



The Email Express



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Published by Denver City Councilman Charlie Brown

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Council Votes Nov. 7 on Banning Texting in Public Meetings



Art by Karl Wimer. No taxpayer dollars were used to pay for this cartoon.

It's another Monday night meeting of the Denver City Council. Dozens of citizens have gathered in the ornate council chamber on the fourth floor of the City and County building for a controversial public hearing. It's a time-honored tradition (mandated for land use issues) that gives interested constituents 3 minutes at the podium to speak directly to elected officials and tell them what's on their minds.

After waiting for the council to finish its regular business (which can take hours), the public hearing begins with the council president banging the gavel and, in a scripted message, instructing the audience: "As a courtesy to those in attendance, please turn off your cellphones and pagers."

Sadly, the same rule does not apply to Denver's 13 city council members, some of whom are often observed receiving e-mails and texting in the meeting. This raises a simple question: Why is it called a "public hearing" if some council members are clearly not listening?

What Ever Happened To Common Courtesy

At one recent public hearing, I observed several colleagues with hands below their desktops, eyes focused down, trying to hide their frantic texting during much of the public hearing. The president called each speaker by name to the podium, located a few steps from council members. But even the close proximity didn't matter. Texting continued as some members seemed oblivious to the

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This is Councilman Brown's proposed addition to the president's scripted message (after telling citizens to turn off their cellphones) before public hearings:

"In view of open records considerations, our requirement to provide a full and fair public hearing, and as a courtesy to our citizens here to testify before us, City Council members will please refrain from texting or e-mailing during the hearing."

Contact Us

District Office
2324 East Exposition Ave.
Denver, CO 80209

(720) 337-6666
FAX (720) 337-6661
Charlie.Brown@denvergov.org

Council Aides

Carol Singer
Carol.Singer@denvergov.org
Sydne Harwick
Sydne.Harwick@denvergov.org

Visit us online at
www.denvergov.org/

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speakers. It was a behavior that clearly irked many in the audience.

Skirting Open Records Laws

State and city officials receiving text messages during meetings has become increasingly common. It's time we adopt rules that ensure our open-meetings laws and disclosure rules (all which require decisions and most deliberations to be public) keep pace with the changing technology of the digital age.

In a recent Detroit News article, Robin Herrmann, general counsel for the Michigan Press

Association, said electronic communication can keep information from the public.

"Before the use of all these devices, if a member of a public body had a question for their council, they would say it out loud. If two people are texting and it has to do with the business of the public body, that sort of communication – which is informing their decisions – should take place in public," Herrmann maintains.

Closer to home, Colorado Common Cause Executive Director Jennifer Flanagan said "The core of our open meetings law is to ensure that decisions are made through public deliberations. People rightfully have an expectation that they will be heard when coming to participate at a public meeting," she said.

"Allowing the use of texting and other electronic communications is problematic no

and to those who have come to speak before the council, by giving your full attention," he said.

"The Colorado Senate completely prohibits texting in the Senate chambers and in all other official meetings," according to Denver Assistant City Attorney David Broadwell. "The House rule, however, is more liberal," he notes. The Denver City Council rule book is silent on the issue. "Currently, there is

"Allowing the use of texting and other electronic communications is problematic no matter how you look at it. The core of our open meetings law is to ensure that decisions are made through public deliberations."

—Jennifer Flanagan, Executive Director Colorado Common Cause

nothing whatsoever in the council rules about the use of electronic devices during meetings," Broadwell says.

We can fix this. We can change our council

matter how you look at it. If it is related to the public discourse, it violates the open meetings law. If it is not — for example checking game scores or doing other work — then it's just disrespectful," Flanagan said.

Mayor Michael Hancock agrees. "As a former Denver city councilman, I think it's a good idea to limit the use of cellphones during public hearings. It's about being courteous to your fellow council members,

rules and say "c ya" to text messaging and e-mail during city council public meetings. In early November, I will bring a proposed rule change to the full council. If you are in agreement with this change, please contact your council member urging support.

A ban shows we practice good manners; it would reinforce our belief that citizens presenting at council meetings will be heard and their time valued; and, most important, it would be a reminder that the Denver City Council hasn't forgotten for whom we work.

Mayor Hancock Appoints Lauri Dannemiller as Manager of Parks and Recreation

Mayor Michael Hancock has appointed Lauri Dannemiller as the manager of Parks and Recreation. Dannemiller has been the executive director of the Denver City Council for the past 6 years. She has more than 20 years of management experience in municipal settings within organizations of varying sizes. She also has 10 years of experience in parks and recreation and holds a master's degree in Recreation Administration.



