

## OPINION

### VOICE of the CHIEFTAIN

# Call to investigate Joseph council is correct

The abrupt resignation of Joseph City Administrator Larry Braden late last week comes as a shocking blow to the city at a time when the city government needs an administrator on board — budget season.

What is more concerning though, is the alleged harassment cited by Braden in his resignation letter, which was read at an emergency City Council meeting Friday, April 16.

Given the council will have an investigation done by city attorney Wyatt Baum, we at the *Chieftain* feel any words written here need to be used cautiously so as to not give a view of pointing fingers or taking sides, nor to in any way impact the investigation.

That said, this is a situation that needs commented on.

The allegations should be taken seriously, and we are sure the investigation into them will be thorough. The call to investigate is absolutely correct.

Prior to his resignation letter, Braden cited problems he was having performing his job, as it seemed there was confusion over his role as the city administrator. He claimed the city was not in compliance with the charter, and in the April 1 meeting said doing his job in a functional way was “impossible.”

Regardless of the legitimacy of this complaint, the *Chieftain* does recommend every person on the council re-read the city charter and know what not only their own role in the city is, but the roles of everyone in the city government. Then follow them.

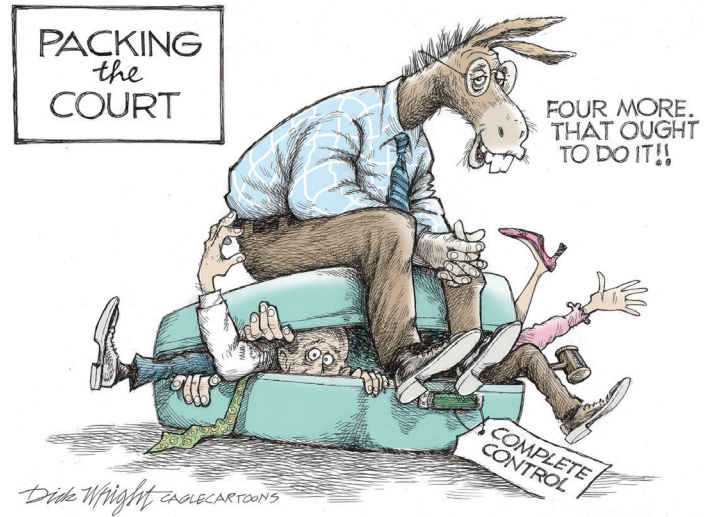
Reading and knowing the charter leaves those on the council without excuse in the future. If this were to happen again, nobody would be able to plead ignorance, and anyone doing so would have to be carefully looked at.

But that’s only a suggestion for the future. What about in the present?

Mayor Belinda Buswell is right to recommend an all-hands-on-deck approach to getting the budget done, as it will be a much more daunting task to undertake with Braden gone.

Councilwoman Lisa Collier is also right to recommend the council members stay clear of the inner workings of City Hall — even during this budget season. The desire to help is noble, but even a simple allegation that someone on the council is causing problems is enough to warrant a judicious step like this. It would smell very fishy if an individual insisted on helping in this instance.

The investigation needs time to play out, as well. And if, as Braden has alleged, his job was being hindered — especially intentionally — and he was being harassed by a member of the council, at the very least, that council member should follow in Braden’s footsteps — and submit their resignation letter.



### LETTER to the EDITOR

#### What you can do for your country

Nowadays, I hear employers talking about being unable to hire workers for the jobs they have. I am told that some people are not taking responsibility for their bills and rent, because the government’s stimulus package is providing extended unemployment and because renters believe that their landlords are not able to evict them. I would rather not believe this is true.

When the pandemic hit the United States, people lost their jobs, making it difficult to pay rent and buy groceries. The economy of the country was in danger of tanking and something had to be done. The administration with the approval of the majority of voters decided to provide a stimulus for the economy by putting almost \$2 trillion in

the hands of lower-income families, state and local government agencies and small businesses.

The idea is to stimulate the economy by giving dollars to those in the most need to be spent on necessities, and those dollars will “trickle-up” to benefit the economy of the country. This is the opposite of past efforts to boost the economy by providing huge tax breaks to corporations with the expectation that the tax breaks will “trickle-down” to benefit everyone.

Whether the “trickle-up” or “trickle-down” method is used to stimulate the economy, neither plan can succeed without the cooperation of those who receive the boost. If the corporations use their tax cuts to benefit only their shareholders and their top management, the lower-wage earners and the unemployed are no better off. Similarly, if the stimu-

lus to benefit low-wage workers and the unemployed is not used to get jobs or to improve an opportunity to get better jobs, pay bills and rent, there will be no benefit to the economy.

The United States of America is a free country only as long as all of its citizens accept their responsibilities to make its systems work. This includes responsibility for our capitalistic economy, our systems of education and health care, and voting for and keeping in touch with those who operate our government. Abraham Lincoln said that the U.S. is “government of the people, by the people, and for the people.” President John F. Kennedy said, “Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.”

Freedom is not free. Let’s do our part.  
Evelyn Swart  
Joseph

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