

Phil Faccenda
C/O Stray Moose Productions
3 Anaconda Hills Drive
Black Eagle MT 59414-1211

Commissioner Rick Tryon
PO Box 5021
Great Falls, MT 59403

Greetings,

This letter is to inform you that you are using a business name, "E-City Beat" which is registered to WTF406 with the Montana Secretary of State. You have no authority to use this registered business name.

The purpose of this letter is a formal request to cease and desist from the use of the business name, "E-City Beat". We are the owners of the registered business name, "E-city Beat" We believe that using that name would put you in violation of the statutes enforced by the Montana Secretary of State.

Our registered business name, "E-City Beat" may not be used for any purpose including the regular publication of any electronic or social media publication including, but not limited to, a blog, FaceBook Page, Twitter or Instagram accounts or any video, sound recordings or printed materials.

Sincerely,

WTF 406

Sent Certified mail, return receipt requested

Please consider the following a formal complaint of potential ethics violations by City Commissioner Rick Tryon. All information contained within is based on information and belief. In the interest of brevity, I have included hyperlinks of relevant articles. The following are only a small sampling of relevant examples, however a thorough examination of all Tryon's authorship in connection with his employer should be undertaken as part of a formal investigation into this complaint.

Issue 1: Employment Relationship Between Tryon and Stray Moose Productions

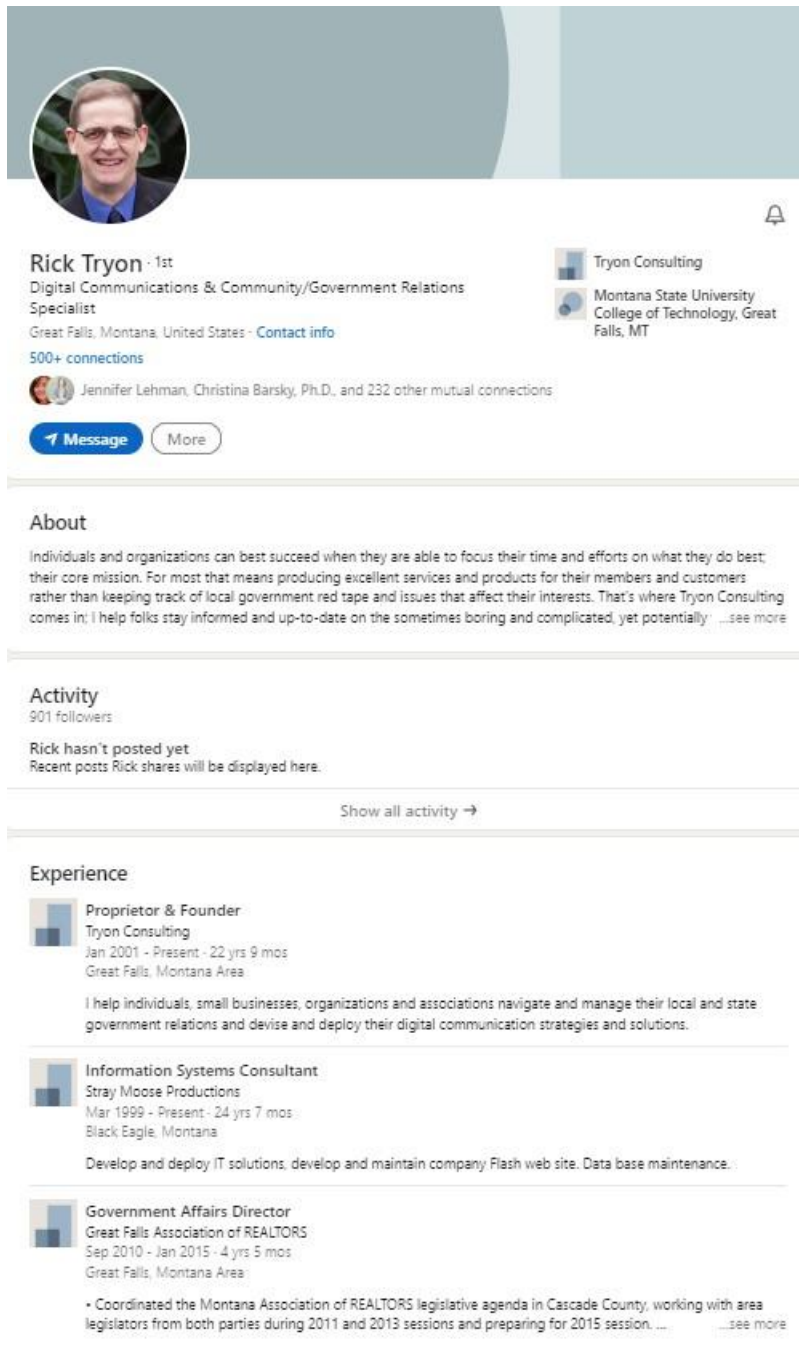
During his tenure as City Commissioner, Rick Tryon has concurrently maintained an employment relationship with Stray Moose Productions. Tryon has written numerous articles for a blog, E City Beat. Although E City Beat was not previously a registered business name in the state of Montana, it appears that E City Beat is owned and operated by Stray Moose Productions. As seen below, E City Beat's contact information indicates emails are directed to Straymoose.com.

