



## EDITORIAL

## Difficult times

Reno City Councilmember Jenny Brekhuis is difficult. We're sure this is true. We've heard off-the-record complaints about her from City of Reno staffers for years. She's obstinate. She doesn't always abide by proper procedures. She asks inappropriate questions at inopportune times.

But that's why we need her. She's a human monkey wrench, a glitch in the matrix. She's often the lone nay vote on development projects and other expenditures that come before a Reno City Council that mostly seems happy to bend over—backwards or otherwise—for flashy developers with big plans. We know where that gets us: a housing crisis where renters and first-time home-buyers are getting squeezed out, and the city's poor population is fast becoming the city's homeless population.

Brekhuis had two pieces of bad news in recent weeks. First was the widely reported news that Reno Mayor Hillary Schieve was publicly campaigning for Reno Engineering executive Britton Griffith, who's challenging Brekhuis for the Ward 1 seat in next year's election.

Second was the news, first reported by KRVN's Joe Hart, that City Manager Sabra Newby earlier this year formally reprimanded Brekhuis and took action to limit her contact with city staff. Newby claims she has received several complaints regarding Brekhuis'

"combative nature towards staff." The city manager isn't allowing Brekhuis to meet with staffers for agenda briefings prior to full council meetings.

A "combative nature" is, of course, just what we want from a public official who needs to stand up to special interest lobbyists and developers—not to mention a council that does sometimes seem to gang up against her. Still, it's probably not what's needed for dealing with lowly city employees behind closed doors. So, yes, Brekhuis should probably learn to play nice with city staffers.

But we're glad she doesn't just go with the flow of Mayor Schieve's developer-friendly agenda. And we've found her to be among the more accessible councilmembers to the public at large and to the news media. She responds promptly to calls and emails.

And we don't have anything against Griffith, who seems affable and capable—if a bit in the I-hope-everybody-likes-me mold, not unlike Mayor Schieve herself. We don't really need another Schieve on the Reno City Council.

We need somebody on the council who's willing to be unlikable, somebody who doesn't mind irritating city staff or pissing off big money developers. We need somebody difficult. □

**Jenny Brekhuis is a human monkey wrench.**

## STREETTALK

BY MATT BIEKER

## What stories did local media miss?

ASKED AT THE DOWNTOWN RENO LIBRARY, 301 S. CENTER ST.



ALINA CROFT  
Student

There's this organization I recently learned about—I believe it's Lexie's [Gift] foundation. ... They do a foundation every year where they gather items and donate them to people in need, and think that's something really cool our community missed out on.



MICHAEL MOORE  
Pool player

One thing I think should be reported on in this town—at the bus station, the people, the janitors that clean, they're doing this city a great service. They're underpaid, under-appreciated. ... Without them, this town would be in bad shape.



DELMÍ RIOS  
Machine operator

There's a lot of homeless down near the river. It's not safe for the people anymore. I don't like the [news] because, when I watch, it's always bad news. But [there needs to be more] about what's unsafe for people.



MANUEL BERROA  
Advertising sales agent

All people like to hear stories about their neighborhood. ... Wells Avenue has a huge history in the bag. ... Now, it's like all forgotten. I wish there was something in the local newspaper about the story of Wells Avenue.



EDGER RIVERA  
Sales person

Why we haven't had a light rail system in the town of Reno is beyond me. ... From Reno to Sparks is where we had the light rail system. Before San Jose, before Sacramento, before any place, we had it. So why did we just ignore it? ... The transit system in this town is horrendous.