



BAKER CITY, OREGON CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING
JUNE 27, 2023 - 6:00 PM
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MAYOR:
Matthew Diaz
COUNCILORS
Johnny Waggoner Sr.
Jason Spriet
Dean Guyer
Beverly Calder
Raymond Duman
Nathan Hodgdon
CITY MANAGER
Jonathan Cannon

Call to Order/Introduction

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Call to Order | The meeting was called to order by Mayor Matthew Diaz at 6:00 pm. |
| 2. Pledge of Allegiance and Invocation | Councilor Hodgdon led the council in invocation followed by Councilor Calder leading the council in the Pledge of Allegiance. |
| 3. Roll Call | <p>Roll call was called by City recorder, Rheann Weitz and answered by Mayor Matthew Diaz, and Councilors Guyer, Waggoner Sr., Hodgdon, Calder, and Duman. Councilor Spriet was absent.</p> <p>Also in attendance were HR Manager, Stacy Spriet, Public Works Director Joyce Bornstedt, Police Chief Ty Duby, and Planning Director Holly Kerns.</p> |
| 4. Agenda Additions, Deletions, Modifications | <p>There were 3 additions on the agenda; city manager pro tem employment agreement, executive session for labor negotiations, and collective bargaining agreement approval.</p> <p>The councilors had some discussions on deleting and moving additional items on the agenda. They discussed deleting item 9, revenue options discussion, moving item 10, 2025 OMA conference presentation to the July 11 meeting, and moving item 5, public comment to the end of the meeting. There was some discussion on whether or not they had agreed, in their council rules, that the public comment should be at the beginning or the end of the meeting.</p> |

MOTION MADE BY: Nathan Hodgdon

MOTION: delete item 9 and 10 and move to the July 11th meeting

SECONDED: Dean Guyer

IN FAVOR: Unanimous

OPPOSED: None

Motion passes

MOTION MADE BY: Johnny Waggoner Sr.

MOTION: move item 5, public comment, to the end of the meeting

SECONDED: Dean Guyer

IN FAVOR: Matt Diaz

OPPOSED: Nathan Hodgdon, Ray Duman and Beverly Calder

Motion fails

a. City Manager Pro Tem Employment

Agreement - Addition	
b. Executive Session - Labor Negotiations - Addition	
c. Potential Collective Bargaining Agreement Approval - Addition	
5. Public Comment	During public comment, councilors reminded citizens that all comments needed to be directed to the council as a whole, not directly to one individual. There were 11 citizens who spoke on the controversial Facebook post that Mayor Matthew Diaz had posted to his personal social media page. They all spoke in support of the LGBTQ+ and Jewish community members. They spoke in regard to the Mayor needing to resign from his seat for not showing support to the entire community. The speakers were: Cyndi Wuner, Gary Dielman, Daniel McQuisten, Marie Taylor, Vicki Johnson, Jess Defrees, Jeana Phillips, Whit Deschner, Alice Trindle, Susan Triplett, and Victoria Royal. In addition to these public comments, there were a number of letters sent in to councilors as well. They are attached as Exhibit A. There were 3 citizens who also spoke on the Facebook post by the Mayor, but spoke in support. They stated that he is supportive and loving of all community members, and his point was just taken out of context. Those citizens were: Robyn Hodgdon, Christopher Wiseman, and Keriann Wiseman. Sam Roberts spoke on the budget issue. He stated that he was concerned that at the last city council meeting the council spent an hour more talking about the golf course than they did the fire department. He stated that the golf board mentioned that they had 800 members, yet that was not even a dent in the total population of Baker City. He expressed concern about the amount of money taken out of the street fund and was worried that with crumbling streets, tourism would cease in the community. He stated that because our finances are not in order, we will lose everything if they can't get control over it. He wanted to see more discussion on revenue-building options. Shawn Peterson wanted to speak on the effects that transgenderism has on children. He urged the council and the citizens to educate themselves, whether or not they agreed with what he had to say or not. Amanda Cox asked the council to quit creating a divide within the city. She stated that if this continued, the city would crumble.
6. Barger - Noxious Odor Ordinance Discussion	Stephanie Barger presented to the council her frustrations with a neighbor who grows marijuana. She stated that she, and many of her neighbors, are having a difficult time with the odor that is coming from their neighbor's home. She stated that she had a few letters to give to the council from herself and her neighbors to discuss in more detail. She stated that the neighbor is directing their fan directly into her backyard, and she is unable to hardly breathe for many months out of the year. She mentioned to the council that she has reached out to her neighbors many times, with no solution. She also stated that she has had code enforcement out on multiple occasions as well. She asked the council if they would look over the odor ordinance that Pendleton has put in place (she gave the councilors a copy of said ordinance).

