

PRESS RELEASE:

10/12/2011

After many years of my family and me serving the citizens of Coeur d'Alene, I find myself forced to come to the public with this announcement. There is a law titled (18-1359, Using Public Position for Personal Gain) that was enacted in 1990. The law contains the provision that "no member of a council member's family or mayor may be appointed or employed by the city with which the salary or wages are paid from the general fund." With that said, for many years two of my grandsons have worked part-time within the city and for the last two summers a third grandson has worked seasonally for the street department. My grandsons were never appointed or hired by me; my family has always assumed that they could always apply as well as any other citizen in this community for these part-time positions. I have never, let me repeat, never used my position to further the aspirations of any employee of the city including those of my grandsons. Unbeknownst to them or me, they were ineligible for employment.

I felt compelled to come to the citizens of the community, it is necessary for the continued transparency, I have always displayed with my constituents and the public at large.

The moment the city was informed of this, my grandson's employment came to an end on Thursday October 6th, 2011. I have never used my position to further the aspirations of any city employee including my grandsons. I have always been honest in my public service; my public record states the same. This was an innocent mistake made by members of the city. Two of my grandsons which are attending college full-time, one at the University of Idaho-Coeur d'Alene and the other Lewis and Clark State College – Coeur d'Alene. The third, a street maintenance worker, is now without a job in which his next options are limited in this current economic environment. I admire those who are seeking to better themselves with an education and at the same time trying to sustain themselves with jobs that will pay the bills while attending a higher education institution. It is important to recognize how important higher education is in this new global economy.

While the innocent victims are my grandsons, they will be unemployed and without income. They are highly capable and will try to move on to better opportunities and new careers. While I believe it is unfair in this economic climate, especially considering these positions were part-time, I am very appreciative this came to light and the matter was resolved. However, I am not appreciative, of those who believe that in a heated campaign, it is alright to attack my family at their core. I am not from a family of wealth, nor are my grandsons; these jobs had meaning to them. Our family reflects the hard working blue collar individuals who have helped create the wonderful city we live in. For this reason, I admire those who work hard for a living to support their families and themselves no matter the job or description, title or type.

I have served this community for over 40 years. I have always been honest. I have dedicated my time and efforts to the betterment of the city as a whole and my intentions are to continue that endeavor. I am proud of my part in the success of the many accomplishments this city has created with the support of the city. Many jobs have been created such as the Kroc center, the library, Riverstone, and the new education corridor. These are jobs that will not be shipped overseas, and they will remain in our community.

It is well known that I have taken a strong stance on the McEuen Field redevelopment project, believing that the tax payers of this community should have a larger voice in this project and should be given the opportunity to vote on whether this project meets their approval. I have never taken the position that there should be no change or updates to McEuen Field but the present plan includes some aspects that I cannot support including the present price tag. This is an endeavor that will transform the landscape of our downtown and the taxpayers of this city should have a “right” to have the largest voice in this transformation.

It has always been my view that any political contest, be it national, state, or local, should be decided on the issues that most affect the public. A rigorous and thoughtful exchange of ideas should not just be welcome, but is owed to those deciding upon the future of our excellent city. Left with no issue upon which to discredit me and a heated dissatisfaction with my position taken on McEuen, there are individuals who have chosen to go after the core of my being; my family during this campaign. I have been given a choice, if you can call it that. I could have resigned and I believe a vocal minority was hoping this would be the outcome; however, after many discussions and contemplations of my next steps concerning my public service, my family and I have decided that it is with the best interests in mind, including those of my grandchildren, that I continue to serve the City as a Public Servant and move forward with my election campaign. I have chosen this decision for the citizens of Coeur d’ Alene, my family, and the hard-working employees of the city of Coeur d’ Alene.

It is not with an easy heart that I have come to this decision, nor do I make this decision based on what is best for me, I do this for the best interest of my three grandchildren who have worked for this city for many years under the impression that if they had the experience, knowledge and work ethic they were eligible to obtain and maintain part-time employment with this city. At no time was I, or any of my family notified by the human resources department or any legal officials within the City that I, nor them, were breaking or having illegally obtained employment. At no time, did I use my influence, to sway or pressure the city to gain employment for members of my family. Based upon this unfortunate experience, I would recommend that the city’s legal team and human resources department conduct a complete review of the Federal and Idaho employment laws to ensure this type of situation does not occur again in the future.

It has been a privilege and an honor to serve the people of Coeur d’Alene for over 40 years. These are lessons for the city to learn. I have always tried to conduct myself with the utmost honor and integrity, living up to the ideals that have made this city and its people so great. It is sad that a local city election has come to this. I am a man of integrity and have and always will run an honest, clean campaign, based on my beliefs. It must have been apparent to some that the only chance they had to defeat me, was to defeat me at my core. You will not win with that tactic. Let me be very clear, today is a sad day for me and my family, but I believe the citizens of Coeur d’Alene will persevere. My family and I have suffered many worse losses over the years.

I look forward to doing further work for the good people of Coeur d’ Alene.

Loren “Ron” Edinger

208-664-6279