HELLO, I’M TOM WIKNICH

WELCOME TO THE 3RD KZGN NEWS TALKING POINTS EDITORIAL FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH, 2014.

TODAYS TOPIC WILL BE TRANSPARENCY FLAWS WITH OUR CURRENT CITY COUNCIL.

BUT FIRST,

I WANT TO SHARE SOME COMMENTS PROVIDED ON FACEBOOK ABOUT THIS NEW KZGN NEWS SEGMENT.

FIRST WE HEAR FROM SKIP:

HERE’S PORTIONS OF WHAT SKIP WROTE:

OK. I JUST READ THE 1ST TWO EDITORIALS….EFFECTIVE COMMENTARY NEEDS A BIT OF COLORFUL FLAIR,

KINETIC INTONATION AND PROJECTED EMOTION (TYPICALLY ANGER).

NOW, ADMITTEDLY, I ONLY READ THE EDITORIALS, I DIDN’T SEE THEM) BUT I’M TOLD THE DELIVERY WAS STIFF AND DRY (SORRY TOM)

WELL SKIP, I’LL TAKE YOUR ADVICE AND GET MORE CONFRONTATIONAL AND EMOTIONAL, AND MAYBE EVEN SHOW “ANGER”.

IT’S OBVIOUS THAT YOU READ MY 1ST SEGMENT WHERE I TOOK THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER TO TASK ON THEIR QUESTIONABLE USE OF EDITORIAL LICENSE.

SINCE YOU ARE ONE OF THEIR COMENTATORS, I CONSIDER YOUR RESPONSE PREDICATABLE. KNOCK THE PRESENTER, AND NOT DISCUSS THE TOPIC.

FOR A COMENTATOR TO MAKE COMMENT ON MY DELIVERY, WITHOUT SEEING IT, IS AKIN TO TAKING A RUMOR FROM SOMEONE AND PASSING IT ON AS A TRUTH. I WOULD APPRECIATE A REVIEW FROM YOU AFTER ACTUALLY SEEING IT. I KNOW IM NOT A BILL O’REILY, BUT I’LL WORK AT IT.

MARY WROTE:

YOU DO HAVE TO USE EDITORIAL CAUTION.

THIS WAS IN RESPONSE TO SKIPS COMMENT ABOVE.

THANKS MARY, I’LL TRY AND RUN THE LINE BETWEEN AROGANCE AND CRITISM BY RUMOR, TO FACT AND DISCUSSION OF THE REAL TOPIC.

NOW TODAYS TOPIC:

TRANSPARENCY OF OUR CITY COUNCIL.

LAST WEDNESDAY THE CITY COUNCIL HAD WHAT APPEARED TO BE A MUNDANE AGENDA ITEM.

THE ITEM WAS HOW THE CITY SHOULD ALLOCATE APPROXIMATELY $130,000 IN AVAILABLE FUNDS FROM THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPEMENT BLOCK GRANT FUND FOR THE 2015-2016 YEAR.

THE CITY STAFF MADE THE RECOMMENDATION THAT THE FUNDS SHOULD BE ALLOCATED TOWARDS THE CONTINUED EFFORT BY THE CITY TO MODIFY SIDEWALKS AT STREET INTERSECTIONS TO BE ADA COMPLIANT.

THIS INCLUDES REBUILDING SIDEWALKS AT INTERSECTIONS TO HAVE RAMPS FOR WHEELCHAIR ACCESS. IT COSTS AN AVERAGE OF $6000 PER RAMP.

STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING OF FUTURE PROJECTS REQUIRE CITIES TO BE ACTIVELY MAKING STRIDES TO MAKE ALL CITIES INFRASTRUCTURE ADA COMPLIANT.

THE STAFF RECOMMENDATION WAS THE USUAL RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE PAST, AND PREVIOUS DECISIONS HAVE ALMOST ALWAYS BEEN TO SUPPORT THE MODIFICATIONS OF SIDEWALKS AT INTERSECTIONS TO MAKE THEM ADA COMPLIANT.

IN A SURPRISE MOVE, MAYOR DAN CLARK CAME UP WITH A RECOMMENDATION TO USE THE FUNDS FOR AN ITEM THAT WAS NOT EVEN MENTIONED IN THE STAFF REPORT.

THE MAYOR APOLOGIZED TO THE OTHER COUNCILMEMBERS FOR BLINDSIDING THEM WITH THIS RECOMMENDATION, BUT FELT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO BRING UP.

NOW MY OPINION:

NOT GOOD ENOUGH MAYOR! YOU SHOULD HAVE ALSO APPOLOGIZED TO THE STAFF AND THE PUBLIC YOU SERVE AND ANSWER TO.

