

From: [Sarah Blossom](#)
To: [Christine Brown](#)
Subject: FW: IN MY OPINION
Date: Tuesday, July 02, 2013 2:20:38 PM

From: thebluetoed@aol.com
Subject: Fwd: IN MY OPINION
Date: Sun, 3 Feb 2013 17:12:12 -0800
To: debbilester@yahoo.com; blossoms49@hotmail.com

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From: Arlene Buetow <thebluetoed@aol.com>
Date: February 3, 2013 4:23:09 PM PST

Subject: Re: IN MY OPINION

Friends, I do not have the will or inclination to take Randal Samstag on. Nor do I think it appropriate for the current chair of the UAC who published the report of the advisors to the Council on the Water Utility Management question to weigh in on a tit for tat dispute such as Randal is waging. But I will pass along a bit of insight that maybe one of you would be inclined to incorporate into your comments.

1. Randal has never met a City Consultant contract that he does not support. Bigger is always Better to Randal and he has never shown a concern for the need to demonstrate value added when reviewing an activity proposed for staff or a consultant. This is a self fulfilling, self serving prophecy, since Randal is himself is a consulting engineer, whose company in fact has recently been the recipient of a very lucrative City Contract. I personally believe Randal has become the lead cheerleader for the City's public works

department as he believes it will bless he and his company with returns as the results of the goodwill such support will generate from the City's Public Works Department and Director over time.

2. While on the UAC, when reviewing the UBA Consultants findings, Randal Samstag contacted Katy Isaacson, a member of the UBA Consultants team independently, which was a direct violation of the authority and direction we (the UAC Committee) had been provided by the then City Manager and thru our charter. When questioned as to the purpose and appropriateness of this contact Randal told me the following and I quote for clarity; **"I though it would be ok to reach out and speak directly to the consultants as I am a consultant myself and I felt that it would a peer to peer contact and that, as such they would speak more frankly to me, most particularly because it might result in collaborative consulting opportunities between my firm and their firm in the future."**

3. Randal, challenges the fact that the recent UAC Report provides reference to the UBA Report as support for our findings, and reasons for that challenge by stating that I, (Arlene Buetow) had as he states "previously made comment that I found the UBA Consultants to be incompetent". That is not exactly true! What I said previously is that the UBA report was not responsive to the Issued Scope of Services in the RFP which was to analyze the responses from the individual parties who had offered to assume ownership of the City's Water Utility. As I stated previously the Consultants report morphed from an analysis of the respondents proposal to a plan for the supposed optimized utility whereby the City would reduce rates to be competitive with the respondents but without a specific budget or plan to operate under those reduced revenues." I specifically said "I found the UBA Advisers report to be unresponsive to the RFP" and therefor not what the City had asked for, so I questioned the appropriateness of paying them in full for the unresponsive report. There was a preponderance of issues identified the report as deliverable which were in fact never addresses. If I were administering that contract and I did not get what I asked for, but instead received a bunch of other alternative work I would expect a separate budgetary authorization to fund that work.

4. Finally most egregiously disagree with Randal's assertion **"t he City has worked hard to improve the management and cost-effectiveness of the Water Utility. It has proven that it can do what naysayers insisted could never be done. It would be a disservice to all City staff and citizens, and especially to Water Utility customers, if such a decision were taken without a thorough consideration of these impacts."** As a participating member of the UAC, I can personally attest that the UAC has not been provided the necessary information in depth or detail to adequately gauge success or failure of the City's optimized utility". That the relationship between the UAC and staff has been a game of cat and mouse and that I cannot reasonably predict that we will know the results of this "social experiment" for years to come.

It is because of these facts and because I believe that all City Utility operations merit serious overhaul, most particularly in the cost allocation system. And because I believe that the City needs to separate its role as Primary Policy Maker and Chief Administrator of the Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives, from those of an independent utility service provider. That the City should concentrate on the big picture and leave the day to day operations of the Island's Utilities to the most experienced, productive and efficient municipal utility purveyor available. I believe the rate payers of the City's water utility are most fortunate in that they have a non-profit, Municipal, water service purveyor in Kitsap County whom has already demonstrated their experience, dedication, and commitments to our community, who already has a significant investment and presence in our community, and whom stands ready to provide this service on behalf of the Utility rate payers and our entire community. I can only pray the Council has the fortitude to make the right decision at the right time, and to take action to transfer the Management of the City water utility to the KPUD now.

To anyone who cares!

Arlene

