

Position #1 – Martha Spiers and Michelle Stroh Responses:

On Apr 13, 2021, at 12:40 PM, Debbie Ethell <debbieethell@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Ms. Spiers and Ms. Stroh:

I am writing an upcoming article to be published in the Oregon City News in regards to the position you are both running for election for: Oregon City School Board - Position 1, and will publish one week from today on (April 20, 2021). If you could please send me your answers to the following questions by April 19, 2021 I would appreciate it. If not, I will print that you declined to answer.

As you know, there are multiple on-going state-wide investigations opened against the Oregon City equestrian team coach (known as OHSET) Angie Wacker, the current Athletic Director, Andy Jones, the Principal Carey Wilhelm, and the Superintendent Larry Didway over their handling of complaints made by parents against coach Wacker which include severe bullying, harassment, cyber-stalking, not reporting serious injuries...to name a few. This past January Mrs. Wacker was unanimously convicted by the ethics commission of four ethics violations for "self dealing" among other things. No other coach in Oregon history has ever been convicted of so many at one time. The investigative report provided by Mr. Jones (a report according to district policy was in fact supposed to be prepared by Mr. Didway) was almost entirely lifted (copy/pasted word-for-word) from emails Mrs. Wacker sent to Mr. Jones. I have attached a copy of the report for your review: the portions highlighted in yellow are the segments of Mrs. Wacker's emails which made it into Mr. Jones's report without attribution. For reference, the plagiarized emails can be found behind the report itself. Yet, despite all of this, coach Wacker (a volunteer coach) continues on in her current position coaching both OHSET and 4-H clubs.

I would like to ask you each the same questions in regards to this situation:

Ms. Spiers, knowing what you now know about the coach's behavior and the falsified documents you were presented by the athletic director in order to make your decision to "retain coach Wacker":

- 1) How would you handle the situation differently today presented with the same body of evidence?
- 2) Did you read Andy Jones's investigative report before or during the Executive Session Board Meeting held on December 16, 2019?
- 3) Were you aware that, according to district policy, any "investigative report" was supposed to have come from the Superintendent Larry Didway, and not the athletic director?
- 4) Now that the school board has admitted publicly to holding an "illegal vote" in an Executive Session would you commit to learning about the proper procedure in regards to District 62 policies whether it concerns the timeline of complaints (which apparently were not followed), reports prepared (falsified documents), or school board voting guidelines (it is illegal for any government body to vote in a closed session)?

Ms. Stroh:

I realize you may not be fully aware of the details concerning the issues I raised with Ms. Spiers so I've included several of the recent articles written about this case (published in the Portland Tribune as well as surrounding area Pamplin Media newspapers - see below) and would like to pose the same questions to you:

- 1) How would you handle a situation similar to this if you are elected to the Oregon City School Board?
- 2) Would you take the time to read any/all investigative reports provided to you in regards to any coach (volunteer or otherwise) accused of abusing students? And what steps would you take if you in fact discovered the report was obviously falsified?
- 3) How comfortable do you feel in standing up to fellow board members and/or the Superintendent if you disagree on an issue or how the process is being handled?
- 4) Will you make a commitment to understanding/reading the District #62 school policies in regards to how proper procedures within the district should be followed?

Article #1: ["State Nails Oregon City High School Coach on Ethics Violations"](#)

Article #5: ["Oregon City School Board Now Subject to State Ethics Probe"](#)

Article #7: ["Oregon Equestrian Coach Likely Author of Own Investigation"](#)

Article #8: ["DA Orders Oregon City School District to Release Audio of Illegal Vote"](#)

Article #10: ["Oregon City School District Apologizes for Illegal Board Vote"](#)

I would like to thank you both for your time and attention to this matter.

Best,

Debbie Ethell

<Athletic Director's Falsified Report 4.13.21.pdf>

← **STEVE MICHELE Stroh**

📧 Wed, Apr 14, 8:01 AM (5 days ago)



to me ▾

Good Morning,

Thank you for sharing this information. I was following closely as this was one of the reasons I chose to run for the position. I have attached my responses to your questions. Thank you for bringing more information out to the public- This situation never should have happened.

