

Council Launches Attack on Editor

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ments made in editorials in January and on Feb. 8, the night millrace area zoning was to be considered by the council.

NEWS UNBIASED

Referring to the use of "secret" for the committee meeting held at the Mayor's house prior to the council meeting in February, Siegenthaler declared that Tugman knew this was false, and that the newspaper could have had a representative there since "all they had to do was ask."

The councilman had a handful of articles and editorials clipped from the Register-Guard. He said after the Monday meeting that he felt the news reporting was unbiased, except for one headline which he said "hurt."

But in repeatedly attacking the editorials, Siegenthaler denied that the minds of councilmen were made up prior to the final zoning meeting a month ago. He also charged that Tugman deliberately picked what he called a "few words" from the city zoning ordinance and "twisted and tore" the meaning.

Siegenthaler continued to cite portions of the zoning ordinance. At the end, he repeatedly said "He (Tugman) was wrong and he knew he was wrong."

DEFIES ANYONE

Councilman Carl Koppe said he defied anyone anywhere to show "collusion" in anything that the council has done over the years.

"There have been no cliques at any time," he declared, "and there have been no secret meetings."

He added that "When Mr. Tugman says zoning of the River-view area was decided in a secret meeting, he did not tell the

truth. What I'd like to know is this—should members of the city council get up and cower to any individual?"

Councilman Robert Booth had about the same opinions as the rest. He added, however, that "I'm glad this is in the open. Many people sincerely believe the council has secret meetings. Thus any actions we take are under a cloud."

"I hope," Booth said, "that through this motion the people of Eugene will become acquainted with the true facts."

Koppe and Siegenthaler again spoke up. They repeated some of the previous arguments, and Siegenthaler concluded that "We don't want a fight. We want calm, collected appraisal of methods. We're hoping for better government." He also indicated that through front-page newspaper consideration, the people might become acquainted with the council's side of the story.

LITTLE TO SAY

Councilman Ed Cone, also a legislative candidate, had little to say. He commented that when the voters elected the councilmen, they did so in good faith. He said he feels the council has been keeping confidence with the electors.

Larry Watson was a little lighter with his comments about the editorials in the Register-Guard, but concluded that "I think we are right." He said that "I don't always agree with Mr. Tugman. But I think the policy of the paper has been fair. I don't think we should get too emotional in disapproval of others."

Mayor Johnson backed the members of the council in defending committee meetings.

The mayor, also a candidate for the state legislature, explained that the council has always operated on a committee system in the more than nine years that he has been a part of city government. Anyone can attend the meetings, he said, since they are not closed. "They are open at any time."

OFFERS CHALLENGE

He said citizens can obtain information at the city manager's office as to where and when the committees meet. "These," he said, "are the meetings referred to as secret." He declared that "I challenge them as secret meetings."

He then asked for further comment.

An immediate roll call vote brought unanimous adoption of the motion to adjourn, and gave the mayor permission to appoint a council committee to draft the council's formal statement of policy on its overall actions.

After the meeting, Mayor Johnson said he isn't sure that he'll limit the committee to three councilmen or whether he'll call entire membership as a committee of the whole. He had written the names of Siegenthaler, Booth and Koppe on a piece of paper which he explained will be the nucleus of the committee.

Johnson said he isn't sure that he'll call an independent citizens' committee to study the council's methods of operation. He said however, that he will "mull it over" and wait for council statement before taking any action.

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Siegenthaler Letter Critical

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believe you have given this zoning a fraction of the study we have.

Now let's have a general discussion of the "private" and "secret" meetings. Last week I attended four council committee meetings, consuming at least seven hours. Every one of these considered matters referred to it by the council in public meeting,

Boat Explodes

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to Watkins, who was stunned by the explosion.

The accident occurred a mile and a half from shore as the three men were on their first voyage of the season, planning to spend several days "outside" in search of Chinook salmon.

Willis was not a regular crew member, going along "for the ride." His relatives live in Albany.

The swamped vessel washed ashore Tuesday morning, 15 miles north of Florence after other vessels tried unsuccessfully to tow her into Florence.

Watkins and Tatum were taken to a doctor's office in Florence and treated for their cuts and burns. Both were resting at home Tuesday.

Both men are long-time Florence residents, and both are veterans of previous harbor mishaps.

PREFERENCE

MILFORD, Conn.—Assistant Fire Supt. Wilfred J. Dugay has been demoted to regular fireman at his own request. Dugay said he liked the regular fireman's working hours better.

just as was done in the case cited above. There was no reporter or other representative of your paper at any of these meetings. You know perfectly well that these meetings are held—the council meetings would be interminable if the committees did not do the leg work between council meetings, and go out and actually look at the sites of some of our problems. Are these, too, "secret" meetings? In case you want to listen in, most of them are held in the Osburn Hotel dining room at noon. We have lunch and discuss our problems—often until 1:30, 2:00 and even 2:30. Dozens of people see us there every week.

What do you want us to do? Should we call you every time we have a meeting? You will be meeting pretty regularly, I assure you. And you will be bored stiff most of the time. And I can also assure you that if you or a reporter is present, there will sometimes be discussion that must be "off the record." The one unfortunate incident when a reporter was denied the right to sit with us involved a very delicate piece of negotiation when publicity might have had a very adverse effect on Eugene's relationship with a neighboring city. If we had been sure that the discussion would have been handled in a confidential manner until the negotiations were completed, there would have been no objection to having him there. I might add

(that some of us sincerely regret that the incident happened, and will guard against it happening again in this manner.)

I think it fair, finally, for you to clarify what you mean when you imply something dishonest or dishonorable when your councilmen have these so-called "secret" or "private" meetings:

(1) Please define what you mean by these terms and tell us what distinguishes the Feb. 2 meeting from any other committee meeting.

(2) Please tell us what procedure you think we should follow to overcome these odious habits of ours and still get our city business done. Do you think we have an obligation to notify you every time we have a committee meeting? If not, how are we to judge which ones you should be invited to attend? If so, will you or your representative attend all meetings so you get the full story, give an accurate report stating plainly that this is a committee action and not a council meeting, and respect our confidences in those rare cases when it is necessary? This letter has been submitted to most of the councilmen for their comments. They are in general agreement with its contents, although reserving independent thought on its details. We feel we are entitled to an apology and to clarification of what you think our procedure should be.

Yours very truly,
Ray F. Siegenthaler
Councilman, Ward 4

North Bend Defeats Consolidation Move

COOS BAY (AP)—Residents of the Coos Bay and Empire School districts voted Saturday to consolidate. But voters of North Bend defeated the proposal.

The vote on the measure to merge the three districts: Coos Bay, 1,000 yes, 449 no; Empire, 473 yes, 122 no; North Bend, 651 no, 394 yes.

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What "Nut" said the
Thousands are peep at the
weak low in energy. 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