

November 6, 2023

Honorable Mayor and Councilmembers:

This is regarding Item 13a on the Agenda for the November 7, 2023 Regular Meeting of the Clayton City Council. Thank you for receiving and considering my comments on this matter.

I have been an employee for the City of Clayton since 2001. During my tenure with the City, I have worked with many different City Managers, Police Chiefs, Community Development Directors, and Finance Directors. In his short time with the City of Clayton, City Manager Bret Prebula has created a vastly improved work environment that is more efficient and effective. Mr. Prebula has introduced faster, more precise office technologies and updated computer programs that have been extremely beneficial to City staff. In addition to these improvements to our processes, he has also brought with him an excellent team whose quality skills, expertise, and knowledge have mirrored his own—Assistant to the City Manager Amy Walcker and Finance Director Prapti Aryal. These improvements, upgrades, and positive contributions of new staff members have created cost savings and more effective time management. Mr. Prebula has shown the intelligence, depth, and wisdom to expedite the various duties and responsibilities of being our City Manager and has made all the difference in strengthening my capabilities and productivity as the Assistant Planner with the City of Clayton Community Development Department as well as those of other City staff.

Mr. Prebula has been and continues to be an outstanding leader for City staff and for our community at large. He is astute, intuitive, articulate, professional, hard-working, and has the experience to guide the City of Clayton as we face the challenges that are placed at our collective doorstep. Mr. Prebula has strong problem-solving skills and works excellently in a team environment. He has the determination and dedication needed to complement our organization. His presence as City Manager has greatly enhanced the potential of City staff. He is extremely supportive, inspirational, encouraging and has the “can do” attitude that is needed as our City Manager.

I also want to address Mr. Prebula’s admirable personal qualities. He is sincere, polite, cordial, and brings a wealth of insight and knowledge to our organization. I have been repeatedly amazed by his “people skills” and the warm, courteous manner with which he interacts with City staff. As a representative of City staff as well as our community, these amazing qualities are a fundamental cornerstone of a being a great City Manager.

It is without hesitation and with the highest regard that I wish to convey my gratitude and appreciation for Mr. Prebula being our leader. He has, without a doubt, been beneficial and valuable for the City of Clayton. Mr. Prebula has created an exceedingly efficient and effective work environment and represents the standards of excellence that we all aspire to have and work toward.

Thank you, again, for your time and consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Milan J. Sikela, Jr.", with a stylized, scribbled flourish underneath.

Milan J. Sikela, Jr.
City of Clayton Assistant Planner

Hello Mayor and Councilmembers, and citizens of Clayton.

My name is Jennifer Giantvalley and I live at 307 Alexander Place

I have been the Accounting Technician for the City of Clayton for almost 12 years and a resident for over 20 years.

I have a personal stake to do an excellent job; not only for my own satisfaction, but I also pay property taxes here.

In my tenure, I have worked for eight different City Managers and nine different Finance Directors. Most of these changes happened within the last 4 to 5 years. It has not been easy with constantly changing management styles and new faces. Not to mention a pandemic thrown in the middle of it all.

I just try to keep my head down and do my job well because that is what is the best help to everyone involved.

Earlier this year, Bret was hired, and I immediately saw a bright light at the end of the tunnel. He is whip smart, involved, personable, and energetic. Something I have not seen in a permanent city manager. His engagement has been a breath of fresh air. He came in with his eyes wide open and knew the challenges he was to face.

In addition, he brought talent to fill the gaps. I thought he must be doing something right if these amazing women followed him here, especially knowing the politics and unrest caused by certain individuals who spread lies within the city without owning up to them. (but we know who you are)

Work has started to be more enjoyable, and a positive atmosphere has emerged here in City Hall. Now we can focus on the future of Clayton. Communication opens and new dialogues begin.

We are finally moving into the 21st century with technology. Instead of always hearing NO, we can bring new efficiencies which allow us to become more effective. We are all on the same page. We have accountability and that in itself is so very refreshing. It feels great to solve problems cooperatively!

This also allows us to better serve the citizens of this beautiful city and the base of a gorgeous mountain. Not since Kevin Mizuno have I felt so valued which encourages me to learn more and grow.

Lately, there have been people tossing rocks and trash into this tunnel we have been traveling along. The light is harder to see and the climb over these obstacles and lies is exhausting. But we are doing what is best for Clayton and its residents.

Why do these people think lies, politics, and criticism are going to help the city? They suck air from the room and stall our momentum.

Opinions are great – but only if they lead to increased productivity and energy. These people give us the opposite.

I have questions. What is the end game? What is trying to be achieved? We are already at the bottom of the pay scale, but we persevere, because it is the right thing to do.

Is there an agenda about which we do not know? Or is this simply a ploy for control and dominance?

It seems to me there is an inane fear of Bret. Why? He is open and honest. Is that supposed to be scary?

As an employee, I see you are succeeding in creating instability and uncertainty which kills morale and productivity (these go hand in hand, you know)

And as a resident, I see you are destroying the value of Clayton by spending thousands on what has become a revolving door. This is not a fiscally responsible way of running a city. These are not just your funds; these are public funds.

