

#300 ENDED STORM WATER FIASCO NOW
by Douglas Bruce

Does anyone believe Douglas Bruce fought the illegal storm water tax for three years, with lengthy court battles and two petition campaigns, in order for voters to ratify and prolong it another eight years, costing taxpayers another \$60 million? Councilman Bernie Herpin does. Or so he claims. His nonsensical Nov. 15th letter clumsily splices together #300's two sentences--one an eight-year phase out of one activity, the other an immediate prohibition of other enterprise activities, including those funded by storm water "fees."

The city charter says initiative petitions take effect when election results are certified. That was done Nov. 16th. Issue 300 is now the law. Read it again at www.CityReforms.com. It is only two sentences.

The first sentence phases out over a maximum of eight years "all enterprise payments to the city." It covers payment of money from Utilities and other enterprises, and cash reimbursements for city services to enterprises. Eight years were allowed because this sentence has twice the dollar impact the second one does. It reduces cash, not benefits.

The second sentence covers non-cash support. "Hereafter, all loans, gifts, and subsidies between an enterprise and the city or another enterprise are prohibited." The word "hereafter" means "immediately, from now on." As of Nov. 16th, the storm water enterprise (and all others) must cease gifts or subsidies to the city, like free work on city-owned infrastructure, or paying bills the city owes the federal government. It cannot bill fees for what it can no longer do. The city's three-year fraud on taxpayers is over. Ding dong, the wicked tax is dead. On election night, I tore up my storm water bill on camera because it is void. No more fee collection--past, present, or future. We won; they lost.

The city council gets it, but is playing dumb. First, they said the tax ("fee") was not covered by #300 at all, noting the storm water enterprise made no "payments" to the city. After public outrage, they backpedaled, conceding that tax was covered. Their latest tactic is that storm water is covered by the first sentence only (the payments sentence they said last week did not apply!)

Their posturing is a gigantic bluff. They aren't confused; they are corruptly violating the election results to get \$60 million, the biggest heist in city history.

My rebuttal is on the website at Essays, dated 10/18/09. My post-election proof given to council is dated 11/9/09. It copied over 40 articles to confirm #300 applied to the storm water enterprise. I also gave them bumper stickers, fliers, and mailers. I reminded them of the yard signs--"END CITY STORM FEE. VOTE FOR 300." The signs didn't say "phase out over eight years." They said, "END."

Computerized phone calls went to 90,000 voters. Listen to phone call #2 (see website menu), which says, "Issue 300 ends NOW that illegal storm water tax they call a fee." Not in eight years—NOW. The call goes on to say the secret Utility payment "phases out over eight years." To keep \$60 million in illegal loot, the council confuses two separate enterprise expenditures.

I tried to tell them at their next formal meeting, but the mayor denied my three minutes before I went to court at 1:30 p.m. on their trumped-up criminal charge against me.

I don't want to sue the city to enforce #300, but I will if they force me. That will drag on for years, which is what the city wants. It hopes to spend that money yearly and then tell the judge it can't obey a court order to return the money because "We spent it." Their cynicism and arrogance are evil.

If the council scorns the voters, I will not only sue, but start another petition, to provide a permanent property tax cut equal to the full storm water tax. By limiting city property tax to one mill, citizens will recover that \$15 million yearly in illegal past and projected charges. When the city loses in court, it will absorb both impacts as the just consequence of its illegal, immoral, undemocratic, arrogant, and un-American theft.

Citizens! Demand city council honor the voters' wishes. Their main City Hall number is 385-5986. Talk to each member individually. Call cell phones, too. Speak at their Nov. 24th meeting. See contact information at www.springsgov.com. I think council members Gallagher, Glenn, and Paige want to obey the law, so phone, FAX, write, and email the Selfish Six. Don't let them steal our election victory! Defend democracy! Do it today.

Douglas Bruce is the author of issue #300. Volunteers may reach him at 550-0010 or taxcutter@msn.com.

(750 WORD TEXT)