After Stephanie's presentation, Councilor Calder asked the City Recorder to read a letter that was sent in by Mary Tomlinson (attached for reference under Exhibit A). The letter was in opposition of Mayor Diaz and his actions posted on social media. Once read, Mandy Diaz asked if she could come up and read a letter as well. The letter that she read was in regard to Mayor Diaz's character and love for other people.

Mayor Diaz stated that he was in a unique position, but he wasn't unapproachable. He stated that he was hearing a lot of talk about how he was being judgmental, but everyone else was being judgemental of him. He stated that no one had asked him to talk and that he was willing to talk to anyone who would talk with him. Councilor Calder stated that it was untrue that no one had approached him, and that he had a conversation just earlier that day with someone. He agreed that he spoke wrong, and that one person had approached him to talk, and that it was a good conversation and he welcomed anyone else to come and do the same.

Councilor Calder made a statement (attached for reference under Exhibit B) followed by a few motions.

MOTION MADE BY: Beverly Calder

MOTION: Include the goal of "improving communication and citizen engagement to foster an environment of inclusivity" in the opening message of each meeting of the council.

SECONDED: Ray Duman

IN FAVOR: Nathan Hodgdon

OPPOSED: Matt Diaz, Dean Guyer and Johnny Waggoner Sr.
Motion fails

MOTION MADE BY: Beverly Calder

MOTION: Post a statement of solidarity and support for all LGBTQ+ and Jewish members of our community, in addition to all others that have been marginalized, on the opening page of the City website.

SECONDED: There was no second

IN FAVOR: None

OPPOSED: None

Motion fails

MOTION MADE BY: Beverly Calder

MOTION: Create opportunity to partner with organizations representing communities targeted and harmed by bigotry and compel Matt Diaz to resign from his position.

SECONDED: Ray Duman

IN FAVOR:

OPPOSED: Matt Diaz, Nathan Hodgdon, Johnny Waggoner Sr., and Dean Guyer
Motion fails.

Councilor Hodgdon mentioned that he would like to see a DEI policy made and

put on the city's website. Councilor Calder stated that she just motioned for that to happen. Councilor Hodgdon's response was that he thinks of a "post" as something that comes and goes, not something permanent, and he would like to see something permanent.

MOTION MADE BY: Nathan Hodgdon

MOTION: Create a DEI policy to be put on the City's website

SECONDED: Johnny Waggoner Sr.

IN FAVOR: Unanimous

OPPOSED: None

Motion passes

During the motion and vote, Councilor Calder left the dais.

7. Tree Board Application

The Tree Board let the Council know that one of their members had multiple no shows, so they were opening up that spot on the tree board. They had one applicant, Anna Fornelli who came to tell the Council why she was interested on being a part of the tree board. She explained that she loved to be outdoors and was always looking for ways to be involved in the community. She stated that her neighbor, a tree board member, asked her and her husband to join them on the earth day clean up they did in April and she really enjoyed it so she thought this would be a good fit for her.

MOTION MADE BY: Nathan Hodgdon

MOTION: Appoint Anna to the tree board

SECONDED: Ray Duman

IN FAVOR: Matt Diaz, Johnny Waggoner Sr., Dean Guyer

OPPOSED: None - Jason Spriet and Beverly Calder were not in attendance for vote

Motion Passed.

Old Business

8. Consent Agenda

2 items on the consent agenda were meeting minutes from May 9 and May 23. Councilor Calder had given the city recorder a couple of amendments to the minutes on May 9, and Councilor Hodgdon made one amendment to the minutes for May 23.

MOTION MADE BY: Dean Guyer

MOTION: Approve the meeting minutes from May 9 and May 23, with the amendments made.

SECONDED: Nathan Hodgdon

IN FAVOR: Unanimous

OPPOSED: None

Motion Passed.

a. May 9, 2023 City Council Meeting Minutes

b. May 23, 2023 City Council Meeting Minutes

9. Council Rules Discussion

Mayor Diaz brought up that lines 49 and line 56 state different rules for the same thing. Line 49 reads that public comment is 5 minutes, while the council committee recommends 3 minutes. Line 56 reads that public comment is 3 minutes. He questioned what they should allow since their rules state 2 separate things. Councilor Guyer stated that when a lot of people want to comment, 3 minutes is plenty of time.

Councilor Calder mentioned that she had a request from the city recorder to send a copy of the city council rules because they were lost on the computer. She stated that changes were not made to them. The city recorder mentioned that while looking at the agenda for the meeting that the city council rules were adopted, the attachment provided was different than the one they were looking at, and the changes had been made. Due to all of the confusion, the council asked for City staff to review previous meetings to come to a conclusion.

MOTION MADE BY: Nathan Hodgdon

MOTION: Ask City staff to review recording for April 11th meeting to determine what changes were made.

SECONDED: Johnny Waggoner Sr.

IN FAVOR: Unanimous

OPPOSED: None

Motion Passed.

New Business

10. Ordinance 3391 Amending the Baker City Development Code Ordinance 3296

Planning Director Holly Kerns presented Ordinance 3391, which amended the Baker City Development Code Ordinance 3296, which would allow for residential caretaker units to be built and used.

