

City officials attempt to head off questions

EPPLEY GUNSHOT FALLOUT

In addition to releasing the report from an internal investigation that stemmed from the former Keizer city manager discharging a gun in his office, the city provided its own list of questions and answers to accompany the document.

Keizertimes is reprinting that portion of the document entirely with one editor's clarification.

It reads as follows:

1) Why wasn't the City Manager immediately fired after the discharge of the firearm?

Like other employees of the City, the City Manager has constitutional due process rights that provide for an incident to be investigated and the employee the opportunity to respond to any investigation findings and contemplate action.

2) Would other employees be fired immediately if they discharged a firearm on city property?

No, they too would have constitutional due process rights that would provide for an investigation and an opportunity to respond to any investigation findings.

(Editor's clarification: Previously, the Keizertimes specifically asked how the city manager's right to respond to the charges was short-circuited by anything that has happened since. The paper was told Chris Eppley's rights to a reputation were what was violated and any

additional explanation is protected by attorney-client privilege.)

3) Why wasn't the city manager immediately placed on administrative leave?

timeline of events

- MARCH 4: Negligent discharge occurred at approximately 12:00 p.m.**
By 1:00 p.m. The mayor, human resources, safety committee chair and outside legal counsel were contacted.
Initial incident report submitted to human resources by 2:14 p.m.
- MARCH 5:** City Council Executive Session was scheduled for March 8. An Executive Session is closed to the public.
- MARCH 8:** City council held the Executive Session to discuss the incident.
- MARCH 9:** City council retained an outside investigator.
- MARCH 10-12:** Outside investigator was on site conducting witness interviews.
- MARCH 13-15:** Outside investigator conducted additional interviews by phone.
- MARCH 18:** Oregon State Police (OSP) was contacted to conduct an investigation to determine the potential for any criminal charges. OSP was on site conducting witness interviews the same day.

Even though the city manager discharged a firearm, he was not perceived to be a safety risk following the incident and this was not a situation where the city had concerns about his retaliating against employees or using his presence on the job to interfere with the investigation.

4) Why wasn't 911 called after the incident?

911 was not immediately called because the incident did not result in an injury and there did not appear to have been a crime committed that would require immediate police attention. OSP subsequently conducted an investigation at the city's request.

5) Why didn't the Keizer Police Department investigate the incident?

Because the incident involved an employee of the City of Keizer, the Keizer Police Department was not involved as it would have been a conflict of interest.

6) A number of potential criminal violations have been cited. Did this event constitute a crime?

The investigation into potential criminal charges was handled by the Oregon State Police. The Oregon State Police determined there was no crime associated with this incident. Specifically, the Oregon State Police determined that though the city manager's actions may have been careless, they did not rise to the level of recklessness required under the applicable criminal statute.

7) Why did the City provide a severance package?

The severance package was offered to acknowledge the city manager's length of service and contributions to the city, as well as to preclude the filing of any legal claims.

With so many reasons to stay home these days, we are taking away the word *can't*.

At Home Fire Stove

Can is Here to Stay!



Pictured: Heat & Glo Cosmo I-35 with Iron Age Front and Fluted Black Glass Liner

At Home Fire Stove
You Can...

Order Your Hearth or Outdoor Product From the Comfort of Home
Find Professional Showroom Staff, Service Technicians and Installers
Visit Our Showroom - We are Open!

Home FIRE STOVE & GRILL CITY

1695 Market St NE, Salem, OR 97301 www.homefirestove.com
503-364-6339 - CCB # 48630

Trade Ally of **EnergyTrust** of Oregon

As an Energy Trust of Oregon trade ally, we can help you access cash incentives to make it easier to improve your home's energy efficiency.



Richard Riggs
for School Board Position #1

"Rich will put Kids first!"

- ★ Proven leadership & governance experience**
 - Chemeketa's Board of Education: elected in 2007 and re-elected in 2011
 - 20-year Navy veteran with service in Iraq
- ★ Advocate for accessible and equitable schools**
- ★ Steward of your tax dollars**
- ★ Rich's priorities include:** Listening to the community as we deal with after-effects of the pandemic, working to improve high school graduation rates and closing achievement gaps.

Leadership • Integrity • Accountability
RichardRiggs.com

PAID FOR BY FRIENDS OF RICHARD RIGGS