It takes courage and intelligence to defer to and support a subject matter expert and allow them to do the job for which they were hired.

The lies and negativity are not indicative of achieving the greater good. It is not a competition.

It is supposed to be a collaboration of individual strengths to create a whole and complete team. Ego and revenge have nothing to do with success and this team has one goal: to see Clayton succeed and thrive for the enjoyment and peace for all its citizens, not just the vocal few.

So please do me this one favor. Pick up your rocks and detritus so we can walk in the sunshine, spread positivity, and provide benefits of living and working in this great little city. Bret is part of the solution. Please start treating him as such. Basically – DO THE RIGHT THING!

From: MICHAEL L WELLS <mwells5150@comcast.net>

Sent: Monday, November 6, 2023 9:58 AM

To: Amy Walcker <awalcker@claytonca.gov>

Subject: City Manager Review by Council on November 7, 2023

You don't often get email from mwells5150@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

I want to praise City Manager Bret Prebula on his performance as City Manager. Bret has provided leadership, transparency, open communication, and stability to the City of Clayton. He understands how local government works and is an outstanding City Manager.

Thank you,
Mike Wells
Resident of Clayton

Dear Clayton City Council Members,

I am writing to you today to express my sincere appreciation for hiring Bret Prebula as our City Manager and how I am so impressed with his work so far. Since 2018, we have had a revolving door of city managers and other employees and I am so glad he has brought some stability to our wonderful city.

I want to highlight a couple of areas I think Bret has made a real difference. I really appreciate his professionalism, his past knowledge of how a city runs, and the team he has assembled to help us run our city. Management of city services is a very complicated process and we have seen that before Bret came on board, it felt like the past or interim city managers were just trying to handle the immediate issues and there was no forward planning or a real understanding of what our city needed. I think Bret has quickly learned the nuances of our city and I am excited about his plans on making our city more effective and provide the services we all want for our city.

Second, I think his commitment to transparency is truly refreshing. Whether it is him holding listening sessions with the community, his engagement with various constituency groups, or his newsletters and informational bulletins have been a wonderful change compared to the last 5 years. I have learned more about how our city works, how we get funding, and how we set priorities from Bret and his team since I first moved here in 2001.

Finally, I think he has changed the morale of our city team and I have heard from several of our city employees on how much they appreciate his commitment and transparency to helping make Clayton a great city. This is especially impressive that this has all happened since he was hired only 6 months ago.

As you review his past 6 months, I would encourage all city council members to listen to a broad spectrum of community members and not a few vocal residents who have made Bret's job more difficult and challenging. As someone who keeps himself connected and aware of city challenges, I have spoken to a variety of my neighbors, and they all truly are excited about what Bret has brought to the city.

I hope during this 6-month review of his work, you will take into account the communities deep appreciation for Bret and what his team as accomplished so far in our community. I look forward to having Bret and the city council to work together to solve the many challenges Clayton faces today and into the future.

Mats Wallin

339 Mt. Washington Way

Clayton, CA

Hello Mayor, Council Members and Citizen of Clayton

My name is Patrick Nemah, Office Assistant/code enforcement officer for the City of Clayton.

Today, I am writing this open letter in support of Bret, someone who truly exemplifies leadership in the workplace. Bret's leadership style has had a profound impact on our team, and I want to highlight a few key qualities that make Bret a remarkable leader.

First and foremost, Bret encourages development. He understands that personal and professional growth is essential for each of us. Bret doesn't just delegate tasks; he empowers us to take ownership of our careers. Whether it's providing opportunities to seek training off site, on-the-job training, or mentorship, Bret is always there to support our development.

One of the qualities that sets Bret apart is his transparency. As a city manager, he believes in open and honest communication. Transparency builds trust, and Bret ensures that we are always in the loop regarding team goals, challenges, and successes. This transparency fosters a culture of trust and collaboration within our team.

Bret recognizes the value of guidance and support in our professional journeys. He invests time and effort in helping us navigate our career paths. His mentorship extends beyond the workplace, and he genuinely cares about our success and well-being.

One of the most refreshing aspects of working under Bret's leadership is his openness to process changes and suggestions. He values our input and believes in continuous improvement. Bret encourages us to share our thoughts, making our work environment more innovative and efficient.

Bret's commitment to our career development and goals is commendable. He takes a genuine interest in each team member's aspirations, helping us set and achieve our professional objectives. Bret's support goes beyond our daily tasks; he is invested in our long-term success.

Lastly, in my short time working for this city, I have experienced a high turnover rate, Bret and the current team that we have is the only model of consistency in my short time with the city, besides Bret being a niners fan (bummer), he's been nothing but a positive impact to our team morale and this organization.

In conclusion, Bret is not just a city manager; he's a leader who inspires, guides, and supports his team. His encouragement of development, transparent management style, mentorship, openness to change, care for our career goals, and emphasis on effort make him an exceptional leader. It's a privilege to work under his leadership, and we are grateful for his dedication to our growth and success.

Thank you for your attention.



PATRICK NEMAH