From:	Baxley, Robin L.
To:	Bielarski, Edward J
Subject:	FW: Recommendations for Biomass Discussion . . . Have One.
Date:	Tuesday, February 28, 2017 5:42:10 PM

FYI from Commission emails.

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From: James Thompson [mailto:jtexconsult@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 25, 2017 2:12 AM
To: citycomm
Cc: Harvey Ward; Jenn Powell; David Arreola; sheryl eddie
Subject: Recommendations for Biomass Discussion . . . Have One.

Mr. Mayor, Commissioners,

I understand the Sun, through no ill intention, can piece together individual conversations in ways that were not intended, making a whole appear from parts that don't fit together. This is especially true in the Sunshine environment, where you all are not allowed to speak to one another on issues outside meetings.

However, it appears there are such a wide variety of responses from you as individuals to inquiries about the GRU understanding with GREC. As you can guess, there is going to be an impression that things are being done in secret unless each of you, to your maximum ability and with extreme vigor, discusses every stage and aspect of this openly and publicly, as individual elected officials. If for someone reason you cannot do so, you need to explain why. And then you need to change that policy as a group, or perhaps even civilly disobey it. The truth must out early and often on this issue. If not, we will further estrange rightfully bitter critics of the first contract, and perhaps even plant doubt in the minds of those who understand why we need to buy this plant.

I am compelled to support renewable carbon-based energy as a transition modality until we can make real change by lowering consumption. And I know that buying the plant will save us all a lot of money, allow us to retrofit for efficiency and environmental factors, and get our public utility out of the hands of a private corporation. So I am deeply concerned that this new Commission is already making some of the same mistakes as the original "buying" Commission, and will set up any future governance of a City-owned plant for failure and political strife.

We need to buy this plant, but at stage one, the Sun has presented it as a done deal, made in secret, all but formalized in a memorandum of understanding. The subtleties of the negotiation--like why the language of purchase and offer are being used before any decent volume of public discussion has taken place--need to be explained assertively, in the open,

loudly, and daily . . . before they appear in the newspaper, and not after.

I don't envy you on this. To just say the word "biomass" in a crowded room will have 40% of people angry at you for one reason, 40% angry at you for another, and 20% wanting to leave the room. Candidates for office who actually take the time to even discuss this issue often find themselves in a corner, and quickly.

Well, I'm not leaving the room, and I'm not angry. I'm just disappointed that this appears to be business as usual. We have to do better at explaining a process that seems to be always ahead of the voters and public discussion. People need to be on the train before it leaves the station.

Regards,

James Thompson
352-246-6863