MOTION MADE BY: Nathan Hodgdon

MOTION: Read Ordinance 3391

SECONDED:

IN FAVOR: Unanimous

OPPOSED: None

Motion Passed.

MOTION MADE BY: Johnny Waggoner Sr.

MOTION: Read Ordinance 3391 for a 2nd time, by total only

SECONDED:

IN FAVOR: Unanimous

OPPOSED: None

Motion Passed.

11. Housing Production Strategy Review and Discussion with Planning Commission

Planning Director Holly Kerns and Planner Madison Brossett discussed the housing needs in the community. They were joined by 4 of the 7 planning committee members as well as 2 consultants they are working with on this project. They talked a lot about the housing needs of the community, for all income levels, and they also discussed options for revenue to move forward with the project.

Planner, Madison Brossett presented a power point along with the 2 consultants and opened the floor to councilors for questions, who didn't have many.

Councilor Calder re-joined the council at the dais and mentioned that the current need for housing is over 130 currently. There was more discussion on the needs of the community, and the council and the planning commission unanimously decided that having a work session together would be a great idea to get a plan going to move forward. The work session was scheduled for 5 pm on Wednesday, July 19.

12. Resolution #3940 - 2023 Wildfire Season Staffing Grant

City recorder, Rheann Weitz, stated that resolution 3940 was for a staffing grant to cover overtime costs in the fire department. She explained that the city has received and accepted the funds for last year's wildfire season and because the funds were received in June of this year, they need to go into the 22-23 budget.

MOTION MADE BY: Beverly Calder
MOTION: Adopt resolution 3940
SECONDED: Johnny Waggoner Sr.
IN FAVOR: Unanimous
OPPOSED: None
Motion Passed.

13. Resolution #3941 Declaring to Receive State Revenues

Rheann Weitz stated that resolution 3941 gives the city authority to receive state funds such as alcohol tax and tobacco tax.

MOTION MADE BY: Beverly Calder
MOTION: adopt resolution 3941
SECONDED: Nathan Hodgdon
IN FAVOR: Unanimous
OPPOSED: None
Motion Passed.

14. Resolution #3942 Adopting the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget

Rheann Weitz stated that resolution 3942 was the resolution to adopt the 23-24 budget.

Councilor Calder motioned to adopt the resolution as is. Councilor Guyer stated that he had an amendment. He stated that he had a discrepancy with the amount of money they were allotted for the golf course. He stated that he didn't think they should borrow more than what they needed. Councilor Calder stated that Kent Bailey, the city's financial advisor, told them to keep it in there.

Councilor Duman agreed and stated that his understanding was that it would kick into next year as a placeholder. Councilor Waggoner agreed with Councilor Guyer and stated that he didn't understand the need to borrow more in a loan than needed.

MOTION MADE BY: Dean Guyer
MOTION: Adopt resolution 3942 with the following amendments: The transfer to the golf course does not exceed more than \$434,780
SECONDED: Johnny Waggoner Sr.
IN FAVOR:

OPPOSED: Matt Diaz, Nathan Hodgdon, Beverly Calder, Ray Duman
Motion fails

MOTION MADE BY: Beverly Calder
MOTION: Adopt Resolution 3942 as it is.

SECONDED: Nathan Hodgdon

IN FAVOR: Ray Duman

OPPOSED: Matt Diaz, Dean Guyer and Johnny Waggoner Sr.
Motion fails

Joyce Bornstedt mentioned that if they do not adopt a budget by 6/30/2023, they will not be allowed to operate any city business starting 7/1/2023. She also explained that by putting in a placeholder loan, like the DEQ loan, you don't have to actually borrow any more than you need.

Councilor Calder added that by putting in the full \$700,000, it gives them the authority to borrow if needed, but it doesn't mean they have to. She mentioned that they have an obligation to the citizens and to the staff to pass a budget tonight.

Councilor Guyer stated that their responsibility was to the citizens, and Councilor Waggoner Sr. agreed and said that he isn't borrowing any more than they need to, just to be able to blow it on something else.

MOTION MADE BY: Dean Guyer

MOTION: Adopt resolution 3942 to enter into negotiations with regards to a memorandum of understanding of the financial obligations of each party associated with the golf course project.

SECONDED: Nathan Hodgdon

IN FAVOR: Matt Diaz, Ray Duman, Johnny Waggoner Sr.

OPPOSED: Beverly Calder

Motion passes

Councilor Calder stated that she opposed the motion for one reason, and that was because it did not show that they were honoring their partnership with ALORA.

Councilor Waggoner Sr. stated that that contract would be up in 2025 and he wouldn't sign off on it to continue the partnership.

