

ELECTION 2011

Part 4: The Short List

By Dick Farmer

It is my position that no one should run for elected office in the public sector who has not had to “make payroll” in the private sector. Private for profit corporations generate jobs, products, services, and most importantly, tax dollars. Tax dollars, in turn, are what fund the operation of government. The simplest definition of “success” in business is staying in business. Staying in business means using resources to advantage, creating value, and generating income sufficient to pay employees, pay operating costs, pay taxes and repay investors. What is left over after the paying is done is called profit. It is always easier to spend money than to make it.

In the current race for mayor all three candidates have some real world business experience. Two of the candidates also have experience holding public office. The way in which these candidates managed their political campaigns in 2007 was predictive both of their leadership styles and the conflicts that have developed. Linda Strickland won her council seat in the 2007 Primary against a field of nine other candidates. Strickland received 2,213 (27.37%) votes. Roger Tobler prevailed against Mike Pacini in the 2007 General Election receiving 2,989 (59.51%) of the votes for mayor.

- Strickland received \$3,804.00 in donations and spent \$3,804.00 on her campaign.
- Tobler received \$18,364.34 in donations and spent \$32,045.02 on his campaign.
- Strickland accepted no donations of over \$500.00.
- Tobler received \$6,737.34 (36.69% of total) in donations of over \$500.00.
- Strickland’s campaign spent \$1,400.00 on advertising with 100% of that amount going to businesses in Boulder City.

- Tobler's campaign spent \$26,188.72 on advertising with 53.54% of that amount going to businesses in Boulder City. (\$6,098.35, or 23.27%, was spent at Tobler's Home Hardware. (I wonder if Tobler gave his contributors a discount when he spent their money at his store?))

I have prepared a list of donors for both campaigns, by name and amount, for all donations totaling over one hundred (\$100) dollars. Donations are divided into two categories, "cash" and "in kind," i.e., goods and/or services. The names of some donors will be readily familiar. Others will be less so. For example, just three days after the primary election in April 2007, Boulder City Disposal made two donations of one thousand (\$1,000.00) each to the Tobler campaign. "Boulder City Disposal" is the name under which Waste Logistics, Inc., a company based in Las Vegas, operates the landfill and performs local trash pick up. On March 1st, 2007, Waste Logistics, Inc. sent a certified letter to the City seeking to exercise the extension clause in its franchise agreement. A copy is attached.

As I see it there is a short list of candidates for mayor. Seldom have the differences between two candidates, and the consequences of electing either, been more apparent. I stand by what I wrote earlier. No one should seek an elected public office before they have to "make payroll" in the private sector. In recognition of Boulder City's peculiar politics I will add two conditions. 1) That "making payroll" in a business started by and taken over from a father or father-in-law does not count. 2) That "making payroll" not be confused with "making a pay off." When you "make payroll" you pay your employees for work which they have already done. A "pay off," in contrast, is the repayment of a loan of sorts, secured with the politician's character flaws as collateral, against a future action they could not legally be paid to perform.