

From: [Dee White](#)
To: [Council Clerk – Testimony](#)
Cc: [Therese Bottomly](#)
Subject: agenda item 647 testimony
Date: Tuesday, August 4, 2020 4:13:09 PM
Attachments: [dee white testim agenda 647 powell bte roof 08 05 2020.pdf](#)

Hi Karla,

Comm Fritz was going to ask Mayor Wheeler if I could testify at tomorrow's second reading for the roof at Powell Butte since I was unable to speak last week for technical reasons. I have decided not to testify in person tomorrow since there will be no discussion of any sort at the meeting (all items are second readings). I'm sending in written testimony for the record instead.

Thank you,
Dee White

My name is Dee White.

August 5, 2020

TESTIMONY

647 Authorize a contract with the lowest responsible bidder and provide payment for the construction of the Powell Butte Reservoir 1 Roof Upgrades Project at an estimated cost of \$5,140,000 (Second Reading Agenda 626)

I will not be giving oral testimony on this the day of the second reading of this water bureau contract. Last week I was one of two concerned citizens who requested that this \$5,000,000 contract be pulled from the consent agenda so we would be able to discuss. Consent agenda items do not allow for discussion. Most folks don't know this. Due to technical difficulties on whose account is debatable, I was unable to testify last week. And because today's meeting is nothing but second readings, no discussions or presentations, and because literally no one but perhaps your staff will be listening, I am sending in this written testimony instead.

1. The roof on this surplus "for long term supply needs" reservoir at Powell Butte has been problematic for years. Contracts are involved. It was supposed to last for 50 years but started having problems after about 20 and now, at 30 years old, it is being replaced, among other things. Why wasn't this addressed? The warranty? Damages? Industry alerted?
2. This has been an item on the water bureau's budget since 2017, 3 years. And each year, one reads in that budget document that the reservoir has been taken out of service. So, has the Powell Butte I reservoir been empty for three years?

The main issue that needs to be addressed right now is the process, the path of governance that you are leading this community down; a path that is dark and murky. The constant, pervasive lack of transparency and accountability at the water bureau is no mistake. It is an intentional display of paternalism, greed and power being served up to this community by Commissioner Fritz, Mayor Wheeler, the Office of Finance and Management, Procurement, and the upper management of the Portland Water Bureau. It's no wonder that there is chaos and anger in this struggling community right now given among other things, the complete lack of trust that we have in you all on so many levels. No trust is stressful and harmful to this community!! It's wrong!!

The Impact Statement (attached to the Consent item) describes plans to excavate and DIG TRENCHES in the green space, the Nature Park. There will undoubtedly be a land use process with trenches being dug in a green space but there is no mention. What could possibly possess any of you to believe that there need not be a public process on this land use action? You say in the Impact Statement that you are working "closely with neighbors and businesses". This is not even close to meaningful public involvement, given the actions being taken and the ratepayer \$\$

being spent on a faulty, short-lived roof over a 50 million gallon underground drinking water tank. Does excavation and trenches in a Nature Park mean anything less than we, the public, believe it should mean to you?

To bring this to council on the Consent Agenda with no discussion is unethical and shady, keeping ratepayers in the dark and causing impacts and potential damage that could possibly be avoided if the process were done with best democratic practices and ethics.

This kind of council action via the Consent Agenda is similar to the ~Report~ brought to council by the Office of Finance and Management (OFM) on July 8, 2020 for the sham corrosion control facility (agenda item 536) that, according to the OFM, “should” reduce lead levels at taps. So, this super low confidence Office of Finance and Management \$18,000,000 contract is brought to council as a ~report~, thus silencing ratepayers’ voices unless given special permission to speak from the Mayor, which in my personal experience has never been granted.

Speaking for a lot of Portlanders both in the streets demanding action, or in isolation demanding action, something has got to give with the unjust, undemocratic process of governing and protecting that the City of Portland is loudly preaching and unjustly practicing.

From an Oregonian Letter to the Editor:

“...I do know that politics got us into this mess and that the only way to get us out is eliminating personal politics as a job requirement for the “head of the water bureau.” It might be refreshing to have clarity on how things are, not how they’re spun to match someone’s agenda.”