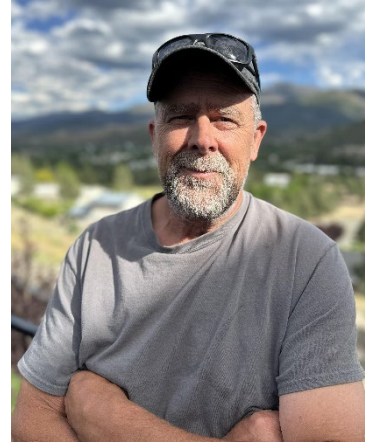


JOHN DAY DESERVES BETTER LEADERS! VOTE YES TO RECALL

Hello! I'm Casey Myers. I am the Public Works Director for the City of John Day. I have filed a petition to recall John Day City Councilors Sherrie Rininger, Eric Bush, and Ron Phillips. We are losing our staff, services, and money because they are running John Day into the ground.



I'm a conservative, long-term Grant County resident. I have been a public servant to this community for over 16 years. I'm directly involved with the ins and outs of our city, and I am deeply concerned for this community. Here are three reasons why I am asking you to **Vote Yes** on the recall:

Reason 1) Financial Mismanagement and Lack of Transparency. We are losing money left and right. The backroom decisions these councilors make are eroding our future. I need to let you know what has been happening because, despite their claims, they are not transparent. Decisions that directly affect us as residents are being made behind closed doors, without opportunity for public comment or participation. You cannot know how much damage these three are doing to our community unless I speak up. They have produced no audits for the last two years, ran up hundreds of thousands in unnecessary legal fees and consulting costs, blew through their own budget that they passed, and now we're facing budget violations with the Oregon Secretary of State. They can't blame the past administration for these actions – it's been two years! They hired Melissa Bethel and pay her over \$130,000 a year, and now, due to their mismanagement, **we have almost no money left in our General Fund** (they estimated the city is down to \$12,000 in the budget) because they spent it all! And now they're trying to hire two more managers with barely any money left. To manage what? They've killed every project.

Reason 2) Harassment and Unethical Behavior. I spoke up, and I believe that is why I have been harassed and criticized by these councilors, privately and publicly. They attempt to remove anyone who is not loyal to them so no one is left to blow the whistle on their corrupt and harmful actions, but I stand by my claims. Sherrie Rininger used her position on the council to harass and condemn all city staff in an unfair public rant at a city council meeting last June, creating a toxic work environment that resulted in city staff unionizing or leaving. Do you know eight city staff members have resigned since they took office? Eric Bush threatened to have me charged with a felony because I blew the whistle and filed this recall. **They continue to target city employees and will do so until none of us are left**, leaving John Day without certified public works operators and qualified employees to run the city. What will we do then? **Who will provide our city with clean water and the services we need when they run off all our staff?** If we don't end their power grab and corruption now, no one will be left.

Reason 3) Anti-Democratic Practices. These three councilors are actively preventing us from having a democratically elected council – they refused to change the charter to let residents vote to fill council vacancies, falsely claiming “they didn't have time.” Instead, they appointed their unqualified friends to the council. Sherrie Rininger even specifically said in her last writeup in the newspaper that she works for her supporters. Aren't elected officials supposed to work for the entire community and the good of all our residents, not just the ones who voted for them? Soon, most of the people making decisions for you at city council meetings will be unelected. People who gained office by being appointed by these unethical leaders who even bypassed qualified candidates when they were the only option.

We must act now! Recalling these three councilors now is the only way to reset and restore competency to our city government. If Rininger, Bush, and Phillips are recalled, the remaining council seats will be up for election in November. Residents will then have the chance to change our charter and elect a council willing to represent the entire community—people qualified to be in the positions. **We need a fresh start and a chance to elect councilors who make the best decisions for all John Day residents.**

Protect John Day's Future. We need to ensure that everyone in our community has access to the essentials for a good life: adequate housing, jobs, medical services, healthy food, good schools, and activities for their children and grandchildren. Unfortunately, we have been struggling to provide these basics. It takes active investments in our community to make this happen, but Councilors Rininger, Bush, and Phillips have consistently undermined these efforts.