MOTION MADE BY: Nathan Hodgdon

MOTION: adopt resolution 3942

SECONDED: Beverly Calder

IN FAVOR: Ray Duman, Johnny Waggoner Sr. and Dean Guyer

OPPOSED: Matt Diaz

Motion passes

15. City Manager Pro Tem Employment Agreement - Addition

Human Resource Manager, Stacy Spriet asked the Council if they had looked over the City manager pro tem employment agreement that she had sent them and if they had any questions. No questions, but they asked Jon France to come up to discuss it. Councilor Duman asked Jon France if he had any

questions or concerns about the agreement. He stated that the only thing that worried him was the fact that after July 20th, they would have no fire chief, and he wasn't really looking to become one, so if he needed to step into that role, he would expect some compensation for that.

Councilor Calder stated that Mark Bennett was already working on something that would help the Fire Department, so there really wouldn't be any need for that. Councilor Hodgdon stated that if worse happens, and he ends up having to fulfill those roles, they can revisit compensation. Jon France was okay with that.

MOTION MADE BY:Nathan Hodgdon

MOTION: Approve the City manager pro tem employment agreement with a start date of 6-28-2023.

SECONDED: Dean Guyer

IN FAVOR: Unanimous

OPPOSED: None

Motion Passed.

Updates and Future Items

16. Council Committee Updates

Councilor Hodgdon mentioned that he had a conversation with Baker City Downtown, who stated they still had no received a contract from the City to use the room in City Hall. He stated that the last they had heard was that the contract had been sent to the City attorney for review. City recorder, Rheann Weitz, stated that she wasn't sure on the status of that but she would check with the attorney in the morning.

Councilor Guyer stated that he met with the Chamber of Commerce and they were preparing for Miners Jubilee, and that all of their vendor sites were full.

17. City Manager / Director Updates

City manager Jon Cannon was not present at the meeting. No other directors had any comments for the Council.

18. City Council Comments

Councilor Duman stated that the spirit the Council needed to have was with private partnerships, like the one that the City has with the golf course.

Councilor Guyer and Waggoner Sr. both shouted out the work being done in the Fire Department. They both spent their day on Sunday in the fire department, as they had no staff for the day, and they commended all of the hard work that the fire fighters were putting in to fight a fire while being short-staffed. Councilor Guyer mentioned working with the fire department to get volunteers as support for firefighters when they are on a fire. He stated that he thought it would be nice if there were volunteers who could bring food and water to them during these times.

Councilor Waggoner Sr. stated that he would like to see the council come up with ideas to fund an assistant chief at the fire department.

19. Upcoming Agenda Items

City recorder, Rheann Weitz, went over the upcoming agenda items with the Council. These items included;
Revenue options discussion that was moved from today's meeting
2025 OMA conference presentation that was moved from today's meeting
3rd reading of Ordinance 3391
Possible Elkhorn Industrial Land offer
R3 ordinance and board appointment

	Cat TNR presentation by Richard Haines Resolution 3943 - adopting public works standards and specifications Resolution 3944 - Ambulance disposition IT costs update City Council Compensation discussion
20. Executive Session - Labor Negotiations - Addition	The city council entered into an executive session to discuss labor negotiations. No public citizens or news media are allowed to attend.
21. Potential Collective Bargaining Agreement Approval - Addition	Council came out of the executive session to approve the collective bargaining agreement with the police department.

MOTION MADE BY: Dean Guyer

MOTION: Accept the collective bargaining agreement with the police department.

SECONDED: Johnny Waggoner Sr.

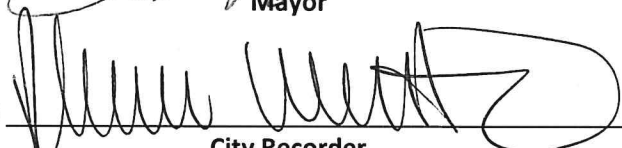
IN FAVOR: Unanimous

OPPOSED: None

Motion Passed.

Adjourn

22. Adjourn	The meeting adjourned at 10:14 pm.
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Signed:	
	Mayor
Attest:	
	City Recorder

A link to this City Council meeting can be found www.bakercity.com or upon request to the City Recorder.

EXHIBIT A

Let me try this again, sorry!

Hello Councilors,

I wanted to take the time to express my concerns regarding the recent public hate and vitriol that has been presented and then defended by current Mayor Diaz of Baker City Council.

I assume you are able to recognize the absolute harm this provides for members of our community who are part of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community, as well as those that are Jewish or of Jewish descent. The level of hate that has been escalating across our country unfortunately has not escaped our county. The rise in anti-seminism and attacks on the rights of and physical persons of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community cannot be overstated. One needs to only look at laws being proposed and/or passed by states to see this in action. Another incredible source of information is the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#), which is an organization that fights hate and extremism through legal processes.

We are a community that is full of loving, supportive, welcoming people and spaces. This is who we are. What is being represented, however, is having repercussions not only for our community members targeted, their families and allies, but also economically for our county as a whole.

