

Hello All,

I was recently asked if I would be willing to return to Council. After a fair bit of consideration I started making some notes. Those notes turned into the below information.

Here are my views on what makes for an effective functioning Council:

Internal Communication/Governance:

Council communicates with the Mayor. The Mayor communicates with the CAO. The CAO communicates with staff. Deviation from this model can create confusion, un-necessary challenges and generally inhibits the organization as a whole.

Under no circumstances is it ok for Council to micro manage staff. We must trust that staff is doing what Council has tasked them to do to the best of their abilities. I will not tolerate an environment where Council tries to “get into the weeds” regularly. Elected Officials are not employees or managers. Our job is to set direction via policy and bylaws – that’s it.

It’s also not ok to second guess decisions that staff made when they are following policy/direction set by Council. They are doing the best they can based on the tools Council has given them. If Council thinks something should have been handled differently they need to look at the policies or bylaws that led to the decisions staff made.

Public Communication/Deliberations:

Council needs to make decisions based on good information in a deliberate fashion. Knee jerk reactions are to be avoided as much as possible. If there isn’t enough information to make a good decision more information must be obtained before making any decision – regardless of perceived urgency.

Council is elected to govern the vocal minority and the silent majority. It is not ok to govern based on “word on the street” or via facebook. This creates polarizing situations and misrepresents our community in general. It fosters an environment where everyone has to yell to be heard and generally only serves a small percent of the overall population

It is never ok for Council to throw staff or other Councillors under the bus when talking to anyone that is not Council. It’s generally not ok to do it with Councillors too but it causes less harm. If the organization seems to be fractured and full of infighting the public loses faith and trust in the organization.

Transparency:

Council should handle itself in a transparent fashion. This means that all meetings must be made available to the public. All minutes from the meetings must also be made available to the public. Content of in camera meetings must be kept to

a minimum and where possible in camera items should be brought out of in camera and put onto the public record.

This does not mean we should take to social media to defend/explain our decisions regardless of any external pressures to do so.

Why I left:

The majority of Council seemed to be determined to go against all of the above. I will not lead anyone in a direction counter to my belief of what good governance looks like.

It is my view that if Council continues on it's current path they will have massive staff turnover and/or staff will unionize to protect itself from Council. The current staff is highly skilled, passionate and trustworthy – they are worth their weight in gold. If they left, Silverton would be in huge trouble. Day to day operations would become unmanageable for quite some time. Special projects would not happen.

I had hoped that my removing myself would be seen as a wake up call. That seems to not be the case.

What it would take for me to return:

A complete 180 would have to be taken by the majority of Council regarding the above. Council would have to be committed to holding strong to that course, trust in my ability to lead and trust in our staff to execute on our direction.

I am unwilling to compromise on anything listed here. It is my view that without these fundamentals good governance is not possible.

Feel free to share this information with whomever you like.

I hope this note finds you all well,

Jason Clarke