply · 2 · 17 hrs



Gary Hollmer

It would be nice to hear from someone other than C3G2!

Reply · 1 · 19 hrs



Tom Gibson · Camas, Washington

I am not in C3G2. I am not nice enough.

Reply · 3 · 11 hrs



Steve Lappier · Ridgefield High School

C3G2 is a group of people Gary. Perhaps you don't realize a "group" like this (I'm in it) doesn't have a spokesperson as that spokesperson would be talking for over a thousand members who don't agree on everything. If you are blaming C3G2 members for being

outspoken and commenting on a lot of things, perhaps you don't like the 1st Amendment.

Reply · 16 mins



Gary Hollmer

Steve Lappier I know the "group" well!

Reply · 11 mins



Karen Ciocia · Owner at Ciocia Communications Strategies

The only surprise here is that he didn't hire on Benton as a consultant while Benton is on staff so Benton could triple dip his salary and just do the Madore's bidding while the land use policies of Clark County fall apart and people just continue to vote these folks into office. I am most sorry for a Jeanne Stewart who actually stepped up to try and make change. She and I may not always agree but I always know that she is acting in good conscience and trying to represent her constituencies.

Reply · 8 · 19 hrs



Nancy Schultz · Vancouver, Washington

Not for nothing are we known in Olympia as "Clown County". NO MORE MADORE. NO MORE MIELKE.

Reply · 17 · 20 hrs



Russ Williams

And no more Benton!

Reply · 14 · 18 hrs



John M. Kowalski · Camas, Washington

He must be removed from office at the earliest possible opportunity. Of course, given his behavior, sooner or later his actions will rise to the level of criminal wrongdoing, if they haven't already.

Reply · 13 · 20 hrs



Nick Ruark · Vancouver, Washington

What REALLY bothers me the most is the fact that over the last 3+ years, nothing - I repeat, nothing - has been done by other local or state elected officials or by so-called managers in Clark County to effectively halt Councilor Madore's and Mielke's very egregious abuse of process and dubious form of governance. Can anyone explain why ?? IMHO, it appears that this debacle will only be resolved through the actions of active, informed, and very disgusted voters come the 2016 elections. Let's hope so.

Reply · 10 · 19 hrs · Edited



Jack Burkman · Council Member at Vancouver, Washington City Government

The voters elected them and the County Councilors get to run the county however they choose, regardless of what any other elected official or county staff member thinks. Only the voters can remove them from office and a recall election is extremely hard to do in Washington State.

Reply · 12 · 19 hrs



John Burke · Vancouver, Washington

Nick Ruark's rhetoric would have unelected bureaucratic "managers" obstruct elected officials, rather than functioning to implement their policies (though it should be noted that he acknowledges "active, informed, and very disgusted voters" as the final arbiter in his concluding sentence).

Thanks to Jack Burkman for thoughtfully noting that elected officials -- chosen by voters -- are the ones who are supposed to set policy, period.

(As to whether popular sovereignty always -- or even mostly -- dominates bureaucratic willfulness in progressive governmental reality? That's something else entirely.)

Reply · 15 hrs



Nick Ruark · Vancouver, Washington

John Burke - Really, John ?? So, do you also believe that such corruptive, devious, divisive, and willful fornication and obstruction of established governance and process - as has been practiced by elected officials such as Madore and Mielke - are conducive to actually leading a functional government ?

Reply · 3 · 14 hrs



Clark County Democrats

Just came by to see if this was Obama's fault.

Reply · 10 · 20 hrs



Thom Rasmussen · Salmon Creek, Washington

So far, No. But we haven't heard from Berrigan or KJ yet.

Reply · 7 · 20 hrs



Christian Berrigan · Works at Self-Employed

Thom Rasmussen show me the last thing I blamed on Obama please. Of course I know you won't, but I have to ask the rhetorical question.

Reply · 12 hrs



Bruce Romanish · Vancouver, Washington

Madore is evidence that the right wing hates all government, while they take our eye off the ball by making the federal government the target for their political juggernaut. These people have the truth by the throat in all matters: politics; religion; economics. It's an American form of fascism that will cause lots more damage before a counter force can derail it. They've taken over most state legislatures in the U.S. They've taken over christianity. They own the republican party nationally. They've taken over many school boards. Stay tuned. The worst is likely yet to come.