However, the truth of the matter is that there are some people that believe and support what was shown, and the defense of this anti-semitic, anti-LGBTQ2SIA+ rhetoric by Mr. Diaz. It is abhorrent and reprehensible conduct unbecoming of a public figure that represents our community. I am asking that Mayor Diaz immediately resign. His actions and words are not representative of his constituents, nor of Baker County as a whole.

The impact of Mr. Diaz's initial conduct, and now continued rhetoric via his defense of his actions on his public social media page, is concerning not only for seasonal, but long-term economics for our community. People are not going to come to an area where they or their family and friends are not supported, welcomed or included. There are already many instances of canceled/changed reservations, people passing through that choose to keep going, and understandable negative statements being said about our community. I do not know if you are aware how extensively this has spread, and the erroneous perception of who we are as a community as a result.

People are not going to remain nor relocate here to work at a hospital in a community where not only is the hospital and emergency services not supported, but members of the community are openly attacked with silence as the only response from our representatives. People are not going to move to have their children attend, nor work for an educational system, based in a community where they and others are not openly supported and included in the community. People are not going to remain nor relocate to an area where they or their family and friends are not supported, welcomed or included. People are not going to spend money to support a community that does not value the people. We are, and must, do better.

As a business owner with family, friends, tourists, and community members of all ages impacted by this hateful rhetoric, I am asking that Mayor Diaz immediately resign. His actions and words are not representative of his constituents, nor are they representative of our county as a whole. Barring that level of acknowledgment of the harm he has done, I am asking that the council remove Mr. Diaz as mayor. In addition, I respectfully request that you make a statement reasserting and clarifying what Baker County, our residents and businesses, do stand for. We are a vibrant, beautiful community full of

loving, welcoming, and supportive people and spaces. That is who we are, and that is what we stand for. I ask that you reiterate this, and that you visibly and loudly stand with members of our community who have and continued to be harmed by these actions, and the ensuing silence from this body.

Thank you for your time and consideration. It is imperative that people of our community, and those that come to visit, are reminded what we really are about as a whole. Silence is not the answer. We cannot assume that people know, or will seek out information on their own as to what our policies are or seek out for what we stand. Policies and actions must be emphatically and clearly reaffirmed and stated, visible, and reiterated time and again. History and current experiences have taught us this.

"If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen to side with the oppressor."--Desmond Tutu

Please feel free to reach out with any questions or considerations. I look forward to speaking with you at tomorrow's council meeting.

In addition, I respectfully request that in case of my absence, this letter be read by the city recorder to be part of the public record for the meeting scheduled June 27, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully,
Jeana

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Jeana Phillips (She/Her), Proprietor
Betty's Books, LLC
1813 Main St.
Baker City, OR.
541-523-7551

Thanks to two Baker City citizens, Mary Miller and Cynthia Roberts, City Councilors have been informed that Mayor Matthew Diaz posted on Facebook a few days ago the image of a Swastika surrounded by Rainbow flags.

Mayor Diaz's behavior is disgusting and morally corrupt, below the position of any person, whose responsibility it is to represent **all** citizens of Baker City.

I am **personally** offended, because I have a 22-year-old transgender grandson, whom I dearly love. She just graduated from college with a Bachelor's Degree and is going on to graduate school to get a Master's Degree in social work.

I'm also offended, because I served 8 years in the Oregon National Guard, which defends **all** of us Oregonians and does not belittle persons for reason of their sexual preference.

My fervent wish is that Mayor Diaz immediately resign from Baker City Council for violating his Oath of Office to abide by the Oregon and United States constitutions, the laws of which protect us from discrimination.

Gary Dielman, former Baker City Councilor
Baker City, Oregon
541.523.6760

Letter Calling out Mayor Diaz's Hateful, Intolerant Messages

I respectfully request that the City Recorder read this letter out loud and enter it into the record as a public comment during the Baker City Council meeting on Tuesday, June 27, 2023.

Mayor Matt Diaz should resign his position due to unacceptable public messages of hate and intolerance toward many members of our community. His initial social media post insulted both LGBTQ and Jewish community members and our community as a whole. His ignorance and lack of respect for fellow citizens is appalling. Unfortunately, such hateful "speech" is precisely the type that may motivate unhinged, angry people to acts of violence, making our community less safe. Should Diaz refuse to resign, I respectfully urge the Council to censure his conduct.

Diaz's follow-up statement dug an even deeper hole for himself. Diaz falsely equated diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts with Nazi propaganda. (Really?) He failed to recognize or take responsibility for his intolerance.

Diaz said, "The post in question was meant to illustrate how the DEI or "woke" ideology is being propagandized and militantly forced on American society and culture using the same psychological tactics used by the Nazi party in the 1930s – 1940s." Apparently, from Diaz's perspective, it's a bad thing to honor the US constitution in declaring all people are created equal.

