

## O P I N I O N

## Editorial...

## Moving on from the manager mess

Well that was messy — and expensive.

After two months of investigation and deliberation over complaints by some City of Sisters employees regarding former City Manager Andrew Gorayeb's conduct, the City Council accepted Gorayeb's resignation — with an attached payout of more than \$100,000. When the total bill is calculated — paid leave, attorney's fees, staff time, costs of the investigation — the taxpayers of Sisters will have forked over likely upwards of \$175,000 to close a chapter in its municipal history.

Why was this episode so expensive? Why did the City pay out so much when Gorayeb chose to resign? Deliberations over the matter are privileged, but statements by Council members and by Gorayeb in his resignation letter make the tea leaves pretty easy to read — and point to some areas in which the City must improve its processes going forward.

In his letter of resignation, Gorayeb wrote: "I am greatly troubled by the disproportionately harsh discipline you have imposed on me due to your belief that I have acted 'at times' contrary to the city's 'Encouraged Conduct' policy."

That "encouraged conduct" policy should be made an "expected conduct" policy. The Council must insist that any future city manager conduct himself or herself at all times in an appropriate and professional manner, treating staff, colleagues, council and community with respect and creating a collegial working environment.

Gorayeb further noted that, "prior to this investigation, I have never been notified or warned about deficiencies in my performance or workplace conduct."

Moving forward, the City Council must establish clear, explicit and firm expectations for performance and conduct — and provide

rigorous reviews and assessments of the city manager's conformance to those expectations. If there are issues with the manager's performance or conduct, they must be addressed directly and thoroughly and in a timely manner. That is the only way to be fair to staff, constituents — and the manager.

Mayor Chris Frye explained Gorayeb's sizeable payout this way: "We believed it was in the best interests of the City. Looking at all possibilities including possible litigation and associated costs, as well as staff time, we felt this package was the best way to go."

Councilor David Asson, who voted against the payout, cited the Council's "excess concern regarding the possibility of reprisal litigation."

If, in the future, the City expresses clear, well-defined standards and expectations and provides strong guidance and supervision based on those expectations, they will always be on solid legal ground and need have no fear of any explicit or implicit threat of litigation.

There is no remedy for what has gone before. The City must move forward. That will probably mean hiring an interim city manager, then searching for a permanent one.

It would be a good idea to model the process on the manner in which the school district searches for a superintendent. That includes significant citizen input on what the community wants and needs in a city manager. Citizens should be able to serve on a hiring committee to narrow down the candidate field before the City Council makes its pick.

The City of Sisters has endured two tumultuous and expensive city manager transitions in the space of three years. Some painful and expensive lessons have been learned. It's time to apply them.

Jim Cornelius, News Editor

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## Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Showers likely 63/44	Chance showers 58/37	Partly sunny 66/39	Partly sunny 74/40	Mostly sunny 75/42	Mostly sunny 73/na

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## Robert Reich

## American Voices

Marissa Mayer tells us a lot about why Americans are so angry, and why anti-establishment fury has become the biggest single force in American politics today.

Mayer is CEO of Yahoo. Yahoo's stock lost about a third of its value last year, as the company went from making \$7.5 billion in 2014 to losing \$4.4 billion in 2015. Yet Mayer raked in \$36 million in compensation.

Even if Yahoo's board fires her, her contract stipulates she gets \$54.9 million in severance. In other words, Mayer can't lose. It's another example of no-lose socialism for the rich.

The rest of America works in a different system. Theirs is cutthroat hyper-capitalism — in which wages are shrinking, median household income continues to drop, workers are fired without warning, two-thirds are living paycheck-to-paycheck, and employees are being classified as "independent contractors" without any labor protections at all.

Why is there no-lose socialism for the rich and cutthroat hyper-capitalism for everyone else? Because the rules of the game — including labor laws, pension laws, corporate laws and tax laws — have been crafted by those at the top, and by the lawyers and lobbyists who work for them.

Before we go to the barricades, you should know about another CEO, Hamdi Ulukaya, who's developing a third model — neither no-lose socialism for the rich nor hyper-capitalism for everyone else.

Ulukaya is the Turkish-born founder and CEO of Chobani, the upstart Greek yogurt maker recently valued at as much as \$5 billion.

Last week, Ulukaya announced that he's giving all of his 2,000 full-time workers shares of stock worth up to 10 percent of the privately held company's value when it's sold or goes public, based on each employee's tenure and role at the company.

If the company ends up being valued at \$3 billion, for example, the average employee payout could be \$150,000. Some long-tenured employees could get more than \$1 million.

Ulukaya's decision is just good business. Employees who are partners become even more dedicated to increasing a company's value. Which is why research shows that employee-owned companies tend to outperform the competition.

Ulukaya just increased the odds that Chobani will be valued at more than \$5 billion when it's sold or its shares of stock are available to the public. That will make him, as well as his employees, far wealthier.

As Ulukaya wrote to his workers, the award isn't a gift but "a mutual promise to work together with a shared purpose and responsibility."

A handful of other companies are inching their way in a similar direction. Apple decided in October it would award shares not just to executives or engineers but to hourly workers as well. Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey is giving a third of his Twitter stock (about 1 percent of the company) "to our employee equity pool to reinvest directly in our people."

But the vast majority of American companies are still locked in the old hyper-capitalist model that views workers as costs to be cut rather than as partners to share in success.

That's largely because Wall Street still looks unfavorably on such collaboration. (Remember, Chobani is still privately held.)

The Street remains obsessed with short-term stock performance, and its analysts don't believe hourly workers have much to contribute to the bottom line. But they're prepared to lavish unprecedented rewards on CEOs who don't deserve squat.

Let them compare Yahoo with Chobani in a few years and see which model works best.

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