

PAID POLITICAL AD

Verbal Political Assassination At Warrenton City Commission Meeting

Rick Newton used his position as an elected Warrenton City Commissioner at the October 9th public meeting of the Warrenton City Commission to stage a blatantly political act of attempting to publicly humiliate John Washington who is running for the office of Warrenton Mayor.

Rick is an openly biased member of the Warrenton Commission dedicated to re-electing the current mayor Henry Balensifer. Rick obviously feels that he can say or do anything he wishes in a public commission meeting in the Warrenton City Hall public meeting room sitting up on the dais with the other commissioners next to him in front of all citizens and staff attending that meeting including reporters from the Daily Astorian and The Columbia Press newspapers.

Rick decided to call a Warrenton police officer up to assist him in taking into Warrenton police custody a campaign sign that Rick had removed from the property of Eric Williamson located at 1690 NW Warrenton Drive and place it in evidence with the Warrenton Police Department. Rick stated that John Washington had trespassed on the subject property and that charges would be filed against Mr. Washington for that offense.

At no time did Rick Newton attempt to ask John Washington if he had received permission from anyone at the subject property to place the sign which Rick removed. Rick seems to have nothing better to do than drive up and down NW Warrenton Drive and look for John Washington campaign signs, and go to the owners of those properties and persuade these owners to have the sign removed. Rick never seeks out facts of situations he feels passionate about, he just acts and does not worry about being wrong. It is obvious to me that this was a planned political attack intended to humiliate Mr. Washington in front of the people attending the public meeting of the Warrenton City Commission including local newspaper reporters.

It turns out that John Washington had received permission from the 19-year-old son (Brandan Williamson) of the property owner who is presently in Alaska. Unfortunately, the son did not tell his father he had given this permission. Because John was being threatened with being charged for trespassing by Rick Newton, he secured a written explanation from the son of the property owner stating that permission had been granted to place the sign. If Rick Newton would have just asked Mr. Washington if he had obtained permission, he would have found out the facts and not acted so rashly.

On Saturday, October 6th John Washington was having a public "Meet & Greet" meeting to allow for people who did not know him to come in and talk with him. Rick Newton came to this meeting and went into a rant stating that all John Washington's candidate for mayor election material was lies and BULLSHIT while a 16-year-old youth was present in front of him. Rick obviously feels that he can say or do anything, anytime, and anywhere because he is

a politically powerful person. John Washington telephoned Mayor Henry Balensifer to complain about Rick's activity. Henry Balensifer informed John that he had no control over Rick Newton when he was acting as a private citizen. However, Henry Balensifer did allow Mr. Washington a little over three minutes at the public Warrenton Commission Meeting to make a public complaint about Rick Newton and his public conduct as a current commissioner.

In the past three weeks John Washington has had many "Dirty Politics" attacks carried out on him from unnamed sources who call up people who own businesses in the Warrenton area who want to support him in his quest to be elected mayor of Warrenton and allow him to place signs on their properties. After these signs are in place, some mysterious person calls these business owners and informs them that they better remove those signs or they will be losing future business from whomever this secret person is. This has happened on at least two separate occasions, plus the current situation.

The League of Women's voters was having a gathering of all people running for prominent public office in Clatsop County at Astoria High School on Wednesday, October 3rd. Some mysterious person telephoned this organization and informed them that John Washington would not be attending this meeting. John Washington did not call and he does not know who had done this. Fortunately, the organizer of this event still made up a name plate for John and he did in fact attend.

Based on the events described above, I believe that Rick Newton is the secret person calling local business owners and pressuring them to remove John Washington campaign signs using intimidation of lost business in the future if they do not comply. I cannot prove this, I can only point out the effort he went to in order to stage the public humiliation of Mr. Washington at the public Warrenton Commission meeting fits the profile of a person carrying out a personal attack using "Dirty Politics" as his weapon of choice.

I do not know if the three other commissioners present at the commission meeting who witnessed this event unfold were aware that Rick Newton was going to stage this event. More importantly, I do not know if they intend to publicly censure him for conduct unbecoming a current commission member. I feel Rick should be strongly advised to resign his position as he has clearly demonstrated he has very little self-control and little or no understanding of how a Warrenton Commission Member should conduct himself personally in public or at commission meetings.

John Washington is currently running as a candidate to be the next mayor of Warrenton. John is a one issue candidate which is TRANSPARENCY of how the current Warrenton Commission works. John has prepared a campaign document that explains six specific incidents he feels this commis-

sion is regularly concealing from the public by forcing residents of Warrenton/Hammond to attend public meetings if they want to know what is happening in the city. In agreement with John, I do not feel this is a reasonable position to take as most people work and do not have the time or energy to go to all of the meetings they would need to go to be properly informed. John went to great effort to confirm the accuracy of the information in his campaign material that is being passed out to 2500 separate homes by John and his many volunteers. I, Scott Widdicombe, am one of the main contributors of information that John reviewed and confirmed from knowledgeable sources before he decided to include the information in his document.

I am proud of the contribution of information I made. Everything I ever do that is going to be made public is prepared in written form so I do not misspeak. I am very confident that if the Warrenton City Commission wants to challenge the accuracy of my information by writing a press release to be turned over to the local newspapers to challenge the accuracy of this information, it will be discovered the information in that election document is in fact accurate and can be confirmed by any reasonable newspaper reporter. However, I would have to pay if I want my point of view in the public eye. If I am wrong, I will accept any reasonable proof of my making an incorrect statement, and I will make a public apology for my comments.

However, if I am going to be challenged that I am not totally 100% accurate with my statements even though my comment is basically sound, I will not accept this as a reasonable type of criticism. If the commission is offering no specific logical proof that a newspaper reporter could follow up on to see if I made a mistake and is just using SPIN to try to discredit me in the eyes of the public with innuendo rather than facts that can be checked and verified, I will not accept that type of insubstantial criticism.

I am now convinced that nothing will ever cause the Warrenton City Commission to provide the information I feel each Warrenton/Hammond Voter should have in order to be well informed. Therefore, regardless of which candidate is elected as the next mayor, I feel there is only one way that the change that I believe in can come about and that is to create a NEW Charter Amendment for the City of Warrenton. The new amendment would state clearly and completely the specific information that the city government would have to provide to their voters listed by the specific description of each item to be included, where it would be placed on the Warrenton City Website so the public could read it from their homes at their convenience, what periods the information would include, and by when this new requirement to provide information to the voters would have to be fully implemented.

I have not decided yet when I intend to move forward with this process as I want to consider all my options.

Paid for by Scott Widdicombe