
Confront the Commissioners on October 25

By Ford Peterson, October 23, 2010

It is time for Meeker County citizens to stand up and be counted. The abuse of our community's most vulnerable citizens needs to end on October 25, 2010, at 1:15PM! I need your help.

On October 19, 2010, the Meeker County Commissioners met in open session at 10AM. This was my last opportunity for a regularly scheduled open meeting of the Commissioners before the HRA meeting at 1:15PM on October 25, 2010 at the Dassel Apartments. My sincere hope is that every single Meeker County resident will be there to confront these two arrogant Commissioners Wilde and Strand. I was at the County Commissioners meeting to present the entire gang of 5 commissioners my demand that they remove Commissioners Wilde and Strand from the Meeker County HRA Board. I wasn't on the agenda for the day. Fortunately, [state law requires these meetings to be open](#) and I was certain to be able to informally address the Commissioners. It was near magical serendipity that [Trish VanPilsom of channel 9 FoxNews](#) was there doing a story on Amy Wilde and Wally Strand. While I had spoken with Trish on the phone several times, this was our first opportunity to meet.

It was fun to watch the photojournalist work his magic. Trish asked if I would step out of the room with her when Sheriff Jeff Norlin finished his business at the meeting. I had only a hunch as to why. When looking down the barrel of the business end of a camera, Norlin looked me right in the eyes and told a lie to cover up what now appears to be a previous lie. Even worse, he dared to imply that I was lying. Talk about an awkward moment! Then the camera confronts me. I hear my mother's voice ringing in my ears... *"The truth shall set you free."* She was right! I am certain he discussed signatures in the file.

During an informal meeting at the Dassel Bakery, Norlin represented to me and Roger Werner that he had a signed statement in his file as proof no assault was committed by Commissioners last October. Then represented he had shown it to Werner and Roger even claims he saw it. Roger later told me that somebody named Brad was in the room when he saw the signature in Norlin's office. I told that to Trish weeks earlier as it clearly made the resident's of the Dassel Apartments look as if they were spinning a story and using my reputation for some devious purpose. What amazed me is how a \$45,000 camera can become a "time-to-tell-the-truth" machine. Norlin didn't even have a dog in this fight. Now it looks like a cover-up. He claims there is no signature and that I'm making this up. What's weird is that County Attorney Beckman bought him a free pass to this show a year ago. Yet he participates in the spinning of the story? What is going on that warrants such Herculean efforts on the part of these County Officials?

[Here is a link to the letter presented to the Meeker 5, dated October 18, 2010.](#)

Short of a removal by a quorum of the County Commissioners, both Wilde and Strand should voluntarily resign from the HRA Board, effectively immediately. Stop terrorizing the residents of the HRA!

I also appealed to the Commissioners to stop the hate-filled lies promulgated by the recent local "news" media. This same media owes me, the public, and especially the violated residents of the Dassel Apartments, a substantial apology for their irresponsible journalism. The Litchfield Independent Review will need to respond to the shameful verbal assaults conferred upon an award winning investigative reporter by its own reporter. The local papers failed to investigate and report about the insane antics of the County Commissioners Wilde and Strand, and endorsed the foolish opinions of County Attorney Beckman. See my previous blog entries <http://mnpatriots.com/?p=255> and <http://mnpatriots.com/?p=350> for more information.

This whole experience is pretty awkward for me. I'm an ordinary Joe trying to make a living out on the prairie. I'm not a politician, or a journalist. I have no aspirations to become either. When the residents of the apartments asked me to get involved and help them, how could I refuse? Facing these powerful public officials and local media outlets choosing to print irresponsible blather and blatant untruths is quite unsettling. See Wig's Litchfield Independent Review article on 10/14 and Miller's Dassel Dispatch opinion dated 10/18—printed inches from the continued spin spewing from Wilde in her Letter to the Editor. Unbelievably irresponsible!

But this is not about me, or the citizens of Meeker County, or the local shoppers. This is really all about the corruption that has become Meeker County executive management. One woman I have come to admire is Mildred Hendrickson, age 92, President of the Meeker County Resident Council/Management Corp. Mildred is Meeker

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County's version of Erin Brockovich. I wonder if they will get Julia Roberts to play the part of Mildred when *Meeker County, the Movie* comes out? I am very proud of Mildred as she stands up to these wicked politicians. She's no shrinking violet. Her grace and integrity is an inspiration to me.

In an attempt to get the air cleared of the lies, half-truths, and stop the blatant abuse of these residents, Mildred contacted the Litchfield Independent Review after the Dassel Meet-the-Candidates forum on 10/18. A letter to the editor was in order. She submitted her letter to Brent at the IR. He told her to cut it in half. She cut it in half. He told her to make it 300 words or less. *"Either cut it down and re-submit or it would be edited prior to sending it to the attorney for review."* What? Read that again! Attorneys? Letters to the Editor are edited by them?

[Click here to see the letter Mildred wanted them to print...](#)

I told Mildred that she should write up whatever she wants to say. I'll show up and let her read it to the camera. I'll publish it without an attorney or an editor. And it will see air by nightfall! Mildred set out to finish this using her trusty Smith Corona typewriter. Want to see it? At 3PM on Saturday October 23, 2010, I met with Mildred at the Dassel Apartments.

[Click here to see Mildred see her unedited letter to the Residents of Meeker County...](#)

[Click here to see Mildred read from her statement.](#)

To the residents of the Dassel Apartments, I promise you that I will be there for you at 1:15PM on October 25. My hope is that others will be there too as I will once again appeal to Wilde and Strand. [Click here for the agenda.](#) This time I'll appeal to what's left of their human decency and ask them to voluntarily resign from the HRA board—effective immediately! The abuses need to end here! We need to put an end to these games now!

During the public comments portion of the meeting, I intend to read the following.

As a citizen of Meeker County, I have watched in disbelief at the ridiculous antics of this HRA Board. I have witnessed how the minutes of meetings are routinely twisted to present the Chairman's intent. I witness as the residents suffer greatly at the hand of these County Officers. In 2005 the State Legislature found the office of County Commissioner to be incompatible with the role of HRA Commissioner. Yet we find Wally Strand is Chairman of both. Because of the foolish opinions of our County Attorney Beckman, these residents have been unable to appeal to her office for justice or for relief from the abuses of your office. I witness as HUD instructs this board on proper conduct and witness you ignoring their pleas. I witness the Sheriff promulgating lies in defense of your activities to the disgrace of the respectability of his own office. I witness this board foolishly spending substantial amounts on needless legal fees for who knows what nefarious purposes. I witness this board expounding outright lies to the public regarding Director Tischer's compensation, when in the opinion of the residents, she should be commended. I witness the disgrace this board has become and demand that the abuses stop. I demand the immediate resignation of HRA Chairman Strand and HRA Commissioner Wilde. The County Commissioners need to take up the business of appointing new HRA Commissioners as soon as practical. Leave these people alone!