Lauri Dannemiller

"I've worked with Lauri for 8 years and know that she will do an excellent job as our new Parks manager," Councilman Brown said. "She's a good listener, and at the same time, she will not shy away from making tough decisions dealing with the myriad of challenges that lie ahead."

"Tuesdays with Charlie" on KNUS

Every Tuesday morning around 8:15, Councilman Brown is interviewed on Steve Kelley's show "Kelley and Company." He answers a variety of questions on city issues for about 5 minutes. Tune into 710 AM.



University Park Celebrates 125 Years

On Sunday, Sept. 25, the University Park Community Council (UPCC) held the 125th anniversary celebration of University Park. The afternoon gathering concluded with Councilman Brown serving as auctioneer. The auction items included were Betsy Johnson Welty's original painting of Chamberlain Observatory, and two items from Councilman Brown: Chamberlain Observatory painting by Steve Tracy and a night at the Hotel Monaco. The auction raised \$890 for UPCC.



2012 Denver Budget

Edward Scholz is the budget director for the city and county of Denver. He is a certified public finance officer and a graduate of the Senior Executives in State and Local Government program at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government.



Ed Scholz

The city has just finished drafting the 2012 budget for the City Council's review. After a public hearing on October 24, city council will vote on the budget November 7th. The city charter requires a balanced budget and city staff begin working on the budget development process in the spring of each year.

Where does the City and County receive its revenue?

The City's main operating fund (\$908 million in 2012) receives revenue from various sources, including:

- Sales and use tax – 50%
- Property tax – 8%
- All other taxes – 9%
- Fines, fees, user charges – 28%

Other major funds include DIA and Wastewater (both funded with user fees), and Human Services (primarily funded with state and federal funds).

How does the city and county spend its money?

The city relies upon staff to deliver most of its services, so personnel costs are approximately 70 percent of the budget. This is typical of most local governments. Fifty percent of the budget is spent delivering safety services (police, fire and sheriff). The next two largest costs are Public Works at 9 percent and Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services, at 8.5 percent. The balance of the budget goes toward Community Planning and Development, Courts, Environmental Health, and internal functions (finance, technology services, human resources, legal, etc.).

What were the impacts from the recession?

In 2009, revenues dropped back to 2005 levels and, while they are growing again, they have not recovered fully. In fact, revenues are still \$80 million less than they would have been if not for the recession.

The city has had to close budget deficits in each of the last four budgets totaling \$446 million, or about 13 percent of the budget each year.

What has the city done to address the budget deficits?

The city reduced more than 600 positions from the workforce, or 7 percent since 2009. This has been done through increased efficiencies, consolidating functions, and improving technology. Sacrifice

has been made by city employees in terms of pay (five furlough days) and benefits and some services have been reduced, such as Channel 8 programming and library

hours. Some of the savings has been one-time savings and some will continue for years to come. If not for the permanent reductions made, the 2012 deficit would have \$250 million instead of the \$100 million that was required to be solved.

If the city has deficits, why do you keep building?

The city is currently building the final projects from the 2007 bond programs authorized by voters. The majority of these projects were rehabilitation projects that improved our existing infrastructure, many of which reduce future operating maintenance costs. The projects also created hundreds of local jobs during the worst of the economy. The program is being delivered on time and under budget from what was originally presented to voters.

How do I know if the city is doing the right things to address these problems?

In 2010, during the worst of the recession, the city was upgraded to a AAA bond rating by all three rating agencies. Very few local governments have achieved this highest rating. This is a testament to our financial policies that require adequate reserves for economic downturns and our willingness to make difficult decisions to reduce costs while maintaining core services. This rating makes it cheaper for us to borrow funds for future bond construction programs.

“The city reduced more than 600 positions from the workforce, or 7% since 2009. This has been done through increased efficiencies, consolidating functions, and improving technology.”

—Ed Scholz

Budget Director, city of Denver

Free Leaf Drop Sites



The Denver LeafDrop program, a service of Denver Public Works Solid Waste Management, gives residents the opportunity to keep leaves off the street and out of the trash this fall. It is an environmentally friendly way to dispose of leaves. They should never be swept into the street because they can clog storm sewers. Keeping the leaves out of the trash also reduces the amount of waste in the landfill and improves soil quality!

Leaves can be dropped off Monday through Friday 6:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. from Oct. 3 through Dec. 2 at the Havana Nursery or the Denver Solid Waste Transfer Station. Saturday drop-off will be held Nov. 5, 12, and 19, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Transfer Station. Sunday drop-offs will be Nov. 6, 13, and 20, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at South High School, 1700 E. Louisiana Ave, and other locations throughout the city. Leaves may be brought to the sites in plastic bags or brown paper yard debris bags.