Contact

If you have a tip or something we should know about, please drop us a line
(whistleblowers are welcome!)

You can email us at ecitybeat@straymoose.com.

Further, Tryon's LinkedIn profile lists him as an employee of Stray Moose Productions. Tryon notes that he is the "Information Systems Consultant" and has worked for Stray Moose Productions since 1999. Therefore, it appears that an employment relationship exists between Tryon and Stray Moose Productions, which logically extends to E City Beat. E City Beat allows for paid advertising on their website, and likely generates income for its owners.



Rick Tryon · 1st
 Digital Communications & Community/Government Relations Specialist
 Great Falls, Montana, United States · [Contact info](#)
 500+ connections
 Jennifer Lehman, Christina Barsky, Ph.D., and 232 other mutual connections

[Message](#) [More](#)

About
 Individuals and organizations can best succeed when they are able to focus their time and efforts on what they do best: their core mission. For most that means producing excellent services and products for their members and customers rather than keeping track of local government red tape and issues that affect their interests. That's where Tryon Consulting comes in: I help folks stay informed and up-to-date on the sometimes boring and complicated, yet potentially ...see more

Activity
 901 followers
 Rick hasn't posted yet
 Recent posts Rick shares will be displayed here.
[Show all activity](#) →

Experience

- Proprietor & Founder**
 Tryon Consulting
 Jan 2001 - Present · 22 yrs 9 mos
 Great Falls, Montana Area
 I help individuals, small businesses, organizations and associations navigate and manage their local and state government relations and devise and deploy their digital communication strategies and solutions.
- Information Systems Consultant**
 Stray Moose Productions
 Mar 1999 - Present · 24 yrs 7 mos
 Black Eagle, Montana
 Develop and deploy IT solutions, develop and maintain company Flash web site, Data base maintenance.
- Government Affairs Director**
 Great Falls Association of REALTORS
 Sep 2010 - Jan 2015 · 4 yrs 5 mos
 Great Falls, Montana Area
 • Coordinated the Montana Association of REALTORS legislative agenda in Cascade County, working with area legislators from both parties during 2011 and 2013 sessions and preparing for 2015 session. ...see more

Although Tryon undoubtedly maintains his rights to free speech while serving on the Commission, he is also bound by the standards laid out in the City of Great Falls' Code of Ethics.

Tryon's employment by Stray Moose Productions and his contributions to the blog, E City Beat, appear to be in violation of the following ethical codes:

2.21.050 - Ethical standards.

In addition to complying with the provisions of Mont. Code Ann. [Title 2](#), Chapter 2, officers and employees of the City of Great Falls shall comply with the following provisions:

A. No officer or employee of the City of Great Falls shall have an interest in a business organization or engage in any business, transaction, or professional activity which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his or her governmental duties;

[...]