Reply · 11 · 21 hrs



John Burke · Vancouver, Washington

LIBERTY

Bruce Romanish foment: "These [right wing] people have the truth by the throat in all matters: politics; religion; economics. It's an American form of fascism that will cause lots more damage before a counter force can derail it."

It would seem that Bruce believes himself to have a choke-hold on all these matters as well.

And since these (supposedly) government-hating right-wingers came to office via election, what sort of "counter force" does he wish would "derail" them? Come to think of it, this rhetoric itself sounds kinda fascistic, doesn't it (again, "counter force", "derail")?

Reply · 14 hrs



Tom Gibson · Camas, Washington

I am pretty sure that Madore is a groomed plant. He is too stupid to have that business by himself. He comes from a religious cult that does a lot of stuff like that.

Reply · 4 · 11 hrs



Bruce Romanish · Vancouver, Washington

John Burke: Madore has an established record of his truth by the throat approach to all matters. But your projection re: me is simply an empty rhetorical slur, saying much more about you. And Mr. Burke, history is filled with examples of fascists being elected. But once elected they can be artful at demolishing the democratic procedures of governance as a way of grabbing power for themselves.

Reply · 9 hrs



John M. Kowalski · Camas, Washington

John Burke The Führer couldn't have said it better himself. After all, you've got the Big Lie in there, as well as the appeal to democracy the Nazis themselves used. In fact, at this point in time, M&M really *aren't* democratically elected. In fact, they never were. Having a big region vote for representatives for a smaller region is hardly democratic, and it's why that was the preferred mode of governance during segregation.

Reply · 1 hr · Edited



Tom Gibson · Camas, Washington

David Madore's contempt for the law and following full and complete disclosure and transparency is complete. For example,

"The most eyebrow-raising aspect is a revelation that Madore already had contacted a new consultant about being involved with the environmental review of the county's proposed land-use update. After approaching a Mercer Island-based company, on Nov. 24 Madore helped vote in a policy that would allow the county to select a new consultant for assistance with the environmental impact statement. He then used last week's meeting to raise the idea of contracting for a proposal.... See More

Reply · 15 · 21 hrs · Edited



Roger Neilson · Works at Mostly in and for US Army

People may not like what Madore is doing, but is he truly overstepping the limits imposed on him by law? I would think that if he is, then we'd have seen a recall effort for misfeasance by now.

Madore will most likely be reelected if he chooses to run again. People are counting on his current power being diminished or eliminated when the 5 member Council is seated, but can we be certain? At least 2 who we believe will oppose him (Stewart and Olsen) are still Repubs, and dependent to some degree on the CC Repub Party. If Madore has used his wealth to "own" the leadership of that group, then I suspect there will be many (at least in Dist 1) who aren't going to be happy with the direction the new Council takes.

Reply · 4 · 22 hrs



Frank Joseph

Besides a recall, are there options to slow down Madore? Is there no lawyer in the county that can file endless "requests for information" that would slow him down?

What about civil disobedience? Why not have 200 people sign up for "citizen's time" and spend 2 minutes each at the beginning of every council meeting. Or county employees that all seem to "misplace" Madore's paperwork, etc.?

Reply · 8 · 22 hrs



Jared McClanahan

"Madore will most likely be reelected if he chooses to run"
I'll take that bet! He'll get roughly the same number of votes he bought for Liz Pike.

Reply · 9 · 22 hrs



Roger Neilson · Works at Mostly in and for US Army

Jared McClanahan - Pull down the County's list of votes per candidate from back in the primary, and you'll see that Madore took a very large percentage of the eastern precincts. The focus was placed on Stewart's candidacy costing him votes, but if Mielke hadn't run his supporters would have almost definitely backed Madore, and he would have made the final two.

Reply · 5 · 22 hrs



Jeffrey Gibbons

Roger, I hate to say I agree with you on this one but I do. Not matter how unpopular or illadvised some of Counselor Madores actions may be I don't think they are illegal or actionable against him.

