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New City Administrator continues under pressure by council majority

April 9, 2010. Update to previous post regarding Councilor Dean Rhodes' request for an executive session. — Councilor Dean Rhodes requested an executive session for the April council meeting to discuss City Administrator Justin Boone's performance, after only 3 months on the job.

An executive session, which is typically a meeting closed to the public, may be held in accordance with Oregon's Public Meetings Laws, as permitted under ORS 192.660.

On April 1, 2010, Trena McManus, the Assistant to the City Administrator, notified the entire Council and Mayor that the executive session had been scheduled. With further questioning, it was discovered that Councilor Dean Rhodes initiated the request and it was supported by Councilors Nick Harris and Bob Cullen. Councilor Rhodes, with the help of McNamus, requested the attorney to be present, making the meeting more serious.

The surprise request came after at least two of the councilors had been criticized harshly for inappropriate practices and even an accusation of an “abuse of power.”

At least two of the councilors involved in this move have been accused of possible Charter violations for attempting to influence the City Administrator outside of public meeting, which could result in removal from council.

In another surprise announcement, City Administrator Justin Boone cancelled the April executive session after he received legal counsel that the councilor’s move was not legal. On April 2nd, Boone sent out an email announcement that stated, “No one councilor has the right to call an executive session to conduct the CA’s review. Therefore I am terminating the executive session set for Thursday, April 8th.”

At the April council meeting, tension was high and the meeting seemed hostile as the council majority added general personnel issues to the meeting agenda and at times, harshly questioned Boone. At one point early in the meeting, Councilor Cullen and Rhodes seemed to almost be interrogating Boone. The meeting room was full, with some standing or sitting on the floor. Many park equipment suppliers and contractors were present, as well.

Why are you attacking me in front of all these people in a public meeting?

As Councilor Rhodes questioned Boone on one issue repeatedly, Boone finally responded that he had already given his answer and then said, “Why are you attacking me in front of all these people in a public meeting?”

During the citizen public input time, Boone’s performance seemed to be the focus. Initially, resident Angela Flood stood up to criticize Boone at length with a list of accusations against him. Resident Darrell Flood commented that Boone had not responded to one of his requests. After that, other residents stood to give praises to the City Administrator.

Local resident, Debbie Schley, even apologized to the Administrator for the hostility he was experiencing and then said to the Council, “I want to give him a chance.” She told Boone, “I appreciate everything you’ve done so far.”

Other citizen comments to Boone included, “Justin is a real asset to the community.” Another resident read an entire list of things she’d already seen accomplished by Boone. She stated that Boone had been very responsive to citizens and had accomplished “more in weeks than the previous Administrator had done in years.” Each of these praises were met with applause from the audience.

The citizens reaction seemed to soften the hostile atmosphere from the council majority as the meeting continued. However, they still voted to hold an executive session to discuss Boone’s performance at the May council meeting. The specific concerns of Rhodes and other councilors will be made public only at Boone’s choosing.

As far as I am concerned, Justin’s performance has been outstanding.

Councilor Leah Harper has stated, “As far as I am concerned, Justin’s performance has been outstanding.” Harper has questioned why his performance is even being reviewed at this time and why city expenses are being extended to bring in the city attorney. She stated that she was unaware of any complaints submitted,

since the new administrator took over in January.

According to Mayor Chris Heisler, many have been impressed with Boone. Heisler said he “has heard nothing but positive comments from many citizens. We’re excited to have him on board, and we’re finally making progress and beginning to move the city forward.”

[Meet Justin Boone](#) | [News Home](#)



6 Responses to “New City Administrator continues under pressure by council majority”

1.  *SL* says:
[April 17, 2010 at 9:12 pm](#)

Councilor Cullen, I have voted for you faithfully for many years and I can say that I am more than disappointed by your behavior of late and your treatment of not only our City Administrator, but also your response to citizens during council meetings. I have been against recalls in our city for a long time but your behavior leaves citizens with no choice – it’s time for you to go. Let someone who is willing to work with the City Administrator, fellow Council members, and citizens fill your vacant seat.

