



Conservative Breakfast Yields Surprise from Schwab

by William C. Thomas

Although Angie Ternus, former Elizabeth Town Board member, did not know when it happened, nor did Sabrina Hurst, wife of the Elizabeth Mayor, Del Schwab asserted that he'd had coffee with Clay Hurst, Elizabeth Mayor, recently, and that Hurst is a "personal friend" of his.

"When we see them, Del and [his wife] Diane, we're quite cordial," Mrs. Hurst reports, but that doesn't qualify as "personal friendship."

Outside of that, the "debate" at the Conservative Breakfast consisted of questions and answers after each candidate introduced himself. Del Schwab said he would have voted against the Elbert and Hwy 86 Amendment 3 if it had come up for a vote. Larry Ross said he'd spend money only when necessary and protect the County's water. Robert Rowland said the County was in trouble and needed an open, transparent environment. John Shipper said the County paid \$500,000.00 per year on the \$7 million note it owes.

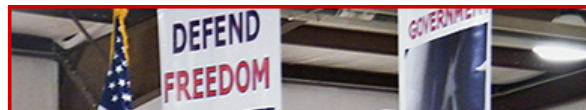
On what the public's role in County Government is: Schwab said we need citizen input and he'd implemented the time for people to air their views at the beginning of BOCC meetings; Ross said that there should be no conflict of interest by the BOCC versus the citizenry; Rowland said the Sunshine Law had been violated; and Shipper said the BOCC hadn't turned anyone away "with a reasonable request."

On Transparency and a Balanced Budget, Ross said that leasing was another loan; Rowland said that the months of January through March should be accounted for; Shipper said the government was open and that assessed values for the County had gone down. Schwab said the open records requests were not difficult and that there were no "supersecret dark meetings." He also said the budget was balanced.

They were all asked how long they'd been Republicans, and with the exception of Ross, who'd registered in fall, 2011, they'd been Republicans since the Pleistocene.

Schwab made his assertion when the candidates were asked about working with various groups to coordinate County Services. He'd met recently with Clay Hurst, he said, who was a "personal friend" of his. Schwab also said that shutting down the dispatch center and paying Douglas County for Dispatch and Emergency Services was a good move. Shipper said the BOCC worked with mayors and towns as much as possible. Ross said Simla, Elizabeth, and Kiowa were ignored by the BOCC; Rowland said Transparency was working together.

On taking County Vehicles home, Schwab said it made a lot more sense than using one's own vehicle because in the past, Commissioners charged the County mileage and it was good for the vehicles, which were kept in decent shape. Ross agreed that Road and Bridge employees needed County vehicles but couldn't see why the BOCC needed County vehicles; Rowland recognized that emergency personnel needed vehicles but expressed concern over mileage outside the County. Shipper said that Road and Bridge employees and Emergency Personnel needed vehicles and that a Sheriff's car parked in front of a house was a deterrent to crime.



On Fracking, Ross said oil drilling was to commence in the Northwest corner of the County at anytime, and he wants it done safely and carefully; Rowland said that the Obama Administration had dangerous energy policies and the County needed to protect and regulate its oil drilling. Shipper, who'd been raised in West Virginia, talked about how oil companies put a charge in an old well and exploded it. To his knowledge, it had never caused a problem. Schwab said that the state of Colorado had good regulations, but air, water and roads are under local control.

On Accountability, Ross said he'd be available 100% of the time and would hold 4 BOCC meetings a year at the Fairgrounds on Saturdays; Rowland promised all open meetings; citizen input; open participation. Shipper simply said the BOCC is already accountable and Schwab said he'd spent 31 years with the Aurora Fire Department and that he'd been held accountable already.

The Conservative Breakfast broke up at 9:30. Special commentary was made by Republican Chairman Scott Wills, who spoke of putting American flags on lapels at polling places in order to influence more conservative voting and County officials attending included Commissioner Schlegel, County Clerk Hartsough, and County Treasurer Rick Pettitt.