Reply · 2 · 22 hrs



Steve Lappier · Ridgefield High School

Roger, the "limits" are one thing. The story is about right and wrong. Is he behaving properly to you?

Reply ·  3 · 21 hrs



Roger Neilson · Works at Mostly in and for US Army

Steve Lappier - Malfeasance is about right and wrong. It's also very difficult to pursue because it's a lot harder to prove than actually breaking the law (misfeasance). One could also observe that he was first elected because many of us believed others were behaving improperly, especially with the CRC. I didn't and won't vote for him, but that's mainly due to the religious angle. However, I do tend to agree with his ongoing battle against C-Tran, who many believe also have acted "wrongly" by playing on loopholes in the law to avoid having to put transportation initiatives to the voters.

Reply ·  2 · 21 hrs



Tom Gibson · Camas, Washington

It looks like he is constantly having private meetings with undisclosed persons then showing up at the last minute with some new completely worked out proposal that neither staff or other councilors have had a chance to review. He does that at the Transportation council all the time too. When he isn't doing things in secret he constantly tries to bypass procedures of the councils he sits on to interrupt them and completely change their direction. I think there should be some kind of three strikes rule for bad behavior. If you can't behave you can't be seated at the next meeting.

Reply ·  2 · 21 hrs



Chris Prothero · Columbia Basin College

Roger Neilson More to the point it's about ethics. He and his lapdog have deemed Stewart as an irrelevant hiccup in their haste to do the bidding of CCCU and their ilk. Look at all the instances pointed out and ask yourself "ethical or not". While actions may be legal, they certainly were NOT ethical by any stretch of the imagination.

Reply ·  4 · 20 hrs



Roy Valo · Political Consultant at Valo Consulting

He won't win. He really has near 0 chance of winning reelection.

Reply ·  5 · 20 hrs



Bill Cantrell · Henry Ford Community College

Frank Joseph, now you're thinking, talking and now for the action.

Reply ·  2 · 20 hrs



John M. Kowalski · Camas, Washington

Roger Neilson No, misfeasance is a failure to carry out one's fiduciary duties, which may or may not be due to bad intent. Malfeasance is misfeasance with bad intent.

Reply ·  4 · 19 hrs



Dennis Henry · Ashmun

Chris Prothero Amen, to that and to the manner in which the contract with Metro was

signed. I suppose Commissioner Madore was paying attention to the "process" of governance and to the unethical nature of that contract. I don't particularly like how he is doing it, but I must say, I like the fact that he is.

Reply · 13 hrs



Roger Neilson · Works at Mostly in and for US Army

John M. Kowalski - A definition of misfeasance borrowed from an online dictionary -- "management of a business, public office or other responsibility in which there are errors and an unfortunate result through mistake or carelessness, but without evil intent and/or violation of law."

Reply · 12 hrs



Betty Sue Morris · Vancouver, Washington

Roger Neilson Whether Madore wins again in his district depends, of course, on who runs against him. In the Primary results you mention above, Madore did win his new 3rd District, but with only 27.4% of the votes. That means 72.6% of the voters in his new district preferred someone else. That's a really large percentage who prefer someone else.

Reply · 2 · 11 hrs



Chris Young · IT Desktop Support at Legacy Health

Frank Joseph - FOIA requests are not handled by the County Councilors, they are handled by the County STAFF. All that the requests would do is drive up the cost of government, with nothing to show but reams of paper. In the meantime, the REAL work that the staff normally would be doing goes undone. This proposal is a true way to have to increase taxes, with no benefit to anyone but papermakers and laser jet printer makers. Having people sign up for Citizen's Time, would not be "Civil Disobedience", which implies that the person would be breaking some law or another. All this proposal would do is waste the Councilors' time, the staff time and ultimately the time of the people talking. Having County employees "misplace" Madore's paperwork, or any other Councilor's paperwork would be grounds for a disciplinary hearing and ultimately termination from employment.

So all three of your proposals waste county time, do nothing to improve the situation and put valued county employees at risk for termination.

You, Sir, are part of the problem.

Reply · 9 hrs



Thom Rasmussen · Salmon Creek, Washington

David Madore does NOT care about Clark County!

