

Council Meeting – October 2, 2018

Item: X111 Ordinances –Professional Services Award for the 7.5-10mgd water treatment plant

I am Dr. Carol Voisin. I have lived in Ashland for almost 20 years.

My concern regarding this ordinance is twofold.

One is that I have yet to find a reasonable account of data and persuasive facts that warrant the building of a 7.5 mgd treatment plant that may cost \$23 million.

Second is that spending \$1 million for phase 1 begs the question about what additional phases will cost.

The first concern, we all know it is a done deal in print that there will be a 7.5 mgd water treatment plant but that can be changed. This award should include the costs for a 2.5-5.0mgd so that the difference in costs can be seen. *by the public.* Why do we need a 7.5 mgd when we have 2.0 mgd in potable water from Medford in the TAP pipeline? How much redundancy do we need and at what expense to rate payers?

- The second concern is more serious. What additional phases will there be and what will those costs be? When I build a house, I know the costs for each phase. This needs to be presented to the public before \$1 million is spent on phase 1. Or that <sup>\$1m</sup> cost needs to be far less to learn what the phases will be and what those costs will be. *The whole project needs to be seen.*
- Rate payers have had a 92% increase in water rates in the last ten years. This has built up a water CIP reserve of \$23million projected to be \$30million by 2021. In addition to this, the city has a low interest loan for the plant.

My question is this: with a robust CIP Water reserve fund, a low interest loan for the water treatment plant, why do you continue to raise the water rates and fixed costs of water to rate payers? ~~It feels like the council is gouging its rate payers making it impossible for more and more folks to pay their utility bills.~~ *increasing rates because there are more folks who are hurting financially*

*when there is such a robust water CIP reserve*

A much clearer presentation of the costs for the plant need to be presented to the public along with the reasoning for such a large plant.