These councilors have not only opposed but also mocked and dismantled the past administration's initiatives aimed at making our city vibrant and healthy. They have been the driving force behind the loss of projects and funding that would have provided these essential services, while simultaneously driving up hundreds of thousands of dollars in unnecessary costs.

If we allow the current city leadership to continue on their destructive path—killing housing projects, returning grant funding, and engaging in blame games—everyone in our community will suffer. We cannot achieve what we need with this council in power. Their tactics are deceitful and divisive, and they are hypocritical. We have gone from winning to losing, from gaining millions to giving up millions, and all of us will pay the price if we leave these three in power.

We Must Start Working Together. Our community is losing residents and will continue to decline if we don't act. This should be VERY CONCERNING FOR ANYONE WHO WANTS A FUTURE HERE. The community came together and pushed back when we recalled Rookstool, **but these three councilors didn't listen.** They continue on the same path of incompetence, false accusations, non-transparency, unethical, and crooked behavior to tear everything apart. You don't need to stand by and let that happen.

Over the past two years, I've seen them spearhead efforts to dismantle every single investment made by the City. Their thirst for revenge against a few individuals is harming our entire community. No exaggeration! In the past two years, they have returned millions in grant funds, put other funds at risk, pursued legal action against multiple city contractors, tried to kill housing growth, stalled the broadband build-out, and butchered the Purple Pipe that would have reduced your monthly water and sewer rates by at least \$10 a month. Will we sit around and wait for them to FAIL US ON THE WATER TREATMENT PLANT PROJECT, TOO?

John Day deserves better leaders! We need leaders who have vision and can effectively govern. Rininger, Bush, and Phillips have consistently shown that they have no plan, no solutions, no vision, no accountability, no integrity, and no idea how to govern. For specific examples to support my claims, please review the enclosed Fact Sheet or go to www.johndayrecall.com to learn more.

Join me in voting YES on the recall.

Let's give John Day the fresh start we need.

If interested in signing the recall petition
contact me at:

JohnDayRecall@gmail.com or text: (541) 237-0665

Paid for by:
The Committee to Recall Sherrie Rininger
The Committee to Recall Eric Bush
The Committee to Recall Ron Phillips

RECALL FACT SHEET

1. Financial Mismanagement & Waste

Rininger, Phillips and Bush engage in poor financial decision-making, which has led to significant financial losses for the city and millions in funding compromised. This includes returning millions in grant funds and incurring unneeded costs.

- **Returned critical grant funds:** Refused \$100,000 annual grant for community development from the Ford Family Foundation, damaging funding partner relationships, then budgeted to spend over \$100,000 of our money for the same purpose.
- **Jeopardized then lost \$3 million water conservation grant:** Due to mismanagement of the treatment plant project and failure to negotiate with Malheur Lumber.
- **Stalled \$1.8 million broadband project:** Delayed accepting grant funds and hiring necessary professionals to complete the fiber optic buildout using funds secured under the prior administration; jeopardizing services.
- **Lost greenhouse lease and potential sale:** Had a letter of intent for a lease with an option to buy, but claimed they needed an appraisal to sell the greenhouse, then failed to get one, costing us money and losing the sale.
- **Significant General Fund depletion:** City accountant attributes financial problems to the council's two years in office, stating repeatedly these problems didn't exist under the prior administration. City Manager's budget message estimates the General Fund has only \$12,000 remaining compared to over \$400,000 in June 2022.
- **Pool project failure:** Rininger and Phillips both campaigned against the pool project, costing the city \$2 million in state grants by supporting former Mayor Rookstool's false claim she could build a \$2 million pool.
- **Withdrew from R3 collaboration:** Gave up their role in allocating millions in funding for housing incentives.
- **No Treatment Plant Agreement with Canyon City:** They claim this is their top priority, but over a year has gone by and there's still no agreement with Canyon City for wastewater treatment.

2. Unprofessional and Unethical Conduct

These councilors have created a toxic work environment, participated in unlawful meetings, overstepped their authority, and spend their time criticizing current and former city employees and contractors, who they continue to pursue vendettas against with the public's money instead of governing.