David Madore cares about David Madore and whoever gets in his way needs to look out for themselves including Tom Meilke. He is using Meilke as a pawn in his quest to be the most important person in the County. This is only a stepping stone for him. All of the changes he has made and will make before the end of the year are to boost his beliefs that he knows what is best for all of us in the County. The really sad thing here is, he thinks he is doing good and will brag

about these "accomplishments" the next time he is up for election be it for this position or some other office he wants to hold. The destruction left in the path of "Hurricane David" will have long lasting effects on our County and will probably end the career of Tom Meilke since he wasn't alert enough to get out of the way.

Reply ·  12 · 22 hrs



Rory Bowman

I've been expecting him to "step up" and run for the US House for quite a while now. The sort of money and ego that create and enable a David Madore are unlikely to be happy at mayhem and mockery in just one county.

Reply ·  8 · 22 hrs



Roger Neilson · Works at Mostly in and for US Army

Rory Bowman - Very possible. JHB gets a fair amount of bad press due to her not being conservative enough for some people.

Reply ·  4 · 22 hrs



Rory Bowman

Roger Neilson: I suspect Ming the Merciless would not be "conservative enough for some" of those people.

Reply ·  10 · 21 hrs · Edited



Roger Neilson · Works at Mostly in and for US Army

Rory Bowman - Good to see there's another Flash Gordon fan out there.

Reply · 21 hrs



Steve Tubbs · University of Washington

I agree with the assessment of Betty Sue Morris that culpability lies equally with Meilke, if not more. 'Deputy Dawg' Meilke ('Yup, yup, yup, yup!') is simply a buffoon. Not an original thought in his head, unless it is to de-fund the animal shelter, or sell off conservation property. His actions during the GM hearing were hysterical: at one point, he actually asked Madore to tell him what to say! Madore's machinations get no traction without the Dawg's blind concurrence.

Reply ·  21 · 23 hrs



Christine Blackford

Is the Integrity Resolution all fluff or does it have teeth?

Reply ·  2 · 23 hrs



Betty Sue Morris · Vancouver, Washington

All fluff! Also - I did a public records request to find out how many jurisdictions actually bothered to respond to the document. There were just two. And when I asked for copies, I learned that Anna Miller had destroyed them because she just acknowledged receipt and said nothing else. So that's how seriously the rest of the world has taken Madore and his ideas since the beginning of his term.

Now, he's actually doing everything he accused CRC of doing: manipulating the outcomes and not disclosing information.

Reply ·  22 · 23 hrs



Bill Cantrell · Henry Ford Community College

Betty Sue Morris, Does the name Richard Nixon sound like David Madore, No, but their actions are very much the same. Doing crooked and having others fall on the sword. CC must get together and fight to rid itself of M & M. This cycle must end, but do not think Boldt will lead you out, that leader is not yet on the scene, but is contributing.

Reply ·  7 · 23 hrs



Ketcham Kate

Betty Sue Morris Are you saying Anna Miller, Madore's paid employee, may have destroyed public records?

Reply ·  12 · 22 hrs



Michele Wollert

Ketcham Kate Yep. Apparently. Allegedly slapped on the hands for it by Chris Horne, too: Anna, you don't get to decide what IS and what ISN'T public record.

Reply ·  8 · 21 hrs



Tom Gibson · Camas, Washington

Bill Cantrell Nixon actually did a lot of good things for the country. Madore never will, even if the chance were right in front of him and all he had to do was say yes.

Reply ·  5 · 21 hrs



Betty Sue Morris · Vancouver, Washington

Madore hasn't just ignored "established process," he's ignored state law requiring adequate notice of decisions being made. And he continues to attempt to treat the county and it's employees as he would those in his private business.

Most tragic here is Tom Mielke's blind, unquestioning allegiance to what ever Madore seems to propose.

Reply ·  22 · 23 hrs



Christine Blackford

So the system is flawed? And there is nothing in place legally or within the system to stop a wayward politician? We see what is happening and have to simply let this man run roughshod over others? Ideally this should not happen. I realize that there is always some distance between ideals and reality but this just seems outrageous to me. Is there no way to deal with the breakdown of integrity and the madness within the system?