NOW THE TRANSPARENCY ISSUE:

THE PROBLEM WASN’T IN HIS SUGGESTION TO REDIRECT THE FUNDS FOR WHAT HE THOUGHT APPROPRIATE. IT WAS HOW HE DID IT.

THE MAYOR HAS DONE THIS ON OTHER OCCASIONS DURING HIS TERM AS MAYOR.

THE COUNCIL HAS AN AGNEDA ITEM,

FULLY EXPLAINED IN THE AGENDA WITH STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS.

THEN THE MAYOR POPS OFF A TOTALLY NEW OPTION OR IDEA TO THE AGENDA ITEM, THAT WAS NOT DISCLOSED PRIOR TO HIM BRINGING IT UP.

THE PROBLEM IS THE COUNCIL, STAFF, AND MOST IMPORTANT…

THE PUBLIC HAS A RIGHT TO KNOW THE ENTIRE CONTENT OF WHAT WILL BE CONSIDERED BY THE COUNCIL FOR A DECISION.

ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO SPENDING OUR MONEY.

THERE WAS ABSOLUTELY NO ADVANCE WARNING TO THE PUBLIC OF THIS NEW IDEA ON HOW TO SPEND THE FUNDS.

THIS IS NOT A TRANSPARENT PROCESS.

AND THEN NO ONE ON THE COUNCIL EVEN SLIGHTLY OBJECTED TO THIS NEW IDEA, AND THAT WE THE PEOPLE HAVE A RIGHT TO 72 HOURS NOTICE WHEN THEY ARE GOING TO MAKE DECISIONS ON HOW THEY ARE GOING TO SPEND OUR MONEY.

AGAIN, THIS IS NOT ABOUT WHAT HE RECOMMENDED. IT’S HOW IT WAS BROUGHT UP.

IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE TO TAKE AN AGENDA ITEM AND THEN TOTALLY REDIRECT THE ITEM WITH INFORMATION THAT WAS NOT DISCLOSED TO THE REQUIRED 72 HOURS NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC.

AND THE MAYORS RECOMMENDATION EVEN MET WITH SOME CONCERN FROM CITY MANAGER SPEER.

IN WHAT SOUNDED LIKE A TONE OF CAUTION, SPEER REMINDED THE COUNCIL THAT THE CITY NEEDS TO KEEP WORKING AT ADA COMPLIANT DEFICIENCIES WITHIN THE CITY TO STAY ELIGIBLE FOR CERTAIN STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING.

DISMISSING THE STAFF REPORT, THE COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MAYORS UNADVERTISED RECOMMENDATION FOR THE USE OF CDBG FUNDS.

AGAIN, THE PROBLEM IS NOT ABOUT WHAT WAS SUGGESTED BY THE MAYOR, IT’S THE PROCESS.

WHEN THIS HAPPENED, I THOUGHT THAT SINCE THE NEW COUNCIL WILL MOST LIKELY BE SEATED NEXT WEEK, THAT I SHOULD JUST DROP THIS ISSUE.

BUT AFTER CONSIDERATION, I WENT WITH THIS EDITORIAL TO SEND A MESSAGE TO THE NEWLY ELECTED MAYOR AND COUNCIL.

I SINCERELY HOPE THE NEW COUNCIL STOPS THIS BOMB DROPPING OF ITEMS DURING A COUNCIL MEETING. THERE SHOULD BE NO CONSIDERATION OF SPENDING OUR MONEY ON ANYTHING UNLESS IT IS PROPERLY NOTICED 72 HOURS IN ADVANCE, SO THE PEOPLE CAN COME AND MAKE COMMENT.

IN CLOSING, TELL ME WHAT YOU THINK!

I ENCOURAGE YOUR E MAIL COMMENTS.

WHETHER YOU AGREE WITH ME OR DON’T,

I’D LIKE TO READ YOUR COMMENTS.

I WILL READ SOME E MAIL COMMENTS ON THE AIR OF THE NEXT PROGRAM.

OR, IF YOU HAVE A SUGGESTION OF AN ISSUE YOU’D LIKE ME TO DISCUSS, E MAIL THAT TO ME AS WELL.

PLEASE E MAIL THEM TO INFO@KZGN.NET.

THIS HAS BEEN A

KZGN TALKING POINTS EDITORIAL.

OUR NEW SEGMENT RIGHT HERE ON KZGN TV

TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS.

UNTIL NEXT TIME, I’M TOM WIKNICH,

AND THAT’S WHAT I THINK!