

Mayor Zollman, and

All Members of the City Council

I would respectfully like to convey to you my concern regarding the proposed adoption of the new press policy that, in my opinion, will damage reporters' ability to cover city government. I am very strongly opposed to this policy.

In light of the many closures of local news outlets, nationwide, the ability of citizens to be well-informed, and make educated decisions about voting, and what goes on in our cities, counties, state and country, we absolutely need to have MORE ACCESS to government business, policy and decision-making, not less. How can we do this if more barriers to access are put in place for members of the press?

Passing this new press policy would, I believe, deeply damage the credibility, and trust in both the City Council and the Mayor of our small town. That trust is something I have felt since I moved here, 25 years ago.

How important is it to all of you to gamble with that trust that many constituents feel quite strongly toward those who lead the city?

If we cannot have transparency and trust locally, and if members of the press have to contend with more roadblocks and speed humps in accessing crucial information regarding local laws and policies, how are we to engage in and protect our democracy?

PLEASE DO NOT PASS THIS PRESS POLICY!

Thank you,

Debra Stretch

