

OUR OPINION

DA's investigation tarnishing the work of many good people

The news that the Windsor-Severance Fire Protection District is being investigated by the Weld County District Attorney's Office will probably shock some people.

But, it shouldn't shock everyone. Those who are close to the district have known for years that the fire district's board of directors has been operating in an old, out-dated manner for decades. The past two chiefs and the current interim chief have warned the board about how it does business – repeatedly.

Their advice went largely unheeded. That arrogance has led to this – a day of reckoning.

While the DA's office is mum about the focus of the investigation, there is an abundance of evidence to suggest that charges, when formally filed, will be serious, possibly felonies.

It's a shame, too. The town owes a lot to the volunteer firefighters and staff who have worked and slaved over the past 50-plus years to build this district into what it is today.

But, somewhere along the way, some people have lost their moral and ethical compass and tarnished the goodwill of so many others.

We don't know explicitly what the charges against the district will be, but we do know:

- > It is not ethical to contract out fire district business to a business owned or operated by a member of the board or a member of the fire district staff. That's a huge conflict of interest. Saying that's the way it's always been done doesn't make it right.

- > Having decisions made by board members individually without a full board vote is a no-no.

- > So are secret meetings.
- > And not posting board meetings in a timely manner.

- > And deciding to enforce operations work is also not a function of the board.

We could go on and on.

Unfortunately, the real reason for the investigation is likely much more serious than this speculation.

Sadly, we will soon know.

WINDSOR KEY PHONE NUMBERS

Windsor Town Board members

- > Mayor John Vazquez: (970) 674-1679
- > Mayor Pro-Tem Matthew O'Neill: (970) 674-8718

Trustees

- > Don Thompson: (970) 686-5686
- > Kristie Melendez (970) 686-7389
- > Robert Bishop-Cotner: (970) 686-9761
- > Mike Carrigan: (970) 674-9160
- > Jon Slater: (970) 674-0806

Windsor town staff

- > Town manager: Kelly Arnold, kamold@windsorgov.com, (970) 674-2400

- > Town clerk: Patti Garcia, (970) 674-2404 Chew, (970) 674-2423

- > Town engineering director: Dennis Wagner, dwagner@windsorgov.com, (970) 674-2406

- > Town planning director: Joe Plummer, (970) 674-2436

- > Town public works director: Terry Walker, (970) 674-5400

- > Town attorney: Ian McCargar, (970) 482-0212

- > Finance and information systems director: Dean Moyer, dmoyer@windsorgov.com, (970) 674-2418

- > Town sales tax clerk: (970) 686-7476
- > Town parks-recreation director: Melissa

Other important numbers

- > Emergency: 911
- > Town Hall customer service desk: (970) 674-2400
- > Police department nonemergency: (970) 686-7433
- > Parks & recreation/community recreation center: (970) 674-3500
- > Public works: (970) 674-5400
- > Planning & building: (970) 674-2436
- > Sales tax office: (970) 674-2486
- > Utility billing: 674-2403



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WMS thanks families for Honor Flight donations

Many thanks to all of the families and businesses who supported the WMS Honor Flight fundraisers. Students raised just over \$750 through our advisory-class coin war. The following family or business sponsors will match the money brought in by students:

- Sixth Grade: Bill Kramer, Brian Moore family, Hopkinson family, Connors family, Englert family, Lamfers family, Jensen family, Larry Bathauer.
- Seventh Grade: Thomas family,

Signature Bank/Clay Drake, Telesto Solutions, Bungalow Coffee, Kawamura family, Velocity Consulting, Schneider family.

Eighth Grade: Colberg family, Dahlgren family, Thomas family, Velocity Consulting, Nicoson family, Good Samaritan Senior Living Resort, Keith and Deb Jensen.

Exploratories: Cunningham family, Craig family, Medeiros family, Wendy Seaman, Telesto Solutions, Chris and Janet Adams, Moran family, Crowley family, Grappler's Ink Sportswear, Pathways Hospice

Additional donors were Elaine

Ryan, Debbie Stromberger, and Jeanne Findley.

Our Honor Flight Swing Dance fundraiser was also a big success, raising another \$650. A huge thank-you goes out to the many students and parents who volunteered the night of the dance. We couldn't have done it without you.

That money, plus a generous donation of \$1,000 from Martin Lind/Water Valley, will allow Windsor Middle School to sponsor three veterans on the April Honor Flight to Washington, D.C., in April, 2011.

WINDSOR MIDDLE SCHOOL STAFF