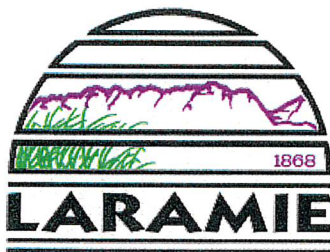


CITY OF LARAMIE

**CITY OF LARAMIE
CITY ATTORNEY'S
OFFICE**

406 E. Ivinson Street
P.O. Box C
Laramie, WY 82073



www.CityofLaramie.org

rsouthard@cityoflaramie.org

**ROBERT W. SOUTHARD
HOLLI AUSTIN-BELASKI**

Office: (307) 721-5321
Facsimile: (307) 721-5318
TDD: (307) 721-5295

April 21, 2021

Ms. Tara Evans
General Counsel
UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
Old Main 204
1000 E. University Ave.
Dept. 3434
Laramie, WY 82071

VIA EMAIL
tevans15@uwyo.edu

Dear Tara:

I need to bring something to your attention.

UW has a lobbyist running loose who has crossed a line. I speak of course about Mr. Pat Crank, who just has just recently redirected his lobbying from the Wyoming legislature to the State Engineer's Office with his letter of April 9, 2021. You were copied on that.

Now, you and I both know what lobbyists do. They say whatever they want to accomplish their ends. Lobbyists are largely unfettered by what governs our lives and the lives of our organizations: working through issues with a respect for those we work with and, more importantly, respect for our long-term and mutually beneficial relationships. Lobbyists work the back rooms, dream up sound bites, and wiggle around without regard to those goals. So be it. Such is the hit-and-run world of the lobbyist.

But that's not our world.

Tara Evans, General Counsel
April 21, 2021
Page 2

The City and UW work together and have for nearing 150 years. I can speak to this personally for a sliver of that time. In my half-decade tenure the City and UW have cooperated on matters too numerous to list: streets, traffic, road closures, construction, infrastructure placement and engineering, road and alley vacations, policing, irrigation, EMT services, student life, fire protection, and on and on. This is good. UW is the vibrant heart of this City. The City wants to help UW thrive, as that's a critical part of making sure all our residents thrive.

So, it is more than shocking when a UW lobbyist lurches into this world claiming that the City is a purveyor of "faulty or fraudulent" information. Claiming, in more blunt words, that the good people who work with me and help you are liars. That they lied with the intent to deceive, and actually set out to mislead the State of Wyoming.

Now, I'm quite sure that you, UW's President and his administration, and the Trustees did not authorize this lobbyist to call City folks liars in a letter to be disseminated publicly and throughout the State government. But that's what he's done. And that can at least be mitigated.

I therefore ask you to have UW direct its lobbyist to retract that statement, in writing. He'll obey. He's still your cat's paw, no matter how misguided he may be.

Now, and briefly, to the substance of the lobbyist's letter. These are only quick observations, as most of this will apparently play out in other arenas. I finally understand why UW hasn't over the last few years wanted to sit down and figure out a way to use all the existing wells, yours and ours, to get UW free water for its golf course. Somebody was banking on the Legislature. There's no need to go over that well-plowed ground, I suppose, but one thing came through loud and clear during that legislative process: UW just wanted to water its grass, and found silly any suggestion it wanted to meddle in or harm Laramie's municipal water system.

Which brings us back to your lobbyist. Just days after that bill was signed by the Governor, this fellow trained his sights on a well that has nothing to do with making UW's grass green and its shrubs bushy. Instead, the well he's trying to scuttle is critical infrastructure for the next decades of growth for the City and has nothing to do with irrigating anything for anybody.

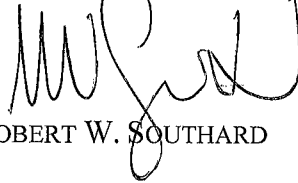
Once again, I don't know if this was authorized in advance by anyone, or if the lobbyist is just roaming the landscape to see what damage he can cause. No matter, it is your lobbyist stating in almost so many words that UW does in fact want to control the City's water system. The lobbyist probably doesn't know this – nor of course would an out-of-town lobbyist care – but it's also a strike at the City's ability to develop to the north. Probably if this lobbyist knew or cared about this town he would understand, as you do, that the north is the key place for the next

Tara Evans, General Counsel
April 21, 2021
Page 3

decades to develop housing, not merely for the general good folks of Laramie, but for UW's faculty and staff. It may just be sport for the lobbyist, but it's Laramie's lifeblood.

Even while recognizing that the relationship between the City and the University has on this topic been strained of late, the April 9th letter startled the City. This is the type of vitriol that one could expect in more-populated states, but it doesn't belong in Wyoming. It's that kind of thing that begins rifts that are hard to repair. I look forward to that retraction.

VERY TRULY YOURS,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Southard', written over the typed name below.

ROBERT W. SOUTHARD