

October 25, 2017

Complaint to Washington State Public Disclosure Commission

In the City of Black Diamond, the mayor is up for election this year. At least twice, she has made or allowed political comment for or against a candidate during city council meetings. This violation by Carol Benson appears to be against RCW 42.52.180 – “Use of public resources for political campaigns.”

**Identification of Campaign Violation**

1. On September 7, 2017 during public comment at a city council meeting, a member of the public made political comments. A council member objected that this was a violation because campaigning is not allowed as part of a council meeting. The mayor over-ruled the objection and encouraged the speaker to continue.
2. On October 18, 2017, the mayor spoke about her recent activities and said, “I participated in ... candidate forum, and my opponent decided not to show up...”. This was a direct campaign message. Earlier in the meeting there had been discussion of this very issue and warnings by the mayor and councilors not to campaign during the meeting.
  - a. This statement by the mayor was captured on video, and can be seen online here:  
<https://cleanfairelections.org/mayorviolatescampaignrule>

Thank you,  
Gary Davis