C. No officer or employee shall act in his or her official capacity in any matter where he or she, a member of his or her immediate family, or any business organization in which he or she has an interest, has a direct or indirect financial or personal involvement that might reasonably be expected to:

1. impair his or her objectivity or independence or judgment, or
2. substantially conflict with the proper discharge of officer or employee's governmental duties;

D. No officer or employee shall undertake any private employment or service which might prejudice his or her independent judgment in the exercise of his or her official duties;

Regarding 2.21.050(A), and of particular concern is the relationship between Tryon's authorship for E City Beat and his ability to faithfully carry out the duties of a City Commissioner. Blog viewership generates advertising revenue. Blog contents, headlines, and stories undoubtedly draw viewership which directly affects the revenue of the blog. Topics that are salacious and controversial may draw larger viewership. Therefore, it is advantageous for authors to write in such a manner, and cover such topics, that will create the greatest amount of engagement for the business.

Tryon has discussed multiple high-profile issues occurring within the city on his blog. In fact, while Great Falls has worked to address the housing crisis, Tryon wrote multiple articles about this very topic. It is a substantial conflict for a city official to dually vote on city actions, ordinances, and even lawsuits while also profiting from and authoring media coverage about these issues. The employment relationship between Tryon and Stray Moose Productions appears to directly conflict with 2.21.050(C1-2). Tryon's employer benefits financially from increased viewership. Therefore, Tryon's employment appears to directly obfuscate his objectivity, independence, and judgement. If Tryon's articles, in which he openly identifies himself as a City Commissioner, are reviewed by his employer, it is entirely possible that a

business (Stray Moose Productions) is crafting narratives about city issues, with a city commissioner as the attributed author. Tryon cannot simultaneously act independently and objectively while writing about city issues on a blog for which he works, and about issues on which he is voting. This very same issue also conflicts with 2.21.050(D) which expressly forbids private employment or service which may prejudice independent judgment in the exercise of official duties. Below are just four examples of Tryon writing seemingly in his official capacity as City Commissioner, on a blog which generates revenue, and appears to be owned by Tryon's employer:

FUMC HOMELESS CAMP GREAT FALLS

City Press Release And Court Filing Against FUMC Great Falls 'Homeless Camp'

BY RICK TRYON MAY 31, 2022



In the interest of full transparency and in response to the dozens of complaints, comments and expressions of concern I've received over the past couple of months I am taking this opportunity to share the information made publicly available concerning the action recently taken by the City of Great Falls related to the 'homeless encampment' at the First United Methodist Church in downtown Great Falls.

Here is the full text of the press release issued by the City:

"Draft Press Release – First United Methodist Church Homeless Encampment

Over the past six months, First United Methodist Church has been expanding its homeless outreach ministry located at 610 2nd Ave N. Initially, the church provided food and space for homeless persons. Recently, the church expanded its activities into a tent and camper encampment in violation of the City of Great Falls Municipal Code.

The City has notified Pastor Jeff Wakeley that the Church is required under the City's zoning ordinance to obtain a Conditional Use Permit to even operate any type of homeless shelter in

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The City has notified Pastor Jeff Wakeley that the Church is required under the City's zoning ordinance to obtain a Conditional Use Permit to even operate any type of homeless shelter in the first instance. The Church has since submitted a CUP application that is currently being processed by City staff, and will ultimately be presented to the Great Falls Zoning Commission within the next few weeks.

In the meantime, the Church was also placed on notice in early May that the tent and camper encampment is a separate violation of the City's zoning code, which does not permit campgrounds in the zoning district where the Church is located. The Church did not respond to that notice by removing the tents and camping arrangements as directed, so the City has now filed a lawsuit in District Court to enforce its zoning requirements.

Finally, the City has also begun the process of reviewing and responding to several citizen complaints regarding a "public nuisance" condition on the property under City Code. That process can ultimately lead to a City Commission hearing on the matter and a possible order from the City Commission that the nuisance conditions on the property be abated.

The City had hoped that First United Methodist Church would work with the MT Continuum of Care Coalition and other existing service providers to assist the homeless. Instead, First United has sought to expand its efforts stating that the City has not done enough to support a "low barrier" shelter."

Here is a [copy of the complaint for declaratory and injunctive relief](#) filed by the City in District Court to "enforce its zoning requirements".

