



Tuesday, July 01, 2014

## City's Legendary Intransigence on Display in Trash Contract



Never underestimate the City of San Angelo's ability to ignore legitimate concerns by citizens in order to maintain the bureaucracy's status quo. Council **ignored** public will,

two to one in favor of delaying the trash hauling-landfill contracts to complete an investigation into Republic Services' unauthorized charges to commercial customers. The *Standard Times* reported:

After lengthy and emphatic discussion, the San Angelo City Council narrowly voted to **authorize execution of an at least 10-year trash services contract with Republic Services.**

"I've never seen **so many constituents get so involved emotionally** in a trash contract," said Councilwoman Elizabeth Grindstaff, who was opposed to the decision.

Two thousand commercial clients, over-billed since 2000, would produce numerous emotionally involved constituents. City leaders and Council ignored these constituents **by approving** a long term contract without ensuring a thorough investigation had been completed, legal action taken (if needed) and appropriate restitution made.

I learned San Angelo's ability to ignore legitimate concerns after becoming a resident in 1994. I was appalled by conditions the City allowed to exist at North Pool of Twin Buttes. I challenged dangerous trash and poor behavior at the city maintained park with Public Works Director Will Wilde, City Manager Tom Adams and Mayors Dick Funk and Johnny Fender. This group successfully ignored my concerns for years. It wasn't until Ken McNease called city leaders did conditions improved. That's when I learned who complains matters in San Angelo. The City's Convention Center is named after McNease.

My frustration regarding the unresponsiveness of city staff took time to dissipate. I learned to clean up broken glass in the area around my windsurfing launch and let the rest be. The City spoke a **good game** with its Twin Buttes Master Recreation Plan but I've seen no action for years in this regard.

*San Angelo Living 2014* maintained the fiction that the city maintained park at Twin Buttes North Pool has electrical and water hookups. This has not been the case for at least a decade. The former hookup area is now inaccessible behind pipe railing and overgrown with brush.

In what other ways has the city been insular and unresponsive? Unexplained, high water bills called many citizens to request an external audit of the Water Department. Citizens complained about staff's dismissive attitude, yet Council defeated a proposal to conduct an outside audit by a vote of 4-3.

I consider Council's response to the Furniture Fiasco as circling the wagons to protect

insiders. The promised investigation into over \$100,000 in Water Department furniture was never released to the public with a full explanation of its findings. It took this blogger to [get a copy](#) of the document, undated, unsigned and absent interviews from two key players, Interim City Manager Michael Dane and former Assistant City Manager Elizabeth Grindstaff.

My advice for people wanting due attention paid to their issue. Find your Ken McNease. Who that is today, I haven't the faintest idea. Without a key insider taking up your issue, the City of San Angelo is likely to [remain insular](#).

by PEU Report/State of the Division at 7:31 PM 0 comments 

---