During this Pride Month, we honor all members of our community including those who are LGBTQ. We expect our public officials to welcome all citizens with respect, and to obey the laws that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, religion, race, sex/gender, and other protected classes.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mary Burns Tomlinson

Dear Councilors,

I am in complete disbelief that Diaz has not resigned or, at the very least, been removed as mayor! He has proven himself unworthy of representing our city in any way, shape or form. Is his homophobia and callous disregard of inclusiveness and acceptance of all Baker's citizens and his shameful meaningless non apology not sign enough of his incompetence? How about his admiration of Nazis? Are the three councilors that decided he was a great choice as mayor going to stand with him or with our citizens? Do we have only one despicable incompetent on our council or do we have four? If Diaz was truly a man, and had the good of our city as a priority, he would of resigned immediately. To hide behind other people, and for other people to let him hide, is abortive, unprofessional and cowardly. Please don't let this ugliness and hate infect our beautiful city.

Thank you all for your valuable time.

Michael J Meyer

P.O. Box 813

Baker City, OR 97814

541 936 6380

Dear City Council and Mayor Diaz,

My husband and I have made Baker City our home for the past 11 years. We have found the town and the people so welcoming and we have enjoyed being a part of such a community-minded place. In no way do we expect everyone to have the same views (the proliferation of different sorts of flags in town are a testament to some of those differences) but have expected and found mutual respect and overall neighborliness to mostly be the rule.

Many have already eloquently stated how offensive the swastika symbol is. And though I have seen feeble attempts to justify the symbol as meaning something other than the Nazis use of it--and providing a false equivalence argument that the LGBTQ community is just as bad, most have rightfully spoken against Mayor Diaz's actions.

I was shown Mayor Diaz's original post. I read the comments. One in particular was potentially horrific. It stated they knew who to "unalive" or not as well as making clear they knew how to make that happen. The mayor of our town "liked" that comment on Facebook. A public official--Matt Diaz liked a comment that clearly promoted unaliving--which just means killing--people they disagreed with.

Mayor Diaz has not provided any true apology for his original post. I can't imagine how any sort of apology would be adequate for liking a comment calling for violence--especially against fellow community members. He has proven himself unfit to lead and his religious beliefs should not provide cover for his destructive actions.

Sincerely,

Nancy Coffelt



15477 Sky Ranch Lane
Haines, OR 97833
541-519-7234
Email: tnthorse@soni.com
tnthorsemanship.com

Current Date: 06.25.23

To: Baker City Recorder/Council

From: Alice Trindle, Baker County Citizen

Regarding: Request to enter statement into the Baker City Council record

Baker City Recorder,

Would you please enter into the record of the Baker City Council for the upcoming meeting on June 27, 2023 the following statement:

As a lifetime citizen of Baker County, I am appalled at the behavior, statements, and underlying sentiments of the current mayor of Baker City, Matt Diaz. The meme posted on his personal social media page and his subsequent response in explanation make it clear he is not carrying on an open-minded fair representation as Baker City mayor. He should clearly resign from this position and from the council.

While Mr. Diaz certainly has individual rights to post on his personal social media accounts his opinions, it crosses a line of his responsibilities as a public servant in the capacity of council person and/or mayor, when his personal actions violently discriminate against a variety of people, religions, and the demonstration of human compassion. The quote that accompanied his swastika meme-post read, *"When you join four pride flags you become ultra pride."* There is no misinterpretation...Matt Diaz feels the mass murder of over 6 million people was an event of which to be proud. This attitude of pure hate can not be condoned or ignored, and when spread by a public servant, it must be condemned.

The members of the Baker City council MUST call for the resignation of Matt Diaz, immediately. There is no other alternative.

Respectfully submitted:

Alice Trindle
15477 Sky Ranch Lane
Haines, OR 97833
541.519.7234

TO: Baker City Recorder / Council

FROM: Julie G. Pollock, County Resident

RE: Request to enter statement into Baker City Council Record

My statement is as follows:

Mayor Matt Diaz's self-righteous publication on his personal Facebook page of four pride flags arranged as a Nazi swastika oversteps the boundaries all fine public servants should set when serving in public office. He has every right to speak for himself in private life but should judiciously consider his statements when made in a public forum.

His statements published in the Baker City Herald on June 22, 2023 include his statement that by posting this meme, he is merely pointing out to the public that "'woke' ideology is being propagandized and militantly forced on American society and culture using the same psychological tactics use by the Nazi party..." He may mistakenly believe that holding his new office of Mayor gives him special privileges to offend under the guise of teaching. It does not. His statements are an attack on our community.

His repugnant conclusions are wrapped in both the Constitution and the Bible. Yet those two documents seek only to assert equality. Public servants have no place fear-mongering and promoting bigotry. Matt Diaz should resign immediately.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie G. Pollock
15266 Pine Creek Lane
Baker City, OR 97833

Hello Councilors,

I wanted to take the time to express my concerns regarding the recent public hate and vitriol that has been presented and then defended by current Mayor Diaz of Baker City Council.

