

Public Comment at Ashland City Council Meeting 10/3/17

Sue Wilson, 1056 Dead Indian Memorial Road, Ashland

I am here to request that the City award Christine Dodson an Outstanding Service Recognition Award

She dedicated herself to 14 years as Ashland's Senior Program Manager

The program is successful and popular by all

She was at or below budget each and every one of the 14 years.

Her outreach as well as informational and referral services were outstanding. She and her specially trained part-time staff helped countless Ashland citizens in need, such as:

- recent widows having difficulty
- adult children when a parent has a stroke and needs special care
- economically challenged elders when their limited income shrinks so much that they can no longer afford food, heat, transportation

Recently Chris, and her whole staff, was let go by Parks and Recreation after a series of subcommittee meetings. Reasons given were "personnel issues" "evasive answers at the meetings" "need for temporary financial savings" and "needing new blood" Yet anyone listening to the audio of the subcommittee would be impressed with Chris' professionalism, openness, knowledge, skill and experience. She showed willingness to explore new ideas and was light-years ahead of everyone in the room as to senior issues, centers and programs.

In fact if one listened to all the audio tapes (since the meeting minutes were slanted) one would find a disturbing pattern of the subcommittee's concerted effort to discredit and defame Christine Dodson. When she gave input on change/expansion ideas, based on her knowledge of the seniors and its senior program, the subcommittee accused Chris of having a bad attitude or causing disruption or shutting off ideas.

Why would they do this? They are a Recreation department ... so like a hammer they see a nail. Where as, the Senior Program is a fine holistic wheel of integrated social services. The subcommittee wanted to smash the wheel into a nail. That is the reason Director Black said the staff layoff was to bring in 'new blood.'

Ashland values service by dedicated people. It does not throw them out like dirty dishwater.

I hope that you will find out more about these issues on AshlandSOS.com.

In the meantime, I hope that you do the honorable thing, and give Christine Dodson an Outstanding Service Recognition Award.

Thank You.