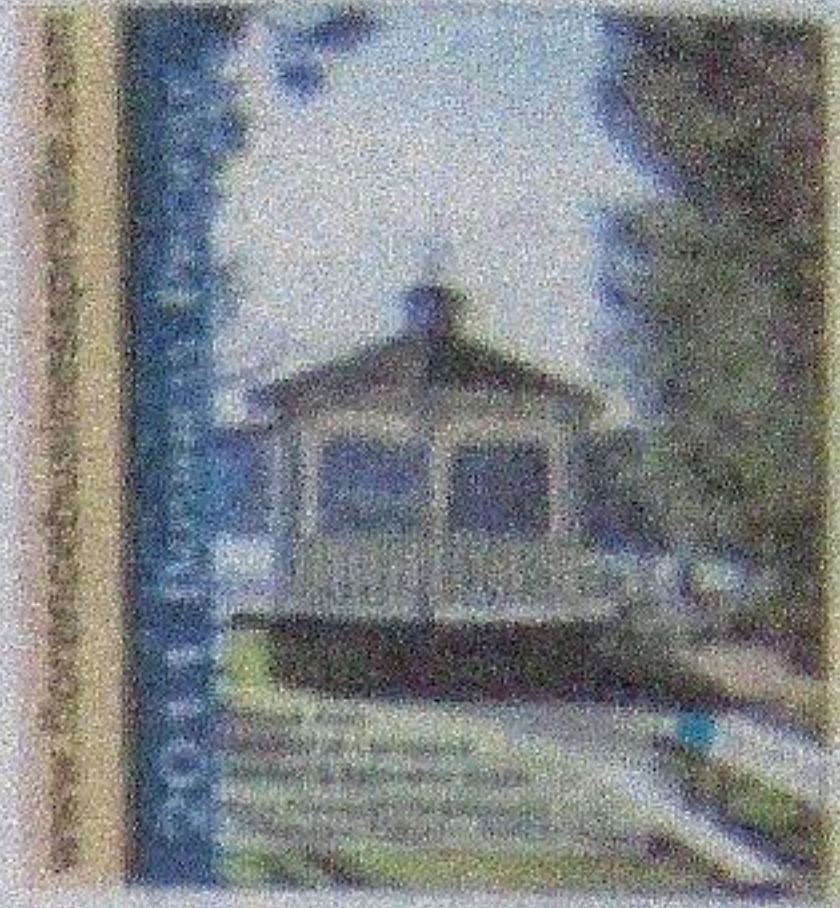


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Dunes City mayor quits: fed up with council

Eric Hauptman steps down as councilors take steps to limit mayor's control over city staff.

BY AMY BARTLETT
Siuslaw News

As baseball legend Yogi Berra once said, "It's like déjà vu all over again."

Dunes City Mayor Eric Hauptman tendered his resignation early Thursday morning, circulating a letter to City Hall and councilors via email.

Running unopposed, Hauptman won a second two-year term in the November 2010 election. Only a few months into the year, he said it was time to go. He did not mince words when he gave the reason for his resignation: the current city council.

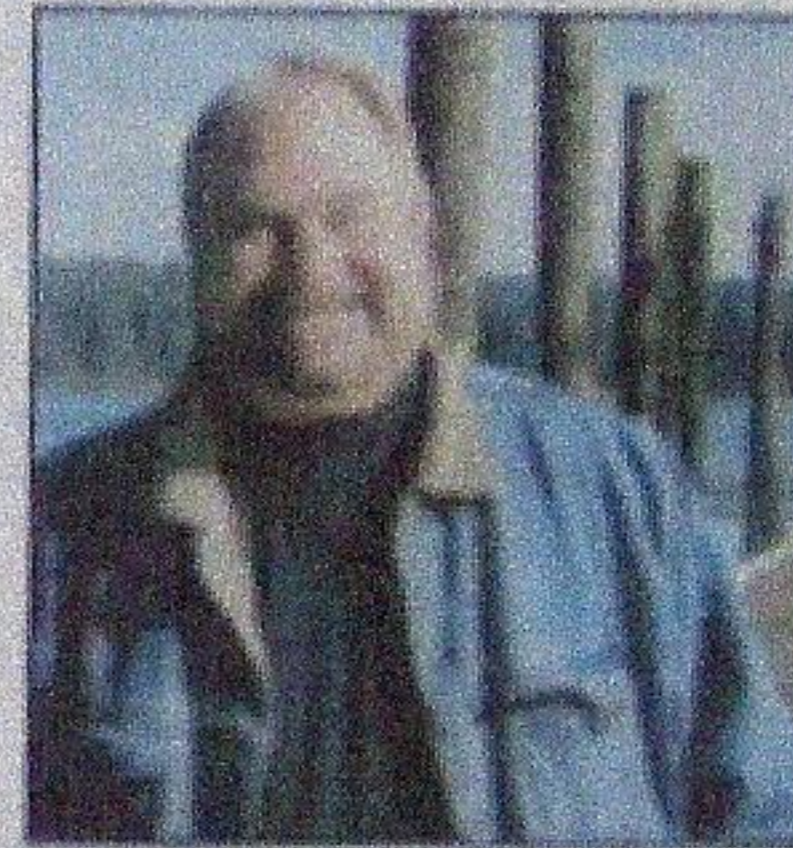
"They basically came in with a personal agenda," he said.

This is the third Dunes City mayor in a row to resign before his term ended. In October 2005, Mayor Rob Ward left, with Councilor Sheldon Meyer taking over as acting mayor. Two years later, in October 2007, Meyer stepped down. The following month Hauptman was appointed mayor-elect. Now he is following in the footsteps of his predecessors.

"It got like Sisyphus," he said. "The boulder is too big and the hill is too steep with this council. They are trying to cram stuff down everyone's throats."

Hauptman includes among his concerns that

one elected councilor, who, he says, stands to benefit if the Montgomery View Estates subdivision is approved, has stated he will not recuse himself from the subdivision approval process.



Eric Hauptman

Hauptman said another councilor elected in

2010 wants the city to take financial responsibility for a weir on his property and there are attempts to bring the issue before the Planning Commission.

"I was trying to have a level playing field for everyone," said Hauptman, "but nobody is treated the same. It's an uphill battle."

In his resignation letter Hauptman said, "It appears that vindictiveness and self-interest are the motivating factors behind this city council's actions. I would like to exclude from the above statement Councilman Duke Wells, who has

See **DUNES CITY** 8A

Dunes City from 1A

been a breath of fresh air for the city with his hard work, honesty and integrity. Councilwoman Rebecca Ruede will do fine as the new mayor."

Possibly Hauptman's "last straw" was learning that a councilor had added a resolution to this week's council

meeting agenda to change City Recorder Fred Hilden's employment contract such that the recorder would report directly to the council. The resolution would effectively remove Hauptman as Hilden's supervisor.

"Every time he (City Recorder Hilden) did anything, he would have to ask the council and poll each member," said

Hauptman.

Hauptman likened it to a six-person board running the day-to-day operations of a business.

"That would become too burdensome," he explained.

Councilor Troy Sathe said Hauptman has done a lot of good work for the city, but the former mayor wanted everything "his way or no way."

"He wanted to have control of everything, instead of the council having control. He did do some good stuff, but you have to go by the rules. If you go by the rules, everything works out," said Sathe.

Council President Rebecca Ruede will serve as mayor for the remainder of Hauptman's term, which expires January 2013.