I assume you are able to recognize the absolute harm this provides for members of our community who are part of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community, as well as those that are Jewish or of Jewish descent. The level of hate that has been escalating across our country unfortunately has not escaped our county. The rise in anti-seminism and attacks on the rights of and physical persons of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community cannot be overstated. One needs to only look at laws being proposed and/or passed by states to see this in action. Another incredible source of information is the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#), which is an organization that fights hate and extremism through legal processes.

We are a community that is full of loving, supportive, welcoming people and spaces. This is who we are. What is being represented, however, is having repercussions not only for our community members targeted, their families and allies, but also economically for our county as a whole.

However, the truth of the matter is that there are some people that believe and support what was shown, and the defense of this anti-semtic, anti-LGBTQ2SIA+ rhetoric by Mr. Diaz. It is abhorrent and reprehensible conduct unbecoming of a public figure that represents our community. I am asking that Mayor Diaz immediately resign. His actions and words are not representative of his constituents, nor of Baker County as a whole.

The impact of Mr. Diaz's initial conduct, and now continued rhetoric via his defense of his actions on his public social media page, is concerning not only for seasonal, but long-term economics for our community. People are not going to come to an area where they or their family and friends are not supported, welcomed or included. There are already many instances of canceled/changed reservations, people passing through that choose to keep going, and understandable negative statements being said about our community. I do not know if you are aware how extensively this has spread, and the erroneous perception of who we are as a community as a result.

People are not going to remain nor relocate here to work at a hospital in a community where not only is the hospital and emergency services not supported, but members of the community are openly attacked with silence as the only response from our representatives. People are not going to move to have their children attend, nor work for an educational system, based in a community where they and others are not openly supported and included in the community. People are not going to remain nor relocate to an area where they or their family and friends are not supported, welcomed or included. People are not

Mr. Diaz

I'm writing this letter to you in hopes of understanding a post you put on your public social media account.

I am deeply saddened and offended about your attack on the LGBTQ and Jewish members of our community. This was very divisive and unbecoming of a Council member "Mayor" not to mention a human being. If there is a different meaning than what I'm understanding I would love to hear your explanation.

As a Council member "Mayor" you should represent all Baker City citizens. If this is something you can't bring yourself to do then I believe you should resign. You are doing our city a great disservice.

I would also like to add that you put a like (thumbs up) on a comment from one of your facebook friends. The comment was about looking for exits and weapons and unaliving and or injuring others. I believe this is something that should be explained also. This makes me feel afraid and embarrassed to live here.

Barbara Meyer

To Matt Diaz and all councilors:

It came to my attention today that you posted on social media a pinwheel of rainbow flags with a swastika in the middle. There are NO circumstances in our beautiful country where that is appropriate. It is a slap in the face of all Americans that fought and died in WWII to liberate persecuted people from the tyranny of Nazi Germany. Any Jewish citizens living in our city I'm sure are hurt and horrified. You not only need to issue an immediate apology to ALL citizens of Baker City; you should also resign. I do not wish to see you in ANY leadership role in Baker City, as you have just shown that you are unfit for leadership.

With the utmost sincerity,

Mary Miller

3545 Carter St

Baker City, OR 97814

To: Baker City Council Members

Subject: Conduct and Behavior of Mayor Matt Diaz

Distribution: To All Council Members / To Be Included In The Public Record

Elected Council Members,

26 June, 2023

This past week our community received another avoidable "black eye". I realize that as a registered voter of the Baker City community I am culpable for my actions and obligated to help to correct that mistake.

In my world there is no room for a Sickle and Hammer or Stars and Bars, nor a Mayor who embraces a Swastika. So this letter to my city council leadership is based on a simple premise, that the Baker City Councilors replace Mr. Diaz with our former Mayor Beverly Calder and that Mr. Diaz take the honorable step to resign from the city Council immediately.

According to the Mr. Diaz's Baker City Candidate Profile listed under occupation, is pastor. He should then realize that Jesus is a Jew. The horrors that the Jews experienced under the Nazi regime should function as a catalyst that pushes us towards acceptance, grace and love, not to be a prisoner to fear, pain and hatred. We need leaders who will be inclusive to serve all our citizens with equal consideration and respect.

As a member of the community, I am aware of the many challenges we face, but I expect that my council will move away from personal and political agendas that are dominating the landscape of our town, and start to serve all our people first.


Randolph & Joan Tracy, Baker City, OR

Emily Simko
965 L St.
Baker City, OR 97814

Hello Members of City Council,

I am requesting the immediate removal of Matt Diaz as acting mayor as well as a city council member. I firmly believe in the value of free speech, listening to others with views that may be different from my own, and leaving space to challenge my previously held beliefs when presented with more information. However, after nearly two weeks of seeing the post by Matt Diaz, and his ongoing defense of using an image of pride flags in the formation of a swastika, I think he is showing not only poor judgement but also a lack of empathy. His inability to admit fault shows that he maintains clear biases that have no place in Baker City, let alone that of a person representing our city. By removing Matt Diaz from his title of Mayor and position on City Council, our community can take a stand to overcome the bias, racism and hate brought forth by Matt Diaz's poor judgement and ongoing inability to admit fault in posting such inappropriate content while holding public office.

