

ASHLAND DAILY TIDINGS

Nov. 11/18

A leadership vacuum

With reference to the opinion by Rich Rosenthal (Nov. 17), wherein he seems to confuse a citizen's right to recall elected representatives with "threatening actions," may we respectfully point out a few things:

A recall is not only a right, it is our civic duty when the officials steamroll the public as has been done in the case of the APRC commissioners' actions toward the Ashland Senior Program. He further states, "This is the wrong type of referendum at the wrong time." Really? Who appointed him to be the judge of the paths to take, and what are his qualifications to do so?

He criticizes a recall as "divisive," "needlessly pitting neighbors against neighbors." Isn't that unnecessarily incendiary? Since this is a right given to citizens, why should it divide anyone? Can't neighbors disagree without becoming enemies? Perhaps when neighbors hear the truth, they will come together — not divide.

He says that the "problem-solving process ... needs civil, constructive discourse ..." If Ashland Parks and Recreation would consider reversing their actions, there might be an

opportunity for problem-solving. Positive discourse requires both sides to agree to change, and, so far, APRC has refused to own the full impact of their errors in judgment. It has been clear since the APRC unanimous vote of Aug. 9 that the APRC will not listen to the public before they act. They need to recognize that they work for the public, and should listen before acting instead of having to apologize after.

He states, "We all agree that a vibrant senior program is important" ... Well, Mr. Rosenthal, we had one until Michael Black and the APRC commissioners began to dismantle it. To suggest the public sit back submissively and accept the conclusions of the newly-formed ad hoc committee is ludicrous. The public needs to be heard before it reaches a conclusion. This ad hoc committee is an impotent body seated by APRC, run by APRC, monopolized by APRC and given only the information APRC wants it to have. The only reason an elected official should be concerned about a recall is if they are not upholding the public trust. We don't pay taxes to sit back and let power mongers run amuck.

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Ashland