- **Toxic work environment:** Created an atmosphere leading to city staff unionization for the first time in over 100 years, publicly and privately belittling employees.
- **Ron Phillips lack of integrity:** Without authorization or council approval, Phillips removed city property and took it to his private residence. When questioned – his response was to say, "duly noted." He later abused his by reporting a local business to the Sheriff for political reasons, falsely claiming they interfered in the recall election.
- **Sherrie Rininger double dealing:** Councilor Rininger used her position to belittle and criticize city employees without allowing them to respond, calling them "out of control" when they questioned the council's conduct, then denied public discussion of her rigged budget committee appointments.
- **Eric Bush criticism/unethical conduct.** Green wrote the \$65,000 broadband grant the city was awarded this year (for free), then Bush took credit for it, calling it a "team effort" when he had nothing to do with it. He has also been referred to the Oregon Government Ethics Commission for his role in alleged illegal Grant County Digital board meetings by the former board chair, who quit in protest of Bush's conduct (OGEC Case No. 24-199PDP).
- **Eric Bush Potential conflict of interest violations:** Bush voted and advocated to send city funds to his employer (Grant County Sheriff) without disclosing a potential conflict of interest for voting to fund his own department (and potentially his own position) in violation of Oregon Revised Statutes 244.040(1), which "prohibits a public official from using or attempting to use their official position or office to obtain financial gain."

3. Lack of Transparency and Procedural Violations

Holding private meetings and making decisions without public input undermines democratic processes, yet these councilors have done so multiple times:

RECALL FACT SHEET

- **Attempted backdoor contract award:** Resident complaint and grievance filed over a \$4 million contract never publicly reviewed, which the council attempted to directly award with no public discussion, including stating in a federal grant application that the contract had already been awarded (before it was even advertised for competitive bids).
- **Illegal public hearing:** Bypassed Planning Commission for two conditional use permit hearings, leading to a formal complaint from the Airport Commission of the city council violating its own code. Bush, Rininger, and Phillips proceeded with the illegal hearing over the opposition of Councilors Labhart and Holland.
- **Suspended housing incentives without due process:** Making the decision to suspend the urban renewal agency programs outside of a formal board meeting led to the threat of a class action lawsuit from residents and developers who participated in the program that the City has now left hanging with no resolution.
- **Lack of financial transparency:** No audited financial statements for the last two years, inability to account for revenues or net financial position. All three councilors claim to be “transparent” but refuse to answer questions when asked in public meetings. City has not produced a single audited financial statement in the last two years, nor could they account for their revenues or explain what the City’s net financial position is.
- **Overspending and budget law violations:** Excessive legal and consulting fees, leading to negative findings in the next audit. These councilors continued to approve invoices and sign checks against funds that had negative fund balances (i.e., no money in them) and touted how “transparent” they were being by signing these checks during council meetings, all while driving the city further and further into the red. As of March, this council had overspent its budget by more than \$170,000 on legal fees and consulting costs, resulting in budget law violations that according to City Manager Bethel will be reported to the Secretary of State as significant negative findings in their next audit. These fees were redacted (blacked out) in a public records request so the public would not know what they were spending our money on.

4. Undermining Progress

John Day was making progress on projects, which would have reduced water and sewer rates and provided housing, services and amenities for residents. Instead, these councilors have actively worked against these projects.

- **Opposed successful housing incentives:** Despite 17 new homes built since 2018.
- **Failed to complete the purple pipe project:** Costing taxpayers and jeopardizing \$3 million in grant funding.
- **Stalled broadband project:** Despite having \$1.8 million in grant funding for the past two years, they have made no progress installing fiber optic internet to homes.
- **Failed fundraising.** They gave up millions of dollars in grants and replaced them with loans for the treatment plant project, adding cost to our ratepayers.

Overall Impact

The actions of Rininger, Phillips, and Bush have resulted in:

- Significant financial losses for the city
- Loss of grant opportunities and state funding
- Toxic work environment and staff morale issues
- Erosion of public trust due to lack of transparency and procedural violations
- Stalled or abandoned projects that would have benefited the community

This is why I feel so strongly that these three councilors need to go!

Paid for by:
The Committee to Recall Sherrie Rininger
The Committee to Recall Eric Bush
The Committee to Recall Ron Phillips