For more information on LeafDrop, call 720-865-6810 or visit www.denvergov.org/denverrecycles

CitySet Breaks Ground on Sept. 14

On Wednesday, Sept. 14, Councilman Brown joined Glendale Mayor Larry Harte and Navin Dimond, founder of Stonebridge Companies, for the groundbreaking of CitySet, a future premier hospitality and entertainment destination located at South Colorado Boulevard and Cherry Creek Drive South. CitySet will incorporate dining, entertainment, shopping, and lodging in the Cherry Creek region. CitySet will represent the cornerstone of the proposed entertainment district known as the Glendale River Walk Development Project — a multi-year phased project — and will offer 25,000 square feet of high-end retail and restaurant space and a new hotel. The proposed Glendale River Walk Project completion is culmination of the vision set forth by city planners and citizens for this community in 1991, to create an ambience for shopping, dining, entertainment and overnight lodging in Glendale.

Mayor Harte can only speak highly of this project. “Working with Navin Dimond and the Stonebridge Company to develop the CitySet project has been very fulfilling. It is important to us to maintain strong relationships with developers and treat them like partners throughout the planning, building and maintaining of projects. We have been able to do that with every development in Glendale since 2002.



Design of CitySet, located in Glendale at Colorado Blvd. and Cherry Creek Drive S.

“Our staff knows that it is in everyone’s best interest to keep planning and moving forward so that the project can be started on time. They were engaged throughout the process – as well as our City Planning Commission and City Council. Discussions and necessary approvals moved along swiftly, thanks to the efforts of everyone involved.

“CitySet is a first-class project that has generated great interest among the local residents and businesses – the feedback we have heard has all been positive. We are looking forward to the grand opening late next year.”

Heinz Compagnie Celebrates 20 Years on South Gaylord

Who: Heinz Schaeffer

What: Heinz Compagnie Salon, <http://heinzco.com>

Where: 1093 S. Gaylord St. 303-777-7447

Heinz Schaeffer was raised near Hanover, Germany, where his parents owned three salons. He grew up watching them quite a bit and always admired them. At 17, he started cutting hair himself. He moved from Germany to Texas before finally settling in Denver.

“I see hair trends evolve on a yearly basis and inspiration can come from the most surprising places. Right now, I see short styles returning, short geometric lines, and, of course, bangs,” Schaeffer says.

Schaeffer has clients who have been with him throughout his career, and he has loved seeing their styles evolve and change. He does make a habit, though, of keeping room in his schedule for new faces, because “I love new challenges and creative visions,” he says.

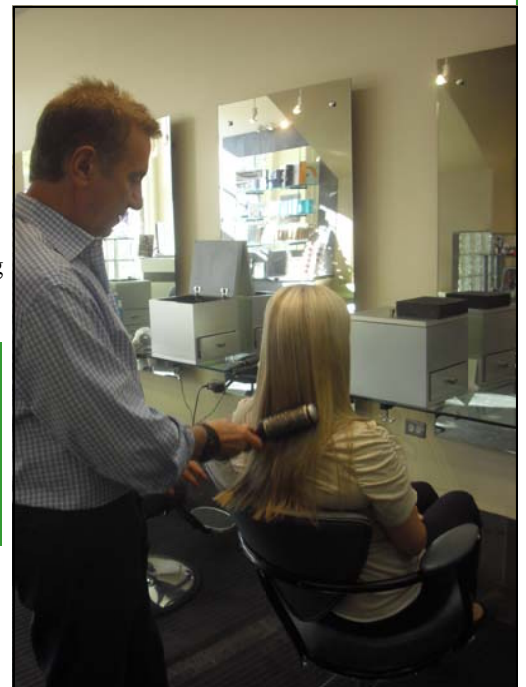
“Right now, I see short styles returning, short geometric lines, and, of course, bangs.”
—Heinz Schaeffer
Owner, Heinz Compagnie

According to Schaeffer, the most challenging aspect about the salon is that the business is a living industry that changes faster than any other. “Staying fashion-forward in every aspect from techniques to styles is a challenge but a rewarding one,” he says.

The aspect Schaeffer enjoys most about the business is seeing people leave the shop happier than when they came in. “Making people feel beautiful is what has kept me in the business for so long,” he says.

Schaeffer’s salon features five stylists and three colorists, including himself. The salon features haircutting and styling, specializing in formal and special occasion styles. His other services include make-up applications and waxing.

