

5/07/2009

Town Council
Jet Oklahoma

Greetings,

My letter of October 10, 2008 proposed a method for the city clerk to make available certain public documents for the web site. As of this date I have received no response.

Therefore I am now requesting that any two board members or the mayor place on the next agenda an item to discuss and act whether to provide this information to the public in this manner. I would like to see an up or down vote on the matter. The following items were suggested for inclusion on the web site:

- ✓ [Meeting Agendas](#)
- ✓ [Meeting Minutes](#)
- ✓ [Financial Reports including detailed expenditures and receipts](#)
- ✓ [Department Reports](#)
- ✓ [Resolutions both proposed and accepted](#)
- ✓ [Other items upon request from the web master or public at large](#)

Paul Blackledge

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E. W. "BILL" SHAW

WRITER'S EMAIL: EWS@MDPLLC.COM

May 11, 2009

Paul Blackledge
PO Box 102
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Re: Public Records.

Dear Mr. Blackledge,

Your letter requesting that certain information be made available for posting on the internet has been forwarded to me for response. The Town Board has adopted a procedure for any person interested in a public record to make a formal request for that record. The Oklahoma Attorney General has determined that since certain duplicated records of a public body may be deemed to be original records, the legislature intended that public records be made available at the location where the records are regularly kept by the town.

I am aware that Enid posts the agenda for meetings on its website. However, you will note that the main focus of the Enid website is to promote the public image of the city. The website prepared by the IT department of the City and procedures and policies regarding the information displayed is managed by that department under the direction of the City Manager and the City Council. Minutes of the city meetings or any of the other information you request is not posted.

You have prepared a website which appears to have the primary purpose of publicizing the business of the town government. I find nothing on the website that addresses the positive aspects of the community or that would entice someone to visit Jet. Why not include pictures and history of the lake, digging for crystals, or stories of the old salt flats.

If you really want to help the town, post information that will attract people to the community. The countdown to the next town meeting in bold red letters across the top of the page does not create a positive image of the town. In fact, I believe the website

as currently maintained creates a negative image and is an embarrassment to the town. Unless changed to reflect the positive features of the community and the area, my recommendation is that board find another webmaster or that Kanokla be notified to cancel the site.

Yours very truly,

E.W. "Bill" Shaw

Content

1. My offer to volunteer to maintain a web site directed for the benefit of the citizens of Jet to assist in fulfilling the intent of the Oklahoma open meeting act and the open records act and my request for access to public records for support. This request was directed to the town council and was intended to be seen by all council members before any conclusions were drawn up.
2. Mr. Shaw's response to my offer and request to the Jet Town Council.
3. Print out of the alleged embarrassing web site's welcome page and navigation frame.
4. Sample of the city of Blackwell's web site where Agendas and Minutes are published.

End of Content

Item 1 is being considered during the May 13 town meeting.

Comments to Item 2 by paragraph and sentence (p.s)

- 3.1 This is correct. The primary purpose is to publicize the business of the town.
- 3.2 I am disappointed that there are no positive aspects of the town's business.
- 3.3 There are other web sites pointing out the attributes of our county. I would be glad to include links to some of these sites. This free web space is limited and pictures take up much space compared to text.

- 4.1 Attracting people is beyond the scope of this proposal. This project has a limited budget (\$0) and limited web space. The intended audience are the citizens of Jet to enhance their knowledge and interest in city government. (Less than 200 utility clients). Attracting people to Jet at government expense could be construed as a conflict of interest for owners of businesses who are also on the town council.
- 4.2 The purpose of the meeting notice is to be a reminder of the upcoming meeting and is very similar to the notice placed on the bulletin board at the post office. It appears automatically 120 hours before the next regular meeting. A link to the agenda (if available) appears 57 hours before the meeting. After that the notice goes away until the next regular scheduled meeting.
- 4.3 I am sorry that Mr. Shaw has a low opinion of this volunteered effort and feels embarrassed. However, the opinion that counts should be coming from the citizens of Jet including the council members some of whom had not seen this request before it was forwarded to Mr. Shaw.

Reference Item 4 -- Blackwell Example

Please note that both the Blackwell example and the welcome page of the embarrassing site has a disclaimer pointing out that official records are kept with the city clerk and that the posted records are unofficial copies. I put the disclaimer on the site at the very beginning. I think that this shows that I have the proper sensitivity and judgment to keep the site with the appropriate content. Also I will only request information that is public and will have access only to the information of the filled requests.

The present control over public records exposes the citizens to harassment by government personnel because the city clerk is aware of each request. Having unofficial records on-line removes this exposure. It also frees up time for the city clerk by eliminating the need to fill each request manually.