

## Rachael Gangelhoff

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**From:** Ted Burney <burney.ted.tb@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 28, 2025 4:37 PM  
**To:** CityRecorder  
**Cc:** Ken Freeman; Bill Dixon; Irma Coleman  
**Subject:** Oregon Government Ethics Commission guidance on Oregon ethics and public meetings law

To: Mayor Julie Hoy, All City Councilors, City Attorney Dan Atchison, and Interim City Manager, Krishna Namburi

From: Ted Burney  
Chair, Southwest Association of Neighbors (SWAN)

Subject: Councilors Attending Neighborhood Association Meetings

The recent July 25, 2025 supplemental staff report from OGEC regarding serial communication affirms the ability of city councilors to attend Neighborhood Association meetings and discuss pending government body business with the public.

Councilors may provide information at these public meetings which includes answering substantive questions, expressing councilor opinions regarding issues and providing information and updates regarding council meetings.

Prior to the release of this recent OGEC supplemental staff report providing answers to frequently asked questions, the Southwest Association of Neighbors was prepared to comment negatively towards the proposed elimination of councilors attending Neighborhood Association meetings in deference to the possibility of violating ethics laws regarding serial communication.

The proposed action to prevent Councilors from attending our Neighborhood Association meetings was deemed by SWAN to be a mistake in that it removed the councilors from interaction with those who elected them to office.

When the "Oregon ethics law" was passed the intent seemed to be to prevent "backroom deals" from being made. This was and is a good idea.

City Councilor attendance at neighborhood association meetings is not an opportunity for dealmaking but is and has been a valuable link to facts and resources regarding the operation of the City of Salem.

Councilors bring the Neighborhood Associations current news and information regarding city activities. The Councilors dispel myths and provide opportunities for constituents to ask questions.

Councilor Nordyke and Nishioka who regularly attend our meetings have been instrumental in helping us find the right resources to address neighborhood issues.

We do not believe the intent of the original ethics law was meant to deny city residents communication with our councilors.

Removing our councilors from the opportunity to attend Neighborhood Association meetings would have been a disservice to our community.

We are pleased with the recent interpretation from OGEC reaffirming our councilors opportunity to meet with Neighborhood Associations.

Thank you for the support you provide to our Neighborhood Associations and we look forward to our Councilors being able to attend and freely speak at our meetings.

All the best,

Ted Burney  
Chair, Southwest Association of Neighbors (SWAN)

**Rachael Gangelhoff**

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**From:** vici taus <vicitaus@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 28, 2025 4:45 PM  
**To:** citycouncil  
**Cc:** Vici Taus  
**Subject:** communication chill between Salem City Councilors and their constituents

Dear City of Salem -

As I understand it, Salem City Councilors are personally liable for fines imposed by the Oregon Government Ethics Commission (OGEC). This reality appears to partner simultaneously with confusion that results (at least in part) from training that OGEC provided to Salem City Councilors.

As I also understand it, the OGEC Executive Officer, the Oregon League of Cities Executive Officer, and the Salem City Attorney offer distinct interpretations of that confusion which is connected to the communication chill that currently exists between Salem City Councilors and their constituents.

Salem City Councilors serve as volunteers. That their confusion (and fear) results in part from an ethics training they were mandated to attend would be comical were it not sad. **What we have here is a failure to communicate (as Paul Newman said in his role as Cool Hand Luke).**

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Vici Taus  
Salem Resident