

February 21, 2008

Letter to the Editor:

The City of Centennial needs an elected treasurer/auditor who is empowered to be a check and balance over City finances.

At the February 20 council meeting I challenged a fiscal impact analysis that had been provided to the mayor and city council concerning a \$4 million transaction the city was considering. The staff made several errors in their calculations to the tune of over \$300,000 and there were several impacts such as loss of tax revenue and loss of investment income that were not taken into consideration. This was a good example of incorrect or misleading data presented to city council – data that was going to be used in making a major financial decision for the City.

The reaction to my presentation took me by surprise. The focus of the mayor's response was on the method of delivery of my information not on the results of my analysis. He said I should take this information to the staff instead of waiting to present a "gotcha" at the city council meeting. I disagree with the mayor. I am accountable to the citizens of Centennial, not to the administrative staff. The administrative staff had a duty to review their analysis with me, the elected treasurer. If the mayor and council have a problem with my analysis, they can attack the numbers – they don't have to attack me personally. The mayor attacked me personally but it only empowered me to work harder for the citizens of Centennial.

The Home Rule Charter Commission has heard a great deal of testimony concerning whether or not the City should have an elected treasurer. A sitting councilman stated, "I really don't see the need for an elected Clerk or Treasurer position in Centennial. I don't think it insures any deeper oversight within our city. All necessary checks and balances are in place as required by law." Some people say the mayor and council are elected to represent the citizens and they can provide needed oversight. This incident serves as a good example as to why the citizens of Centennial need an elected treasurer/auditor to be a watchdog over city finances.

The Home Rule Charter being presented to City Council next month eliminates the position of City Treasurer. I urge the citizens of Centennial to vote NO on this charter as it is currently written.

Susan Bockenfeld  
Elected Treasurer  
City of Centennial