

**Subject:** Jan 14, 2025 City Council Meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 15, 2025 at 10:21:40 PM Pacific Standard Time  
**From:** Karl Ohlemann  
**To:** mlundh@cleelum.gov, sharper@cleelum.gov

Mayor Lundh and Council Member Harper,

First of all I want to thank you for allowing myself and others from the community to express their thoughts on the CHH matter. I do understand how difficult some of these situations can be.

Secondly, I commend you all (six of you at least) on tabling the Bankruptcy motion on Dec 19, and for taking some time to further consider some other options. In this case, time is money...but not to the point of making a bad situation worse.

As I mentioned last night, it has given me some time to have discussions with other community members, and further understand and weigh the pros and cons of Bankruptcy, Receivership, and other alternative resolution options. I can only hope that City Council is doing the same.

When the “pause” was given, I believe the intent was to gather some people from the community together to offer some guidance to City Council on this matter. I am not aware if that has happened yet, but I would implore you to do this without delay. The gesture of good faith shown at the beginning of the CC meeting yesterday was a good move, and I hope received well by CHH and the community at large.

I’m glad that myself and others stayed for the remainder of the meeting. It was in most ways very encouraging and light hearted. I felt that both of your comments at the end of the meeting were authentic and heartfelt. That said, I believe there is still a difference in definition of transparency between members of the community and City Council. I understand that there are likely many things that the public can and should access. Lots of documents, ledgers, and the like.

What I feel has been missing is general, consistent, updated dialogue addressing what the city’s specific goals and analysis are leading into the December 19 meeting and vote, as well as its current and future thoughts, analysis, and recommendations. When communication is absent, people will naturally fill in the blanks with information gathered through the lens of their vantage point. This is not only unproductive, but completely unnecessary. I, for one, believe relitigating the past at this point is not only irrelevant, but counterproductive. We are where we are. The ONLY thing that matters is today, tomorrow,

and the future. Period.

My personal conviction is to remain neutral in these discussions; to look at the paths forward and find opportunities wherever possible to reduce the damage of this situation on everyone involved to the extent we can, as well as come up with as many opportunities and wins as possible. As I have made clear, one of my primary drivers is and will continue to be affordable housing. There is a general sense of agreement between all parties, and this is one of the few things that can come out of this situation that actually benefits the residents of Cle Elum and the larger community.

I have eight attorneys that I use, all from different firms and legal disciplines. I view them as tools, each with a specific function and outcome in mind. However, I understand that regardless of what my counsel recommends, I am the ultimate decision maker and need to be as absolutely educated and up to speed on all aspects of each matter, because in my world if one of my attorneys blow it, I still pay the price. This situation is very similar, yet I feel that way too much guidance is being given/followed by counsel, and the advice that is being given is not good. I make this observation from 30 years of experience, and many expensive lessons and exceptional victories.

You cannot remain silent and suggest that confidentiality is the excuse. That doesn't play, and it is displaying weakness to your constituents. You need to be bold, decisive, yet educated and informed (by the law and by public sentiment equally), and communicate more than you feel is even expected. In my opinion, you are at the opposite end of the spectrum and it is working against you big time.

So, while I greatly appreciate the comments both of you shared in yesterday's meeting, I believe you have a very small window of time to put words to action. That means scheduling a mediation with CHH asap (frankly I'll be very disappointed if this has not already been done) and showing the public that you are not hiding behind Olympia, attorneys, or anything else in how you move forward. Involve the community, with intelligence and shrewdness.

I am willing to help, as are many others in the community that have very relevant and valuable backgrounds and knowledge. If either/both of you would like to have some informal conversations, I'm all in. I am on the side of the community. Period. I am a staunch advocate for affordable housing, creative solutions, and disruptive (unorthodox yet beneficial) strategies. I also believe in the power of [Anti-Fragility](#).

Thank you again for your time and consideration. Together, we can get through this.

Kindly,  
Karl Ohlemann

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Karl Ohlemann

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