

August 6, 2018

To the Delta County Board of County Commissioners:

It has recently come to my attention that a Delta County Planning Commission member, Mr. Steve Schrock, has sent some emails to you, other employees of this administration, Planning Commission members and Area Planning Commission members. These emails did not address county business, which I understand is contrary to County policy. I have attached copies of the emails to be entered into the administrative record.

With these emails, Mr. Schrock has not only abused his access to county email lists, but he has also spread false and potentially libelous information about our non-profit, North Fork Valley Community Rights Advocates.

I am here to tell you a little about NFVCRA, to correct any misinformation that may have been disseminated, and to refute his claim that our organization is endangering Delta County citizens.

NFVCRA is a 501(c)(3) non-partisan, educational and advocacy non-profit. The mission of NFVCRA is to cultivate a safe, healthy environment for all North Fork Valley residents by protecting our community's unalienable rights to clean air, water, soil and food. We educate and advocate for non-partisan self-determination, economic resilience and energy innovation.

Our aim is to have a Community Bill of Rights passed as an ordinance in the town of Paonia that reflects the will of the citizenry. We are garnering an amazing amount of support for our Community Bill of Rights (<https://nfvcra.org/community-bill-of-rights/>), 200 signatures (and counting!) from progressives and conservatives alike. This issue spans the political spectrum: people are seeing and understanding the need to reign in corporate abuses cloaked as "personhood", they are feeling their rights as individuals being eroded, and this is a way to remedy that.

One result of all the community outreach we have been doing is that we are hearing from many people who are feeling un-represented and frustrated. Even though people are using all the usual channels to try to effect change with regard to corporate abuses, the "usual channels" of imploring county commissioners and the planning commission, writing and calling state and federal Representatives and Senators, BLM, etc. are ineffective. People feel that to be heard, something outside of the usual channels is becoming necessary. Farmers, ranchers, artists, former oil and gas workers, progressives, Democrats and Republicans alike have expressed the desire to protest in the form of non-violent civil disobedience. Most everyone understands that this valley only exists because of the water, and they are prepared to protect and keep the water clean and abundant. NFVCRA cannot and will not be organizing civil disobedience actions, but because we care about the community, we want to make sure that our neighbors who choose to organize such actions are doing so safely and that they know their rights.

NFVCRA is offering a workshop, as part of our educational directive, which will cover non-violent civil disobedience, "Know Your Rights" information, and community organizing. We are bringing trainers from Deep Green Resistance, an environmental organization that provides non-violent civil disobedience training. You can look at the guiding principles of DGR on their website <https://deepgreenresistance.org/en/who-we-are/guiding-principles-of-deep-green-resistance>. Note that number one on their code of conduct states, "DGR groups will only engage in aboveground, nonviolent activities. These can include legal demonstrations as well as civil disobedience."

Our organization is well within its rights to provide this workshop. It is almost comical to think that if we were providing some sort of subversive "eco-terrorism" training that we would be plastering it all over social media, in the newspaper, and at our fundraising events. What is not funny is that a member of the Planning Commission has taken it upon himself to start rumors, spread false information about our organization, and use fear-mongering by accusing us of planning "public infrastructure sabotage" and calling us a "threat to Delta County communities and the region".

I want to stress how very serious Mr. Schrock's baseless accusations are. You, as our representatives, should be well aware of what a member of the Planning Commission is doing and how poorly it reflects on you and Delta County as a whole. In addition to these baseless claims, I have personally witnessed Mr. Schrock's rude and unprofessional behavior at Master Plan meetings and Planning Commission meetings. I have watched him shout at other Planning Commission members as well as members of the public. I have watched him storm out of meetings in anger. I have witnessed him using this forum to promote his personal agenda during meetings purportedly restricted to county business only.

Mr. Schrock's narrative has been spun to prop up ill-conceived speculations, to slander our organization, and to attempt to shut down citizens' first amendment rights. This is unacceptable behavior from a PC member who ostensibly should be representing all citizens of Delta County. For that matter, if silence is consent, then it appears that the Planning Commission, the Board of County Commissioners, and the administrative employees all agree with Mr. Schrock's statements, since no one from this body, to my knowledge, has contacted NFVCRA to seek clarification or information about our group or our mission, or to denounce these divisive claims.

I am calling on you as my county commissioners to censor Mr. Schrock and direct him to immediately cease and desist with the fear-mongering and the spreading of false information about NFVCRA and its members. I ask that you direct him to send an email to all on that original email list, explaining that he was wrong to send out such misinformation and that NFVCRA is not endangering Delta County citizens or planning sabotage.

Perhaps this Board might like to take a closer look at Mr. Schrock's behavior and decide if it is acceptable for a member of the Planning Commission, and if persons who engage in such behaviors have the integrity to serve on the PC. I am quite sure my Commissioners do not want to find themselves in a legal setting, defending such egregious behavior. It certainly does not reflect well on this body's integrity or credibility when dealing with matters in the public interest. If members of this Board do not agree with the false statements that have been made, the unprofessional behavior, and the disregard for county policy, you can refute these claims, rectify this, and distance yourselves from it all by calling for the immediate resignation of Mr. Schrock.

Thank you for your time.

Lisa Niermann
President, North Fork Valley Community Rights Advocates
36639 M50 Rd
Hotchkiss, CO 81419