



Northern Colorado FOP Lodge #3

Brothers and sisters,

The past week has been a whirlwind. Events have been continuously evolving with respect to the current Fort Collins municipal elections, and our Lodge's ability to continue to act in the best interests of our membership with respect to the same as we have been doing for decades.

Since the inception of our Lodge candidates have frequently sought our endorsement, and, on occasion, we have given it. This year was no different. We had multiple individuals communicate with us, with requesting our endorsement in this election. This has included both current elected officials as well as those running against our incumbent officials.

Unfortunately, when membership decisions were made with respect to declining certain requests for endorsements, one candidate advised a Lodge leader that a failure to endorse them and a specific issue, would result in consequences and a deterioration in the relationship between the Lodge and the City's leaders.

Shortly after this conversation occurred, the Lodge was notified by the City Manager's Office that the City felt that any actions by the Lodge to endorse or support any candidate in this election would be in violation of the City Charter, Article VIII, Section 8 – Campaign Contributions. This specific Charter Section has been in effect for nearly 40 years, with the current version in place for 20 years. The Charter Section specifically states, “[n]o political party or city employee, directly or indirectly, and no public service corporation, nor any other person, firm or corporation, owning, interested in, or intending to apply for any franchise or contract with the city shall contribute or expend any money or other valuable thing, directly or indirectly, to assist in the election or defeat of any candidate.”

Furthermore, the Fort Collins Police Services Policy Manual, Policy 1058, Section 1058.7.3(c), specifically protects an employee “when off duty, not in uniform, outside City offices and buildings, and not using a City vehicle, equipment, or other resources . . .” to “[e]xpress an opinion as an individual, privately and publicly, on political subjects and candidates . . .”

Even in reviewing all City Policies, Procedures, and Charter provisions with respect to limitations on political activities, not one of them appears to prohibit the Lodge and its members from privately or publicly endorsing a candidate.

It is important to note, that in this election, the Lodge Board, has not provided any financial contributions or spent any amount of money with respect to any campaign, issue, or candidate. Furthermore, no Board member has contributed any time to meet with any candidate with respect to this election, while either on City time or while in uniform. All meetings with respect to this election, have been with Board members in their individual and personal capacity and, at no time, were Board

members specifically presenting themselves as City employees or in any way acting on behalf of the City or any City Department. No Lodge members are currently running for any elected position and, upon information and belief, there are no Lodge members managing any candidate's campaign.

Therefore, there have been no violations of any provision of the City Charter, the Fort Collins City's Policies and Procedures, nor the Fort Collins Police Services Policies and Procedures.

Even though the Lodge has acted in full accordance with the Charter and all City and Department policies and procedures, the Lodge members were informed, via the City's Administration, that they may be subjected to disciplinary action and potential legal and criminal action should they follow through with any endorsements in this election. Therefore, the City had effectively chilled any possibility for the Lodge Board and Members, in their private and individual capacities, to support a candidate or issue in this election. Again, this is also irrespective of the fact that the City knowingly allowed such activities to occur since the inception of this Lodge. And, despite the fact, that, upon information and belief, the City has not taken any action with respect to the current City employees who have actively solicited the endorsement and support of the Lodge and/or its membership.

Our Lodge 3 leadership is very troubled by what is transpiring in this election! We are profoundly confused by the City of Fort Collins' apparent interpretation of both Policy and Charter, based on their arguments to us regarding the same. We are perplexed as to why making an endorsement in this election is troubling when it never has been before, and even more confounded as to why MULTIPLE current council members reached out to our President requesting our endorsement. If the City's official position is that the FOP and its members are prohibited from making any endorsements, how is it not be problematic for the City's top elected officials to specifically solicit such an endorsement?

Northern Colorado FOP Lodge stands boldly behind our actions, our President and our right to represent the needs of our members! As these matters evolve, we will keep you posted.

Spence Alvord,

Current Board Member and Immediate Past President FOP Lodge #3