



**State of Washington**  
**PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION**  
711 Capitol Way Rm. 206, PO Box 40908 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0908  
(360) 753-1111 • FAX (360) 753-1112  
Toll Free 1-877-601-2828 • E-mail: [pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov](mailto:pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov) • Website: [www.pdcc.wa.gov](http://www.pdcc.wa.gov)

June 12, 2018

Delivered electronically to "cbenson@ci.blackdiamond.wa.us"

Subject: PDC Case 26959

Dear Carol Benson:

Below is a copy of an electronic letter sent to Gary Davis concerning a complaint filed with the Public Disclosure Commission (PDC).

As noted below to Gary Davis, the PDC will not be conducting a more formal investigation into these allegations or taking further enforcement action in this matter. PDC staff is reminding you about the importance of separating campaign activity from public facilities. PDC staff expects that you will refrain from making such remarks in the future and will continue to prevent the misuse of public facilities to support or oppose election campaigns.

If you have questions, you may contact Fox Blackhorn at 1-360-753-1980 toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by e-mail at [fox.blackhorn@pdcc.wa.gov](mailto:fox.blackhorn@pdcc.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

/s \_\_\_\_\_  
Fox Blackhorn  
Compliance Coordinator 2

Endorsed by,

/s \_\_\_\_\_  
Barbara Sandahl  
Deputy Director  
For Peter Lavallee  
Executive Director



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June 12, 2018

Delivered electronically to "g.davis001@q.com"

Subject: Complaint regarding Carol Benson, PDC Case 26959

Dear Gary Davis:

The Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) has completed its initial review of the complaint you filed on October 25, 2017. Your complaint alleged that Carol Benson may have violated RCW 42.17A.555 for authorizing city council meetings to be used to support or oppose election campaigns.

PDC staff reviewed your allegations, and as a result of staff's initial review, we found the following:

- On September 7, 2017, a member of the public used the city council meeting to support a candidate for public office. In accordance with her duties under RCW 42.17A.555, Carol Benson promptly stopped the person to remind them not to utilize public facilities to support or oppose election campaigns.
- On October 18, 2017, during the segment for council activity updates, Carol Benson mentioned attending the Candidate's Forum and Chamber Luncheon Forum, and remarked offhandedly that her opponent did not attend. Her statements went no further, yet used public facilities, employee time, audio/visual equipment, and broadcast infrastructure to oppose her opponents campaign.
- Carol Benson demonstrated a good-faith willingness to take responsibility for the violation, has no prior found violations, and the statements made had little impact on the public.

Based on these initial findings, staff has determined that in this instance, briefly mentioning an opponent in a city council meeting does not amount to a material violation warranting further investigation.

PDC staff is reminding Carol Benson about the importance of separating campaign activity from public facilities. PDC staff expects that Carol Benson will refrain from making such remarks in

the future and will continue to prevent the misuse of public facilities to support or oppose election campaigns.

The PDC has closed the matter, and will not be conducting a more formal investigation into your complaint or pursuing further enforcement action in this case.

If you have questions, you may contact Fox Blackhorn at 1-360-753-1980 toll-free at 1-877-601-2828, or by e-mail at [fox.blackhorn@pdc.wa.gov](mailto:fox.blackhorn@pdc.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

/s \_\_\_\_\_  
Fox Blackhorn  
Compliance Coordinator

Endorsed by,

/s \_\_\_\_\_  
Barbara Sandahl  
Deputy Director  
For Peter Lavalley  
Executive Director

cc: Carol Benson