

This is mayoral candidate Brigid Shea's response to an item posted in the Burnt Orange Report on March 29, 2012, at <http://bit.ly/HkOKXg>

Setting the Record Straight on BOR Allegations on WTP4

Recently, my integrity was called into question by KT Musselman of the Burnt Orange Report, who alleged that I stood to profit from the construction of Water Treatment Plant 4, among other city projects. Let's set the record straight on this spurious character attack.

1. KT Musselman has seriously misrepresented the facts on WTP-4, to the point of deliberate distortion. The 2002 contract proposal he lists was a preliminary engineering site assessment and environmental study, NOT the enormously expensive contract for the final version of the plant that is being built now. Also in 2001, the city reached its highest water use ever. Citizens still thought we might need the plant.

2. I did not apply for any contract in 2010 when the WTP-4 project was put out for bid. In fact, I turned down 2 separate appeals to participate in the contracts after they were awarded.

3. Musselman and his editor, Katherine Haenschen, appear to be acting as agents of the Lee Leffingwell campaign and are both active supporters. They have a record of doing this sort of thing in previous Austin political campaigns-acting as partisan supporters of one side, while posing as "journalists". See below an email from Katherine Haenschen actively shopping this story to endorsing groups.

From: keh303@xxxx.com
Date: Thu, 29 Mar 2012 11:10:28 -0500
Subject: Brigid Shea Bid on a WTP4 Contract

To: rwaley@xxxx.com; austinadams@xxxx.com; kedron@xxxx.com

Hey Roy, Austin and Kedron --

I wanted to make sure you saw KT's post today about how Brigid bid on WTP4 contracts back in 2002, when it was still to be located up on Bull Creek. She was included a subcontractor on the alternate bid, for which she would have done PR and communications, ostensibly in support of WTP4.

<http://www.burntorangereport.com/diary/12068/brigid-shea-received-500000-in-city-of-austin-contracts-bid-on-water-treatment-plant>

I know WTP4 is a big issue to the Sierra Club, and I just wanted to make sure you'd all seen this.

-- Katherine

4. I have publicly opposed the site location of WTP-4 for years, and I have been on record for some time opposing the final scale of the project. By 2009/2010 it had become apparent that Austin's water use had flattened out and we did not need an immediate huge investment in another plant. I said so publicly. (see letter below, dated Feb. 2010, that I urged former elected officials to sign.)

----- Forwarded message -----
From: Brigid Shea
Date: Fri, Feb 5, 2010 at 4:31 PM
Subject: Letter from former elected officials
To: Frank Cooksey <xxxx@xxxx.com>, <xxxx@xxxx.com>, Jackie Goodman <xxxx@xxxx.com>, Jackie Goodman <xxxx@xxxx.com>, Raul Alvarez <xxxx@xxxx.com>, Ann Kitchen <xxxx@xxxx.com>
Cc: Bill Bunch <xxxx@xxxx.com>

Dear friends,

I deeply believe we are on the verge of repeating the same kind of mistake that got Austin into the nuke. I'm talking about Water Treatment Plant 4. In general terms, the water plant costs too much, is in the wrong location to serve the greatest amount of new growth which is along SH 130 and is the wrong priority for the Water Utility.

We are headed into a period of historic and unparalleled drought according to a near consensus

of scientific studies. I've attached a pdf of just one page from the recent compilation of current research "Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States." Studies project more than 100 days of extreme heat (over 100 degrees) in parts of Texas by the end of this century. Even if you doubt all the studies, this last summer tells us that we have to be very aggressive about conserving water. I think building one of the most expensive water plants in the US (the price per mgd only gets reasonable if they increase the plant size from 50 mgd to 300 mgd) is the wrong direction for the city.

At the very least, the water availability assumptions behind the engineering seal and the municipal bond assurances need to be reevaluated in light of the new, alarming climate projects for increasing drought and high temperatures.

Please join me in urging city leaders to examine whether we will have an adequate water supply for the life of the plant and honestly questioning the wisdom of making this investment now. The letter is attached.

Thanks for your consideration and please let Bill Bunch know if you will sign the letter. He is compiling it and sending it out.

Best,
Brigid Shea

5. As for the salary I've earned over 11 years of working on city projects, the city has gotten a good rate of return. On the ACWP project, I took the lead in securing \$3.7M in federal grants for the water utility that they would not have gotten otherwise. The ACWP was so successful, it won several EPA awards and was named one of the top ten infrastructure projects in the nation, along with the Golden Gate Bridge and the Hoover Dam.

For more information, please visit www.brigidsheaformayor.com, write info@brigidsheaformayor.com, or call us at (512) 524-1466.