



I Went to a "Budget Meeting" and a Rubbish Ordinance Broke Out

by Jill
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Imagine my surprise, and once again confusion, when I attempted to attend the recently scheduled Quarterly Budget Meeting between the commissioners and accountant Cathy Fromm, only to witness, for the majority of the time I was there, a constant parade between the county attorney, Alex Beltz, and the administrative assistant, Cherie Radeker, dashing in and out of the meeting trying to decide if and when and where the required public notice of this meeting had been posted.

But let me begin at the beginning which in itself was confusing. I checked in (on Thursday, May 10) with the Elbert County Public Information Page via the county website at 9:30AM only to see a posting which stated: "Update from administration for May 9: At the hour of 10:00 AM or shortly thereafter today, 1 or more commissioners will be attending a Quarterly Budget Meeting." But I noted that it was already May 10, so how could this be? I immediately commented back asking if the date on this announcement was correct....said comment was responded to at 1:40PM in the afternoon, long after the meeting had occurred.

Since I only had a short amount of time to get to the meeting, I called several county phone numbers, but no one answered, so I hustled to get to the Kiowa. When I arrived at the BOCC chambers, Cherie Radeker informed me, out in the hallway, that the meeting had been posted on May 9 on the bulletin board, but when I walked into the meeting, it appeared to be in disarray. In fact, the meeting had been halted because Cherie Radeker had informed the commissioners that the announcement had been posted at 10:30AM on the 9th, thus they needed to wait until 10:30AM on the 10th to allow the 24 hour proper notice.

But then Alex, the attorney, and Cherie, the administrator, each made several forays into the meeting....with Alex finally announcing that "Cherie had misspoken" and that the announcement had indeed been posted earlier than she had previously stated on the morning of the 9th, thus the meeting could go on. At this time, Cherie escorted Ruth Freeman, who now fills the position of "hall monitor" on the second floor, (her desk currently sits right at the top of the stairs) into the meeting so Ruth could announce to the group that she had posted the announcement shortly after she got to work on Wednesday, May 9th. So we were safe to move ahead....this in-and-out ordeal took much longer than the actual meeting!

So the accountant then moved ahead.....I admit that I missed the first few minutes of her presentation due to the confusion about the actual existence of this meeting.....informing the two county commissioners in attendance, Del Schwab and John Shipper, that we were behind in income for the year, that assessed evaluations of property were decreased, that about 30% of the audit was complete, and that we expect to get the audit report by the July 30 deadline. After very few questions by the commissioners, all of a sudden Commissioner Schwab brings up the current rubbish ordinance, which had its first reading at the BOCC meeting on May 9. WAIT A MINUTE!!!! I thought I was at a QUARTERLY BUDGET MEETING!! The accountant appeared a little confused, and wasn't prepared to answer any questions about the rubbish ordinance, this not being her area of expertise. So then the commissioners decided that the second and final reading of the ordinance could occur at the next BOCC meeting on May 23rd....to which Commissioner Schwab, obviously very relieved, stated, "Code enforcement needs to be up and running so we have a VIABLE SOURCE OF REVENUE.....I'll let Shane know."

So all of a sudden, the dots are connected.....WE WILL FIX OUR COUNTY'S BUDGET SITUATION BY CHARGING THE CITIZENS FOR RUBBISH THEY HAVE IN THEIR YARDS!!!! This is our representative government at work?

Folks, I would encourage you to immediately study this rubbish ordinance our county commissioners are trying to foist upon us. It is horrendous, dreadful, awful, frightening, appalling and unjust. It seriously infringes upon our individual property rights.....and the reason so many of us live in rural Elbert County: to be able to live with a little more freedom in our surroundings. This ordinance is far stricter than any HOA guidelines I have lived under in any city.....so do your homework....read the ordinance....and make every attempt to be at the meeting where it appears the commissioners are poised to rubber stamp this dreadful edict!

[Click to Read the Ordinance](#)