[Reply](#)

2.  *Mary* says:
[April 12, 2010 at 6:04 am](#)

Shame on you Councilor Cullen. You are a supervisor to the City Administrator, and it is wrong for you to publicly embarrass and discredit him on this web site. And I hope newlafayette.org will get the details and print a story on the \$50k contract error you are presenting. It seems there was no such error by the CA. Facts are: 3 contract proposals were submitted, but only 1 had enough concern and skill to even do the paperwork accurately. It was based on the attorney’s advice and the COUNCIL’S decision that the contract (a good one) was chosen. It’s all public record and not hard to verify. Doesn’t the contract chosen contain \$50k more in service work? Regarding your other accusations, it is also public knowledge that the CA was so sick that his wife contacted City Hall and the Mayor to inform them he had been hospitalized and his parents were flying in. You were all kept updated, nothing done wrong by the CA. Tied in to this problem you’re creating: Councilors approved his time off in February, so if you missed covering the details with him at that time, it seems a little late and suspicious for you to use it now for your purposes (why we don’t know) to attack the CA. I think most don’t approve of your treatment of our new CA (who seems to be doing a great job) especially since you dismissed the adverse performance and blatant mismanagement of the previous CA for years. It is you that have cost our city. There’s no wonder why you are being recalled. I’ll have my final say when the ballot arrives. It is our right and only way to deal with tyrannical elected officials. Councilor Cullen, your bad behavior will cost this city more money by requiring us to have to deal with you thru a recall.

[Reply](#)

3.  *Leah* says:
[April 11, 2010 at 9:27 pm](#)

It was not Mr. Boone who cost the city \$50,000. The council voted for the contract based on the facts. Mr. Boone's wife did notify his staff of his whereabouts, after which Trena notified the council that Mr. Boone was out of the office.

[Reply](#)



4. *Bob Cullen* says:

[April 11, 2010 at 3:08 pm](#)

I couldn't help notice the glaring omissions of facts. What isn't reported in the article is the real story, the fact that Justin cost the city over \$50k because of his lack of attention to detail in public contracting services, the fact that he was absent from work for 3 days with no contact to any of his staff and the really big story of how the Mayor misused his authority by allowing the use of unearned PTO after Mrs. Boone visited the Mayor at home. It'll be interesting to see how long this posts remains. *(Ed. note: a personalized attack has been deleted from this comment.)*

[Reply](#)



5. *Bernie* says:

[April 9, 2010 at 10:38 pm](#)

Thank you. We adjusted the post and hope that perhaps Mr. Flood can clarify for us if we still don't have his intentions right.

[Reply](#)



6. *Cindy B* says:

[April 9, 2010 at 8:08 pm](#)

Thanks for all you inform us about on this web site. I would just like to clarify one thing. I believe Darrel Flood's presentation did not reference Justin Boone but rather spoke about making public documents available on the Internet. Where he may agree with Mrs. Flood in her presentation, he himself did not directly make accusations against Justin. I just wanted to mention this for accuracy sake. Thanks again for what you do with this site. Where would we be without you?! Yes, we'd be back in the world of — do what you are told because you are “moron” citizens who don't have a clue and certainly have no right of input! 😊 Thanks to all the public “servants,” elected or not.

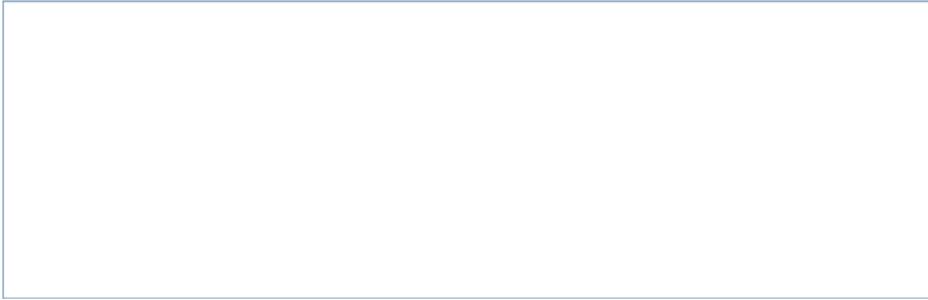
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