Schaeffer has been located on Old South Gaylord for 20 years and on Saturday, Nov. 5, the salon is celebrating its 20th anniversary from 5 to 8 p.m. It is a celebration for clients old and new and a commemoration of the most successful fashion-forward salon on South Gaylord. Stop by and introduce yourself and enjoy a conversation with Heinz and his staff.



Heinz Schaeffer styling a client’s hair at his salon

Colleague Profile: Jeanne Robb, District 10

Council Service: Elected to the council in 2003 and served as Council President from 2008-210. When not serving as Council President, I chaired and now again chair Council's Blueprint Denver Committee, now known as Land Use, Transportation, and Infrastructure.

Bio: Growing up outside of Kansas City, we vacationed to the Spanish Peaks in southern Colorado. After graduating from Mount Holyoke College, I earned a master's degree in Teaching at Northwestern and taught high school on the west side of Chicago. My husband and I made Denver our home in 1974. I taught business writing part-time at community college and as a consultant, participated in neighborhood organizations, worked on some political campaigns, and was a council aide before my election.

Family: Widowed, three adult children and my new amazing Grandson, Jack.

Policy Interests: I am passionate about the built environment and how land use and transportation work together. District 10 boasts wonderful parks and parkways, which are vital to quality of life.

What issues concern your constituents the most? I hear a lot about density issues and how they affect economic development and quality of life in neighborhoods, parking problems, and safety.

What are your proudest accomplishments? Colfax revitalization; Main Street zoning; successful resolution of Fillmore Plaza design

and construction; Cheesman Park and Civic Center improvements.

What has been your greatest frustration? The most difficult issue has been dealing with crime and drug issues on Capitol Hill. Things are improving, but it's frustrating that many of our efforts result only in moving the crime rather than removing it.

What has surprised you the most? Even though I know that government is different from business and involves more public process, I get frustrated by how long things take.

What's one thing you would change about Denver? Plant even more trees along Colfax and improve the public right-of-way throughout Denver.

If you were mayor for a day, what one thing would you do? Take down I-70 through Globeville, Elyria, and Swansea and keep the National Western Stock Show.

What do you do for fun? Besides needling Charlie Brown, I like to read, walk, go to the Spanish Peaks, and spend time with friends and family.



Too Many Folks Are Living This Country Song

♪ "Everything to know about me / Is written on this page / The number you can reach me / My social and my age / Yes I served in the army / It's where I learned to shoot / Eighteen months in the desert / Pourin' sand out of my boots / No I've never been convicted of a crime / I could start this job at any time ♪

♪ I got a strong back / Steel toes / I rarely call in sick / A good truck / What I don't know / I catch on real quick / I work weekends / If I have to / Nights and holidays / Give you 40 / And then some / Whatever it takes / Three dollars and change at the pump / Cost of livin's high and goin' up ♪

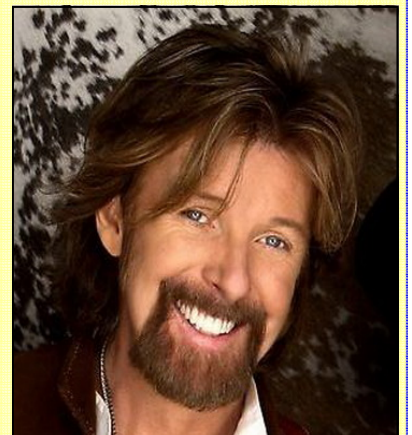
♪ I put Robert down as a reference / He's known me all my life / We attend the same church / He introduced me to my wife / Gave my last job everything / Before it headed south / Took the shoes off of my children's feet / The food out of their mouths / Yesterday my folks offered to help / But they're barely getting by themselves ♪

♪ I'm sure a hundred others have applied / Rumor has it you're only takin' five ♪

♪ I got a strong back / Steel toes / I'm handy with a wrench / There's nothing I can't drive / Nothing I can't fix / I'll work sun-up to sun-down / Ain't too proud to sweep the floors / Bank has started calling / And the wolves are at my door / Three dollars and change at the pump / Cost of livin's high and goin' up" ♪

"Cost of Livin' " performed by Ronnie Dunn, written by Philip Coleman. The song is the second single from Dunn's self-titled album, Ronnie Dunn, which was released June 7, 2011, by Arista Nashville. It is currently #19 on Billboard's Top Country Songs.

"I'll work sun-up to sundown / Ain't too proud to sweep the floors / Bank has started calling / And the wolves are at my door."



Ronnie Dunn, formerly of Brooks & Dunn. The group split up early last year.