Reply ·  5 · 22 hrs · Edited



Tom Gibson · Camas, Washington

Which state laws and which state agency's jurisdiction?

Reply · 21 hrs



Mike Yancey · Clark College -- Vancouver, Washington

How many more times can the King do this to our county?

Reply · 1 · 23 hrs



Michele Wollert

Remember that public hearing right after Madore and Mielke gifted their friend Don Benton the job of Department of Environmental Services director?

My testimony that night warned them both of the danger of ignoring process and making unilateral decisions. I used the sad example of the downfall of Larry Kwarsick, former mayor of Langley, WA, who served jail time for making unilateral changes to documents outside the public process. I also warned them: all it took was one alert citizen, through a public records request, to get that document and bring a 40 year public servant down.

We're still watching and monitoring Madore for his eventual fatal mistake and, as his desperation climbs with his pending power loss, the chances of us finding a smoking gun increases.

Reply · 22 · Dec 6, 2015 8:17am · Edited



John Ley · Camas, Washington

Michelle -- a lie told often enough, becomes the truth. Sadly, that's what the Columbian and others do with regards to the Benton hiring.

A better description of what happened:

"When Republican Don Benton decided to run for a position in Environmental Services, The Columbian ran an article that discussed the Republican commissioners asking County Administrator Bill Barron to vet Mr. Benton, along with other applicants. Mr. Barron refused. Instead he made remarks regarding political favoritism and took it upon himself to hire Mr. Benton, without going through a proper vetting. It was his responsibility to hire staff according to a formal process."

http://www.thereflector.com/.../article_b5d5982e-2a51...

We both know that the County Administrator has the responsibility and authority for the interviewing and hiring process. Yes, the Commissioners (at the time, now Councilors) have direction over the County Administrator, but I don't recall any time elected officials overrode a staff hiring decision. That did NOT happen in the case of the Don Benton hiring -- the two commissioners asked that Benton be "considered" and entered into the "process".

Bill Barron got an attitude. He chose to circumvent the normal "process" and simply directly hired Don Benton. The Commissioners did not "hire" Don Benton -- Bill Barron did. The commissioners didn't make a "unilateral decision", Bill Barron did.

Just the facts.

Reply · 13 hrs



Nick Ruark · Vancouver, Washington

John Ley - And, sir, just what do you suppose would have happened to Bill Barron if he had not hired Mr. Benton ? Good job of re-writing past history to shape your out-of-context beliefs as to what actually took place.

Reply · 6 · 12 hrs



Chris Young · IT Desktop Support at Legacy Health

Nick Ruark - Anything John may "suppose" would happen to Bill Barron, are just that, Suppositions. Not facts. The facts are there in the link.

Reply · 1 · 9 hrs



Nick Ruark · Vancouver, Washington

Chris Young - With all due respect, Chris, the link you refer to is to an opinion piece which by itself is simply supposition. Is that the best you can do, sir?

Reply · 29 mins



Rory Bowman

Throwing the county into disarray and debt is entirely consistent with the sort of nihilistic Orange County "conservatism" that birthed David Madore and sent him to Clark County. Anyone who thinks that less than \$10 in annual savings on a \$300,000 home is worth drawing down county reserves by sending us into deficit spending is not any sort of rational or mature adult.

David Madore is about his own ego and ideology, neither of which he understands at a very deep level. He indulges his passion for himself with constant displays of self-pleasure such as this, and his political career cannot end soon enough for the health of Clark County.

Reply · 34 · Dec 6, 2015 8:16am · Edited



Chris Young · IT Desktop Support at Legacy Health

Clark County has more savings above the "Recommended" by the State Auditor's office. Even if they took all the tax cut from those savings, we would still be above the recommended amount. We shouldn't be collecting tax monies from the citizens unless it is actually needed for current, or reasonably future (for very large) expenses. Whether it is "Only amount of a few lattes" or not, if it is not needed, the County should not be collecting the money.

Too many politicians (Republican and Democrat alike) want to spend every penny collected, and then more. That is why we have a Federal debt in the trillions. However the

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