

[Llehman](#)

replied

May 25, 2021

To: "PDC Support" <pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov>

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN;

On April 28th, at approximately 11:30 AM, the bilingual translation of my monthly "What's Happening at City Hall" article was sent to the City General Clerk. The article is posted on the 5th of the month after printed copies are made and put into the water bills. It was a week early. I am a part-time Mayor and work at Hanford as well. When I got off from work at Hanford, I checked my City email and saw a letter from Craig Briggs, one of the City attorneys. I opened his email which was discussing penalties for trying to sway an election that had not yet been placed on the ballot.

I had been asked by several citizens to describe what it meant by changing the form of government from a Strong Mayor/Council form to a Council Manager form. After researching the topic, I had it reviewed several times to ensure it was impartial, so included it in the final paragraphs of my monthly article. When I read the harsh penalties described by the attorney, I thought I had better have the attorneys review this before printing and sending it out. I promptly called the attorney's office before they closed to have them review the article. I started reading it to Mr. Briggs when he stopped me and said he had already read it. I asked how could you have read it; I haven't sent it out yet? He told me it had been posted on the City website.

I was totally astounded by this, because I was never told that it had been posted and when Mr. Briggs thought there was a remote chance that a few words could have indicated a bias, I immediately texted the City Clerk/Treasurer and had it pulled from the website. However in the few hours that it was on the website, it was seen by two people, Dan Decker and Jake Mokler who immediately filed charges against me with the PDC.

I received an email from the PDC and replied to their telephone number. I was told to respond to this email in writing. Please accept this as my explanation of what happened. I didn't know about the regulation earlier regarding use of city property, although, I was not trying to sway anyone with my statements I was trying to be impartial. Thank you.

Linda Lehman

Mayor of Benton City, WA

Sent from my iPad