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After the Nov. 7th public forum, the council had a discussion about the responsibility of the senior program between the city and parks. We are encouraged that the council showed a willingness to look into the matter. Please let the public know what has been done to research and clarify the responsibilities, especially the council's oversight of the program. In addition, Mr. Slattery stated that the council does not dictate personnel issues.

He said quote "whether they are doing an adequate job at that or not, we do not dive in and micro manage departments"

Well, since there were no "personnel issues" with the senior program staff who were laid off by Director Black ... rather than fired with cause ... Mr. Slattery must be talking about Director Black ... since his personnel decision had an immediate adverse effect on services provided to Ashland residents.

Black laid off the entire senior program staff. The layoff had an immediate, drastic cut in social services to elders; thereby lessening their ability to live independently at home. Four months later there are still no experienced and qualified replacement staff to perform the social services of the previous staff. Mr. Black has no sense of urgency to restore such services.

In fact, it appears that he wants to scale them back significantly with lower skilled staff. That is not a 'personnel or staffing issue,' it is a poor personnel management decision that Director Black made and the parks commissioners supported.

Now Black has stated to the senior advisory members that there is no way the laid off senior program manager will be rehired. We have to question why. There have been no reasons given publicly.

In the news stories of NBC's firing of personnel, they publicly provided specific reasons. Why does not Black? It is because any reason he may publicly give would amount to slander. Yet we hear from people that commissioners are giving reasons in private that have no basis in fact. This opens the city to potential liabilities, as the inappropriate firing of staff has. One should not blame the victims for filing such suits. The misdeeds belong to the management. Addressing these concerns, that have a major impact to Ashland residents, is not micro managing in any sense of the term. Will the council stand by to such inadequate performance that directly affects Ashland residents? We are watching ... Ashland deserves better