Sincerely,

Michele Lee Stroh

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10



My responses to questions for Ms. Debbie Ethell for the OC Board article with the ethics investigation.

1.If this situation had occurred while I was on the OC school board, I most definitely would have done the job I was elected to do. There should have been a full non bias investigation, where all evidence was submitted and thoroughly read and understood. Interviews would have been conducted with those involved to clarify any missing parts or answer any questions. I would have seen roles assigned, such a lead two-person committee and they would make sure that all checks and balances were complete before presenting to the administration. This situation brought victims forward looking for support to a situation that was much bigger than they could handle and by reading the information you provided to me, I feel that they continued to be victimized until the ethics committee found the Head Coach guilty. This was unacceptable. This would also be an excellent opportunity to look at current policies and see if improvement is needed. Should improvement be needed, get at committee started and fix the policy so that this does not happen again.

2. I absolutely would have read everything submitted to me. I would have looked even further into the reports and cross reference the information given to me. If I had discovered the falsified report, I would immediately copy and highlight my discovery and present to my fellow board members, if I was met with resistance and I had to present to administration, I would do so and if I still felt that my discovery wasn't taken seriously or action taken to follow through, I would go above the administration. There was ample evidence to get the Ethics committee and the Clackamas County D.A involved. There are

real victims in this case and the current board and administration failed them.

3. I am a strong leader. I can present my objections respectfully and stand my ground. I do not allow myself to be intimidated and I am fair. If I am elected by my community to serve on the Oregon City School Board, my lone strong voice will be much more powerful, as I would be the voice for my community. If you chose to step up to take on a leadership role in your community, you must be willing to stand for what is right and not take the easy way out of any situation. You are elected by the community to represent them ,the students and families of this district.

4. I will vow to uphold the policies set forth before me as an Oregon City School Board Member. It would be an honor and a privilege to represent my community and restore an ethical and a transparent board, which was absent from the current board.I will bring a level of professionalism and contribute to the meetings in a respectful manner. I believe that if you are an elected officer, you are held to a higher accountability and that is what makes any regular board better for all in the community.

← **Martha Spiers**

Sun, Apr 18, 10:25 AM (1 day ago)



to me, Raymond ▾

Dear Ms. Ethell,

I am cc'ing Raymond Renndleman on this response. I would be pleased for you to include my comment below in it's entirety in your opinion piece referenced in your email.

"I would like nothing more than for the public to have a full accounting of the circumstances around the complaint you reference, and the procedural error made by the Oregon City School Board on December 16th, 2019. Unfortunately, until the investigation is complete I am unable to comment on the specifics of the original complaint and the complaint investigation completed by the district. It is my understanding that the Oregon Government Ethics Commission investigation will be completed on or about April 30th, and that the district will respond with full transparency at that time. I will be first in line to welcome that day.

What I will say about the procedural error made on December 16th is was that it was really nothing more nefarious than a procedural error. For whatever reason the error escaped us all, though we should have known better. No excuses. The fact that I notified the complainants the very next day of our unwitting error should be evidence enough that we did not try to hide our mistake. We are embarrassed that it happened and deserve whatever sanctions we receive from the ethics commission on that score.

Thank you for your interest in getting to the truth, unfortunately we will need to wait until the beginning of May to get the most accurate information."

Raymond, if my response is not recorded in Ms. Ethell's opinion piece, I would be pleased if you would attach my entire comment as an addendum to demonstrate that I did, in fact, respond to Ms. Ethell's request.

Thank you both, and enjoy this glorious day!

Martha Spiers

Debbie Ethell <debbieethell@gmail.com>

Sun, Apr 18, 3:12 PM (1 day ago)

to Martha ▾

Thank you for your response to my questions Ms. Spiers.

Best,
Debbie