

**From:** [Marci Houseman](#)  
**To:** [Mike Applegarth](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Response to last night's meeting  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 21, 2019 12:11:13 PM

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Me again. :) To clarify, I do not believe contempt was demonstrated by any members of the City Council. Rather, it was demonstrated by some residents during the public comments portion of the meeting. And that is what I am trying to address through my response. Could you pass on my clarification?

Thank you!

On Wed, Aug 21, 2019 at 7:40 AM Marci Houseman <[marci.houseman@gmail.com](mailto:marci.houseman@gmail.com)> wrote:  
Good morning Mike,

I hope things are going well for you! I have written the following response to last night's City Council meeting. I know the proposed zoning was continued for another meeting and it will be determined whether public comments will be allowed again or not. Please share my message below with the City Council and if possible, I would like it to be read during a public comment period--when appropriate. As you can imagine, with school starting back up my work schedule has gotten quite busy and I am not able to make it to meetings right now. But I am watching them online. If I am able to attend a meeting in person, I am happy to read these remarks myself. But I wanted to share them with you and the City Council in the event that I will be unable to attend in person. Thank you for your help in passing my thoughts along to the City Council!

Have a great week!

Dear members of the City Council,

Thank you for the hard work you do on behalf of our city. I have been attending City Council meetings (in person or online) for a while now and recognize the careful deliberation you give every decision you make. The energy you expend to consider multiple perspectives is extensive and I thank you for that. The two most recent meetings (Truth in Taxation Hearing 8/13 and Rezoning conversations 8/20) have been particularly challenging for you as emotions have run high. Thank you for demonstrating courage and patience throughout.

I was unable to attend last night's meeting in person but watched online as you discussed the possible rezoning of two properties. I will share my thoughts on those proposals shortly, but first I desire to share my thoughts on the approaches demonstrated by some during the public comment portion of the meeting.

I recently finished the book "Love Your Enemies" by Arthur Brooks and have since committed to being a part of the cultural revolution that Arthur Brooks asks us each to join. I join him and many others in working to end the culture of contempt in our political arena. Mr. Brooks quotes my favorite leader--a leader whose practices I study and seek to emulate. Abraham Lincoln said: "We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not

break our bonds of affection."

In his book, Arthur Brooks argues (and I agree with him) that as a society we do not need to disagree less...we need to disagree better. I would like to share a few additional quotes from the book:

1. "He was not advocating surrender to the views of those with whom we disagree. If I believe I am right, I have a duty to stick to my views. But my duty is also to be kind, fair, and friendly to all, even those with whom I have great differences."
2. "Don't be so quick to say that your right and wrong is the only way to see things."
3. "...when we learn to see others--especially those with whom we disagree--as being just as deserving of dignity and the chance to pursue happiness as we are, only then can we build bridges in the face of differences."

I could continue sharing quotes but I want to be respectful of your time. I feel compelled to share these thoughts because one of the things that I have committed to doing is calling out contempt when I see it...and I saw it during last night's meeting.

I acknowledge that rezoning is an emotional issue with passionate people expressing passionate thoughts. And it is absolutely appropriate for us to hear from all perspectives. In fact, it is essential to making the best decisions possible. Our founding fathers disagreed more than they agreed as they sought to establish the framework for our country. These disagreements--the competition of ideas--laid the groundwork for great decisions.

Contempt is hurtful to the decision making process. We can passionately express our positions without attacking other people or demeaning what they have expressed. I call on all of us to measure what we say and the approach we take as we say it. Speak passionately. Cite evidence. Share a compelling story. But do not attack others who have an opinion that differs from our own. Instead, seek to understand why that opinion has become so important to them. Listen to learn what core value is driving that opinion. Then, look for the WHY that is common to both sides.

I conclude by sharing one more quote from the book: "The important lesson here is not that our differences are trivial or better off never discussed. It is that if we want to overcome a culture of contempt, we must look to what we have in common before we look to what makes us distinct. We have to bridge, not break."

I have taken more than enough of your time in sharing my thoughts on the meeting itself. But, I ask for a bit more time as I share my thoughts on the proposed rezoning. I agree with several statements made by residents that these two proposals are part of a bigger picture. However, the picture that I see is different from the picture communicated by some during the meeting. The bigger picture I see is that our city is at a crossroads and is facing many complex challenges as was communicated during the Truth in Taxation Hearing. Before we can address rezoning proposals, we must step back and dig into the root cause of the budget

challenges we face.

A decision was made to increase property taxes to generate needed revenue for the city. Fundamentally, we can't talk about rezoning without talking about our revenue and our tax base. In my mind, the two issues are connected. I would like to see us initiate a priority based budgeting process. I believe this process would more effectively engage stakeholders in both understanding the complex challenges we face and contributing to the conversation around possible solutions. With a shared understanding of the challenges and the priorities, we can then effectively frame the rezoning conversation. I am eager to serve our residents by being a part of shifting our approach to the budgeting process. If elected to City Council, this will be a top priority for me.

Thank you for your time and for your service.

All my best,

Marci Houseman, At-Large Candidate for Sandy City Council

Marci Houseman

Please visit my website to learn more about why I am running for Sandy City Council: <https://marcihouseman.com>.

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"We become what we want to be by consistently being what we want to become every day."  
--Richard G. Scott

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