Previous article

Great Falls Democrat Activist Smears Cops As Racist Cowards, Calls For Defund

Next article

Slaughter Crushes Groskreutz: Three Reasons



RICK TRYON

<http://www.ricktryon.com>

Rick Tryon is an entrepreneur, a singer-songwriter, and is currently serving a four year term as a Great Falls City Commissioner. Helping Montana become an even greater place to live, play and work is Tryon's passion.



<https://ecitybeat.com/commissioner-tryons-priorities-for-2022/>

<https://ecitybeat.com/commissioner-tryon-fumc-homeless-camp-update/>

<https://ecitybeat.com/marijuana-tax-revenue-for-great-falls-commissioner-rick-tryon/>

<https://ecitybeat.com/city-press-release-and-court-filing-against-fumc-great-falls-homeless-camp/>

Issue 2: Conduct Unbefitting the Public Trust

The employment relationship between Tryon and Stray Moose Productions itself is concerning and worthy of investigation. However, even absent an employment relationship, Tryon's conduct as a contributing author on E City Beat violates other ethical standards.

The most significant ethical violations exist when examining Tryon's writing under the lens of 2.10.030 (B-D)

2.21.030 - Purpose and authority.

It is the purpose of this chapter to provide a method of assuring that standards of ethical conduct for officers and employees of the City of Great Falls shall be clear, consistent, uniform in their application, enforceable, and to provide those officers or employees with advice and information concerning possible conflicts of interest which might arise in the conduct of their public duties. Such ethical standards shall inspire and stimulate each officer and employee to: [...]

B. Affirm the dignity and worth of the services rendered by government and maintain a constructive, creative and practical attitude toward urban affairs and a deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant;

C. Be dedicated to the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships so that each public servant may merit the respect and confidence of elected officials, of other officials and employees, and of the public; and

D. Recognize that the chief function of local government at all times is to serve the best interests of all of the people.

Examining first Tryon's conduct in relation to 2.21.030(B) and 2.21.030(D), Tryon has made multiple public statements that do not indicate a "deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant." One poignant example is the below article Tryon authored for E City Beat. After Neo Nazis littered a neighborhood with antisemitic and anti-trans flyers, Tryon erroneously accused the Great Falls Tribune as mischaracterizing this literature. As seen below, Tryon clearly identifies himself as a City Commissioner at the end of his article. Matters of public safety, including adherence to governmental laws regarding discrimination, are well within the purview of the city commission. It is a direct conflict for Tryon to address such matters on behalf of his employer, and even worse to abuse the public trust and openly disenfranchise members of the LGBTQ+ community who were deeply affected by this hate literature.

Tribune Misreports That 'Anti-Trans' Flyer Was Distributed In Great Falls

BY RICK TRYON APRIL 6, 2022

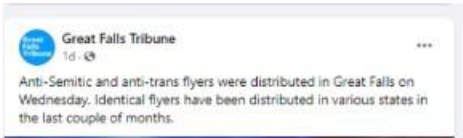
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Because I've been asked about it several times, I felt it necessary at last night's Great Falls city commission meeting to publicly correct a piece of incorrect reporting by the Great Falls Tribune last week.

The front page of the Tribune's Thursday, March 31 print addition carried the following headline, ***"Not in my neighborhood' Anti-Semitic, anti-trans flyers distributed in Great Falls"***.

Their digital content also repeated the misinformation, see screenshot below:





The Tribune reporter either hasn't actually seen the flyer in question, is being intentionally dishonest in order to create a false narrative, or is referring to material other than what I have seen.

I know this because I have seen and reviewed the anti-Semitic flyer that was distributed in Great Falls last week and there is absolutely nothing in the content of that flyer that is "anti-trans".

The Tribune should either correct the record concerning the contents of the flyer or specify how the ugly and bigoted anti-Semitic message contained therein is "anti-trans".

The attempt by the Tribune to invent a false flag, manufacture a bigoted anti-trans smear where none exists, and then try to falsely piggyback it on an actual, dangerous distribution of hate literature serves no one.

In fact, it is a disservice to the Great Falls public.