Thank you,

Emily Simko

Current Date: 06.27.23

To: Baker City Recorder/Council

From: Susan Triplett, Baker County Citizen

Regarding: Request to enter statement into the Baker City Council record

Baker City Recorder,

Would you please enter into the record of the Baker City Council for the upcoming meeting on June 27, 2023 the following statement:

As a citizen of Baker County, I am writing to express my utter dismay at the recent behavior of Baker City mayor, Matt Diaz. While I am not a resident of Baker City, I hope the council and Mr. Diaz will act upon this request calling for his resignation.

While Mr. Diaz is entitled to his personal opinions, he must be vigilant about maintaining equity for all people as a public servant. Clearly, he crossed this line when responding to the meme he posted on his personal social media, which espoused that the "ultra pride" was a symbol of Naziism and the pride of having slaughtered over 6 million people during World War II. In his response reported in the Baker City Herald on June 22, 2023, he defended the posting of this meme as... *"'woke' ideology is being propagandized and militantly forced on American society and culture using the same psychological tactics used by the Nazi party..."*. This is so ironic and wreaks of partisan politics that clearly has little basis in history or reality.

As a final point regarding Mr. Diaz's printed response, where he uses the word 'woke ideology' as a bad influence for Baker City citizens, who he represents, may I point out the definition of the word 'woke'. It is... *Woke is an adjective derived from African-American Vernacular English (AAVE) meaning "alert to racial prejudice and discrimination"*. Given this simple definition, I would hope that any Baker City Council member would want to be 'woke'. You represent ALL people - Not just white people; not just men; not just Christians. But ALL people, including gays, lesbians, trans and non-binary, and people of all race and religions.

There is no misinterpretation...Matt Diaz feels the mass murder of over 6 million people was an event of which to be proud. He further has stated that he is against a 'woke ideology' which simply asks the people, including public servants, to be alert to prejudice and discrimination. This attitude of pure hate can not be condoned or ignored, and when spread by a public servant, it must be condemned.

The members of the Baker City council MUST call for the resignation of Matt Diaz immediately, and Mr. Diaz should resign. There is no other alternative.

Respectfully submitted:

Susan Triplett
15477 Sky Ranch Lane
Haines, OR 97833
541.519.4923

EXHIBIT B

The oath to serve and our council rules are very clear.

"All council members represent and serve the whole city."

"Council members must always act in the public interest."

The very first goal adopted by this council was equally clear.

"Improve communication and citizen engagement to foster an environment of inclusivity."

Bound by my oath to serve and my love for Baker City, I must address the fact that Matt Diaz has shown, at best, a lack of awareness of the impact of using Nazi rhetoric and symbolism in any discussion, and at worst, hateful and divisive disregard for his oath of office, the council he serves with and the community that he represents. His defense of his use of a swastika and his statement that compares inclusion to Nazism demonstrates a complete lack of understanding about the Nazis, the Holocaust, antisemitism, and homophobia. It also endangers our LGBTQ+ community and shows no respect for our Jewish founders and community members.

The swastika is a symbol equated with the dehumanization of people just because of who they are. The pride flag was created as a symbol of hope, love and acceptance – the opposite of the swastika.

Matt Diaz called diversity, equity, and inclusion an "ideology" that is being propagandized and militantly forced upon us. He equated the efforts of equality for all to the tactics of the Nazi party. In fact, we should be working together to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion – as our goal stated – as the way to provide positive outcomes for EVERYONE.

His statements are damaging to children, families, and all community efforts to make our city a more welcoming place. This is clearly not in the public interest. His words cast shadows far beyond our city limits. This is a significant breach of fitness regarding public service.

Many citizens have expressed concern for the safety and well-being of those harmed by his words. This council has an obligation to represent and honor our diverse population. We must stand unified against bigotry and all divisive language that targets LGBTQ+ or other marginalized members of our community or anyone visiting our city.

As leaders, we must accept that we are held to a higher standard of conduct. As public servants, we must lead the effort for inclusivity, respect, and compassion. As loving, imperfect humans we must hold Matt Diaz accountable and insist that he resign from this city council immediately.

I move that the City Council of Baker City include the goal of "Improve communication and citizen engagement to foster an environment of inclusivity." in the opening message of each meeting of this council.

I move that we post a statement of solidarity and support for all LGBTQ+ and Jewish members of our community, in addition to all others that have been marginalized, on the opening page of our city website.

I move that we create opportunity to partner with organizations representing communities targeted and harmed by bigotry and I move that we compel Matt Diaz to resign from his position.