

Letter To The Editor: Town Hall Meetings Would Have Brought Tough Questions About Rec Center Decision

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On October 18th, Wood River City Council members Duncan, Hagaman and Tweedy voted down a motion to hold Town Hall meetings. Yes, the council members would have surely faced some tough questions regarding their decision about the rec center. However, the meetings would have offered the best forum to address a large number of people at one time to explain their decisions and show us why building a rec center

makes sense. But, no, they knew they couldn't do that, because it makes no sense to build this rec center at this time. They knew they couldn't defend their decision, that's why they voted against Town Hall meetings.

In February 2020, the Chairman of the Park and Rec Committee stated at a City Council meeting that the rec center was needed to pass the 1% Sales Tax in April 2019. He went on to say, if you want a rec center, don't sell it as a pretext to pass a sales tax. Instead, take the time to properly examine the needs of the community, the costs and then have an honest and open discussion with the community to gain support. None of that has happened and that is why the council continues to receive push-back on this. This is classic Wood River politics, ramming an agenda through and only window-dressing the real needs of the community. Ignoring voters cost the former mayor and a council member their seats, yet these current council members continue the same approach.

The disdain some members of this and former councils hold for their constituents is alarming. When official documents clearly stated that the Round House was to be removed, former officeholders said this wasn't true. Those individuals and the aforementioned appointed council member told us that we were confused and didn't understand a referendum that was passed by a 3-1 margin.

At the last City Council meeting, the one council member that got her seat by appointment took the time to research the speaking minutes of unnamed citizens, but refused to vote for taking the time to answer those questions in a public town hall setting. She said that she prefers that voters call her rather than having a public hearing. Her answers in a public town hall have accountability, so it's no wonder that she prefers private conversations.

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