Previous article
GFPS School Board Candidate Info

Next article
Opinion: Cascade County Elections Staff Demeanor And Behavior 'Unprofessional' And 'Alarming'



RICK TRYON

<http://www.ricktryon.com>

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Tryon's article can also be read here: <https://ecitybeat.com/tribune-misreports-that-anti-trans-flyer-was-distributed-in-great-falls/>. Tryon cannot "serve the best interest of all of the people" while writing articles that ignore transphobic rhetoric, or the targeting of LGBTQ+ community members by hate groups.

Even more concerning than Tryon's more broad discriminatory statements is Tryon's consistent targeting and harassment of local citizens that disagree with him. Tryon has continually and

consistently used E City Beat to disparage and humiliate citizens that disagree with him. Many of these citizens have never run for public office, nor would they be considered a “public figure” by an interpretation of the definition.

Below are just two examples of Tryon naming public citizens in articles where he openly disparages them for disagreeing with him.

<https://ecitybeat.com/blogger-defends-calling-sheriff-rookie-dumber-tryon-responds/>

<https://ecitybeat.com/commissioner-tryon-responds-to-homophobic-misogynistic-bootlicker-comment/>

Tryon’s actions are a clear violation of 2.21.030(C) which requires Tryon to “Be dedicated to the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships so that each public servant may merit the respect and confidence of elected officials, of other officials and employees, and of the public.” Perhaps the most telling example of Tryon’s violating the public trust is Tryon’s E City Beat article in which he includes an email sent to him from a constituent. You can read the full article here: <https://ecitybeat.com/ban-gas-stoves-in-great-falls/>.

Tryon cannot reasonably maintain public trust when he is willing to share emails sent to him in his capacity as a City Commissioner for fodder on his blog. It is wholly unacceptable for Tryon to make community members who contact him in his official role the subject of public derision. Tryon clearly abuses his position when he not only degrades those who disagree with him, but also seeks to humiliate those who reach out to him in earnest. The below screenshots show Tryon’s article, in which he again clearly identifies himself as a City Commissioner.

Ban Gas Stoves In Great Falls?

BY RICK TRYON | JANUARY 25, 2023

2



Image via pexels.com

Last week I received an email in my City Commission inbox from a city resident urging a phase-out of fossil fuels for cooking and heating from our homes and businesses right here in Great Falls.

Below is the text of the email as well as my response.

I'm leaving out the senders name here, even though the email is public information and available to anyone who requests it.

The Email

Dear Tryon,

The Email

Dear Tryon,

I'm writing to you today because I believe our community must urgently pass a building electrification policy and phase fossil fuels out of our homes and businesses.

Buildings are responsible for 13% of greenhouse gas emissions in the US, and recent study from the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health found that gas stoves are responsible for 1 in 8 cases of childhood asthma – that's on par with secondhand smoke. Burning gas in homes also generates harmful emissions of formaldehyde, methane, nitrogen oxides, and other pollutants.

As your constituent, I'm urging you to do everything in your power to ensure new buildings in our community are all-electric and help phase gas and other fossil fuels out of existing buildings.

Thank you.

My Response

Ms./Mr. ---

Thank you for your comments and concerns, however as a Great Falls City Commissioner I have no intention of advocating in any way shape or form for banning the use of natural gas heating/cooking in our municipal building codes.

This idea is, quite frankly, completely antithetical to the common sense mainstream thinking of the folks I know and interact with daily in this community.

In addition, such a policy if implemented would be a potential disaster economically and an extra, unnecessary financial hardship for those in the lower income brackets in our community.

Sincerely,

Commissioner Rick Tryon

Tryon's authorship on E City Beat has significantly undermined the honor and integrity of the commission and has diminished the respect and confidence of the public in his ability to perform his duties. It is incumbent upon the City of Great Falls to uphold its code of ethics, including fully investigating the employment relationship between Tryon and Stray Moose Productions/E City Beat. Further, Tryon's attacks on the LGBTQ+ community, the unhoused, and multiple private citizens should be considered grounds for his expulsion from the City Commission. Such conduct is not only unbecoming a public servant, but also in clear violation of the city's Code of Ethics.