Tidbits and Outrages

A Theme Runs Through It

- “In your country club, your church, your business, about 15 percent of the people are screwballs, lightweights and boobs and you don’t want people like that not represented in the Congress.”

Former U.S. Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyo.
The Denver Post

- “I feel like our politics right now is so cartoonish and so unhelpful and so small compared to the challenges we have to confront. I wish I could tell you that things are less dysfunctional in the U.S. Congress than they appear to be. It’s worse than you think.”

U.S. Sen. Michael Bennet, D-Colo.
Aspen Times

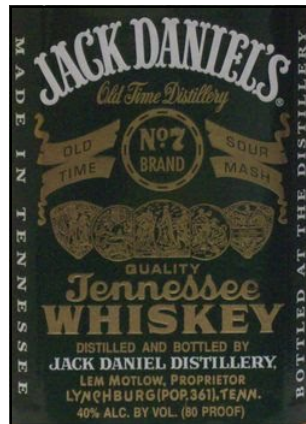
- “We are in a remarkable moment. Everyone understands the stakes. Everyone wants action. From comfortable professionals to people barely scraping by, everyone wants both parties, to work together, to think of our country and not themselves. And of course everyone really gets this except Washington, which says it gets it and doesn’t.”

Peggy Noonan, columnist
The Wall Street Journal 10/9/11

America: Awash in Drink

“By 1830, the average American male over the age of 15 was consuming the equivalent of 88 bottles of whiskey a year. Women were first to mount a war against the sale of alcohol. No force would prove more potent than the late 19th century Anti-Saloon League, the most powerful pressure group that ever existed in the U.S.”

Ken Burns and Lynn Novick
“Prohibition”
PBS 10/2-4

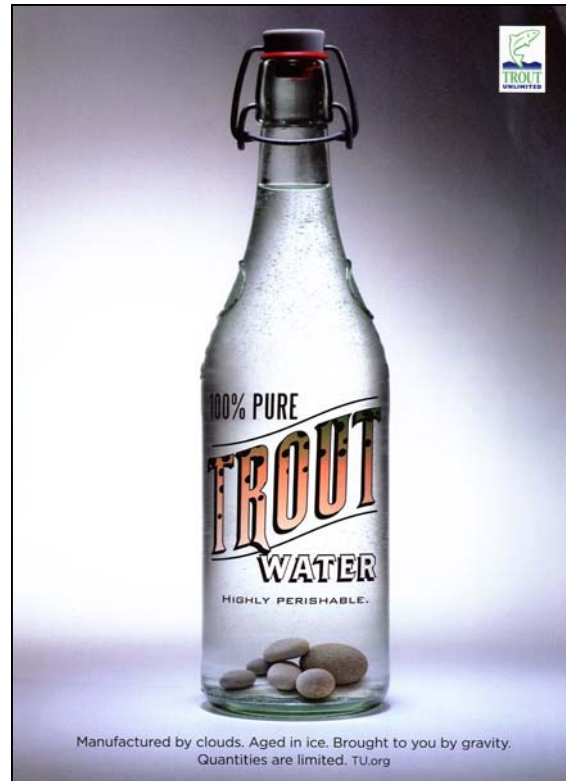


Extreme Gardening

“With the current world record at 1,810 pounds (a Smart car, by comparison, weighs 1,600 pounds), these growers can see the most important milestone of all on the horizon, the one-ton pumpkin. A single seed commanded an unprecedented \$1,600.”

Julia Scott
“The Great Pumpkin Race”
The New York Times 10/6/11

Nice Catch



Advertisement from Trout Unlimited magazine, Fall 2011, a Coldwater Conservation Company with 140,000 members

Forget door-to-door campaigning

“What Facebook provides at the moment is an efficient way to reach someone without having to reach everyone and an enormous platform to get a message across without interference from the conventional media.”

“The Like-me Election”
Bloomberg Businessweek 10/2/11

Gaming on Preservation

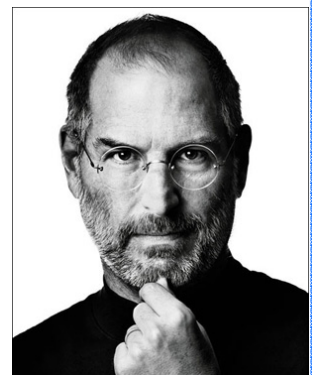
\$378 million.

Amount in casino taxes distributed to the Colorado Historical Society since 1992

Genius

“Steve Jobs was born in 1955, into an era of rotary phones and room-size computers. He died on Oct. 5, 2011, having put a computer inside a phone and that phone into 120 million pockets.”

Bloomberg Businessweek 10/10/11



Steve Jobs