

*The other side of the story...*

## Out in 'Left' Field

Our local government has gotten off track. Lately they've set their core responsibilities aside and become lost in the weeds, creating special meetings, emergency joint meetings, and additional workshops so they can spend endless hours talking about fringe (some say lunatic fringe) ideas that are of little concern to the majority.

Government's core responsibility is basic services: provide for our public safety, roadways, utilities and general welfare. As town manager Bob McLaurin puts it, toilets should flush and cops should show up when you call 911. These are the basics, Government 101.

A recent news story highlighted how far astray government has wandered lately. The police department has been unable to retain officers because they cannot afford to pay them enough. The department is hemorrhaging employees — 6 of 23 gone in the past year, with 6 more soon following suit. The Chief called it a crisis.

Meanwhile, the town council is busy trying to figure out a way to dump another \$2 million into its dysfunctional affordable housing department, so it can go find overpriced land to buy, sit on for years, and eventually sell for a loss (Cheney Lane Mantey property).

As city streets crumble beneath our wheels, an aging sewer system is over-capacity and failing. The council is blindly ignoring the basics, their fundamental duties. They waste valuable time and money pioneering LGBT anti-discrimination laws, renter protections, and other 'national' social issues whose importance locally is questionable. Are these groups truly at risk, locally?

Their own attorneys warned town leaders they were headed down an expensive rabbit hole, but they persist. The federal government hasn't yet sorted out LGBT rights. The Supreme Court continues to hear cases. So our local law could become a "test case" that would be very, very expensive to defend. And the state of Wyoming already has protections in place for both tenants and landlords. But our electeds continue on their time-waste, money-waste tangents.

On top of this, our local leaders waste time and money pondering fringe concerns like 'Are eBikes bicycles or mopeds?' And what top speed should they be allowed to travel on the pathways — 15 or 16 mph?

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*Electeds no longer do  
the work of the people*

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They spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on consultants to study everything from parking to public art, but don't have a nickel to spare for their own police force. That's sad.

Our leaders fiddle while Rome burns.

Our elected officials should "stay in their lane" and stop hunting solutions in search of a problem. We're reminded of the old adage: After all is said and done, there's a lot more said than done. We're hoping our electeds will get back on track and do the important work of the people.

Some in public office need help. Perhaps you could be the adult in the room when they go off track? Two town council seats and three county commissioner seats will be up this fall, and there is still time to run for office.

The election-filing deadline is upon us, there's only a week left. If you support a livable Jackson Hole and want to serve, hurry. Paperwork must be submitted by May 31.