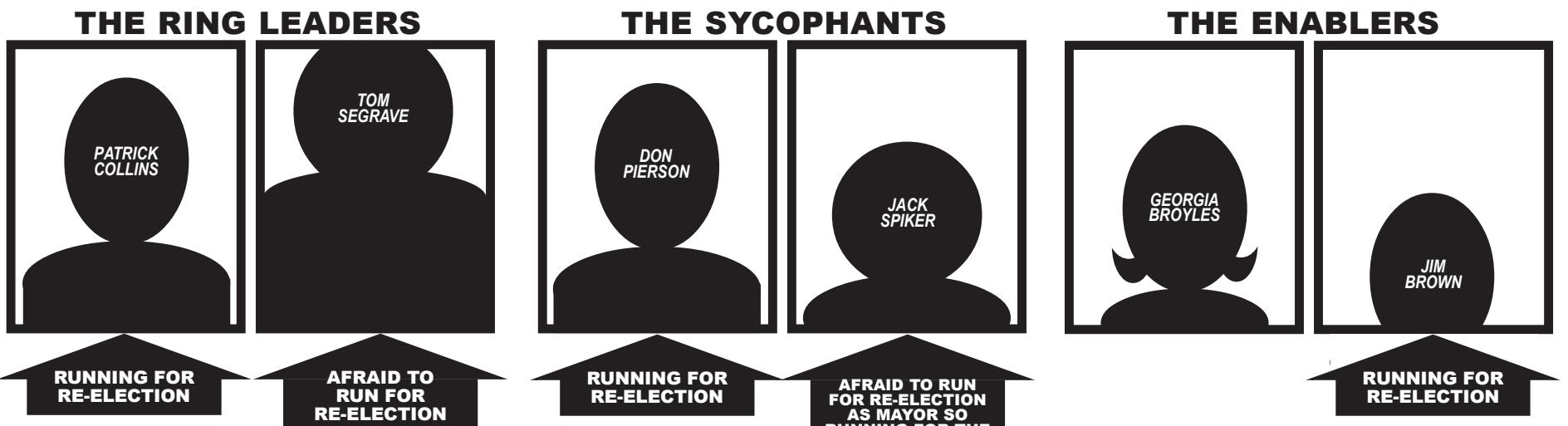


“Like a PTO gone bad”

Mayor Spiker and his goofy pals on the City Council make themselves look stupid, petty, and incompetent all at the same time



by Jim Mathewson

There are only two businesses at the corner of West Lincolnway and Bent. One is the **Wyoming Tribune-Eagle** where myopia and laziness rule the day. The other is **Mad Cyclez** where creativity and hard work seem to be the prevailing standards.

The motorcycle repair shop is owned and operated by Marcus Sanchez. His previous involvement at the level of a neighborhood school apparently hadn't prepared him well for what he witnessed at a City Council meeting where new downtown design standards were being discussed and voted upon.

After watching the proceedings for a painfully long time, Marcus went to the microphone and offered his assessment. “**This City Council,**” he said, “**is like a PTO gone bad.**”

Some long-time observers of this Mayor and his City Council allies consider it one of the most astute and insightful comments ever uttered in the hall.

If Citizen Sanchez was shocked and awed by what he saw and heard that night, he'd probably be positively thunderstruck by changes being considered for the Council's “Consent Agenda” procedure.

In a nutshell, a Consent Agenda is a method by which many governing bodies and boards can dispense with unnecessary discussion and debate on **routine and noncontroversial** agenda items. Such individual items are grouped together and dealt with using one motion, one second, and one vote.

For now, individual members of our City Council (or even a citizen in the audience) can request that one or more specific items on the Consent Agenda be pulled off for separate discussion and voting.

If Mayor Spiker and his devious cronies have their way, however, the procedure will be changed so that items can only be removed for individual discussion and voting IF a majority of the members agree. Conceivably then, EVERY item on the evening's agenda ... even questionable contracts or propositions costing hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars ... could be passed as a solitary “Consent Agenda” item. One motion + one second + one vote. No debate, no discussion, no fact-finding, no due diligence, and no public participation.

It is important to understand that the consent agenda is intended to expedite routine procedural matters and/or decisions that are likely to have unanimous support.

A consent agenda should not be used to stifle dissent or bypass the deliberative process.

The revised wording requiring a majority vote to remove items from the consent agenda provides an opportunity for misuse. The original wording is much more in the spirit of the intent of the consent agenda as it is widely used.

Nathan Garber

A very interesting misapplication of the concept! An inappropriate approach to the use of a consent agenda.

By definition, a consent agenda includes only those items that are noncontroversial and do not warrant discussion, and the procedures as described in your attachment certainly appear to undercut the capacity of the governing body to exercise its legally mandated due diligence.

You raise a very valid concern!

David O. Renz, Ph.D

The wording of the proposed new ordinance was sent to a couple of recognized experts in parliamentary procedure. Their comments (reprinted above) seem to echo a growing impression that the current Mayor and most of the current City Council are anti-citizen and anti-democratic ... not to mention just plain dumb.

Such malevolent and mean-spirited changes to the City Code have now become the predictable result of having a cowardly Mayor who hasn't grown in the job over the last eight years and who relies on a City Attorney who's as clueless as a kumquat.

One Citizen's Opinion

Immaturity and mental deficiency. Psychologists tell us that you can have one without the other. What the two flaws apparently share, however, is an inability to anticipate the consequences of one's words or actions.

The Cheyenne City Council provides a good example because almost every week supposedly smart people make dreadful decision after dreadful decision in large part because they simply can't think through the process from one end to the other. Maybe they're not the sharpest knives in the drawer after all.

Now the Council is considering a change in the ordinance dealing with how “Consent Agendas” are used at their weekly meetings. The Mayor and those on the Council who've been leading him around by the nose for several years will tell you that they're only interested in “streamlining” or “expediting” their meetings. The truth is, however, that they're really trying to make life miserable for

the tiny minority on the Council who actually want the public's business to be discussed openly before votes are recorded.

Mayor Milquetoast and his pals probably think that changing the ordinance will work to their advantage by requiring a second and a majority vote on EACH item which someone wants to remove from the Consent Agenda.

Obviously, they have the six or more votes it would take to defeat any such attempt to move an item to the regular agenda where it can be discussed openly and voted upon separately.

What they didn't anticipate, however, was the possibility that just TWO Council members ... one to ask for removal and another to second the request ... can force a separate vote to remove EACH item from the Consent Agenda.

Mental deficiency or mere immaturity? The six so-called leaders depicted above apparently have way too much of both.

Jim Mathewson

Jim Mathewson is just a poor dumb citizen of Cheyenne. His email address is jmat44691@yahoo.com