

Mike Kennedy's response to Mary Souza's critical claim that Coeur d'Alene City Council doesn't make eye contact with speakers during public forum:



MikeK on Mary: Make Eye Contact, You Ninnies on May 05 at 9:27 a.m.

Interesting. Linda Wright of the Tubbs Hill Foundation after the meeting actually thanked me for smiling at her "a few times" during her testimony - she said she doesn't love public speaking but is passionate about her topic and appreciated the gesture that made it a bit easier. True story and I am following up with Linda on some of her comments to explore them further.

So I was on that dias during the meeting and yes I have five pages of notes on public comment. It's helpful for me to write down comments that resonate - pro or con. Maybe it's a retention or learning style, I don't know, I take a lot of notes in many instances when I can.

But Susie Snedaker prompted this commentary by calling the council out publicly from the dias as though we weren't paying attention because some were taking notes. I was rather stunned at Susie's caustic approach, even though I've come to expect Susie to be caustic. Mary Souza is right that I stopped taking notes during Susie's remarks after she said what she said. I had actually thought that Susie had an interesting idea regarding traffic flow (albeit one that has been discussed by staff before), but after she was so pointedly rude in her comments, I lost interest in what she was saying and simply waited silently for her to complete her statements.

I have more good feedback from other citizens now - five pages worth - but not from Susie. Her comments reminded me of the old adage that you catch more flies with honey than with angry bitterness (yes I paraphrase old adages).

A relatively neutral (and fair-minded) observer told me later that Susie should have been publicly upbraided for her rudeness by someone on the council - because she was out of line. That's not this Mayor's style, and I have come to realize that there is little value in playing a game of meeting public rudeness with rudeness.

Councilwoman Deanna Goodlander's response:

deannagoodlander on Mary: Make Eye Contact, You Ninnies on May 05 at 9:08 a.m.

Except for taking a moment to write down the speakers name I always try to look at the speaker and listen to what they are saying. It is my job as a councilman to pay attention to

any public input. Sometimes I think we all try to write down any ideas that come from that public input in our own notes. I keep my own notes and often refer to them. As far as the comment on the stage in Mary's notes, I don't think any of us really love that venue, I know I preferred the old council chambers where we were elevated just enough to see all of the audience, it is really hard to see the audience from the stage, however, when we built the library we knew that having the television studio at that location was preferable. We could not justify two locations and equipment costwise, so we moved over and made it work. The Library is used for so many more functions that can be televised.

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