

Mayor Dinah Tatman  
City of Bellefontaine Neighbors  
9641 Bellefontaine Road  
St. Louis, MO 63137

Mayor Tatman,

As the governing body of this great city, it is our duty to ensure that all local ordinances along with federal and state statutes are adhered to. During your tenure in office, you have repeatedly violated the state statute and local ordinances to further your personal agenda with a complete lack of transparency and proper communication to the Board of Aldermen. Our role as board members is horizontally aligned with the office of the mayor. As such, this is not a dictatorship, but rather a full governing body who should be focused on the health and safety of the residents of this great city. Your failure to communicate with this board and your willful violation of the ordinances of this city along with federal and state statutes will not be tolerated. Since you took office in April of 2023, you have committed the following violations:

- Failed to secure bids over \$10,000 on a quote that was \$13,324.00 in violation of Bellefontaine Neighbors (BN) City code 2-256 and violated City ordinance 2-256(a) by subdividing the quote when it exceeded \$10,000.
- Your initial misappropriation of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for the above-mentioned bid, resulting in having to reassign the purchase to Capital Funds.
- In violation of a unanimous vote by the Board of Aldermen on May 4, 2023 to enact a hiring freeze until city audits have been complete for fiscal years 2021, 2022, and 2023 excluding essential personnel, you hired a finance clerk for the City without the required approval of the Board Of Aldermen. To date, only the audit for fiscal year 2021 has been complete which further places the city at risk for higher interest rates and a lower bond rating.
- You approved an unsecured and unauthorized volunteer's access to the City's Finance Department to assist the above-mentioned unauthorized and not bonded finance clerk, resulting in compromised passwords and requiring the re-establishment of passwords for security.
- You have repeatedly ignored and dishonored motions unanimously passed by the Board of Aldermen on May 4, 2023, June 15, 2023, and July 20, 2023.
- You also dishonored the June and July meeting motions which caused the incompleteness of the City's budget, resulting in the disqualification of the East-West Gateway Parks Grant which denied the City grant funds of up to \$420,000.
- You requested Board participation in budget discussions with less than a 24-hour notice in violation of the Sunshine Law.
- You irresponsibly vetoed the City's budget despite Board approval due to the Board's unanimous vote to suspend certain social community events until there is a clear understanding of the City's financial status.
- You falsely declared during board meetings that quotes for building security items had been submitted when no quotes were obtained.


- You irresponsibly approved expenditures of \$92,500 of ARPA funding without Board of Aldermen approval that do not follow federal guidelines and may result in the city having to pay the funds back to the federal government.
- You have repeatedly made unauthorized approvals of taxpayer dollars without proper documentation and without approval of the Board of Aldermen in violation of the ordinances of the City resulting in the approval of invoices that are duplicates, contain incorrect amounts, have no budget line designation, and providing no receipts.
- You promoted a city job fair despite the unanimous decision of the Board to enact a hiring freeze until City audits are complete, which to date, are not.
- You have intentionally refused to honor the Missouri Municipal League's recommendation that "Councilmembers should be set apart from the rest of the room" despite complaints from the Board of Aldermen and the public which causes confusion as city employees are occupying the dais with elected officials.

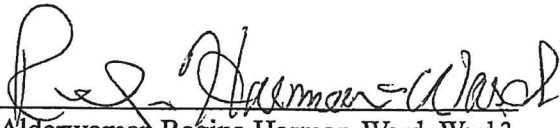
Therefore, as duly elected officials, we are charging you with dereliction of duty, misappropriation of funds and instill a vote of "no confidence" in your ability to lead this City effectively and demand that you take the following corrective actions:

- Adhere to Missouri statutes for the governance of Fourth-Class Cities, as published in the Missouri Municipal League's Manual for Newly Elected Officials, August 2020 and understand that the Mayor and Board of Aldermen are equally positioned on the official state statute organizational chart.
- Maintain the oath of office taken to uphold the ordinances of the City of Bellefontaine Neighbors as they are presently adopted, and any updates that may follow.
- Always maintain truthful and transparent communication with the Board of Aldermen.
- Report in a timely manner all financial proposals, ventures, grants, etc. relating to the City of Bellefontaine Neighbors to the Board of Aldermen prior to any initiations or executions with city employees as The Board of Aldermen should not read about any financial goals or activities established with city employees on social media, particularly when the Board of Aldermen is solely responsible for the disbursement of taxpayer dollars, be they local, state, or federal funds, by ordinance.
- Adhere to all local, state, and federal laws and be prepared to explain any deviation from any public and published law or ordinance, citing specific references to the exact statute that it pertains to.
- Remove City employees from the dais immediately as the dais will be reserved for elected officials, the City Clerk, and the City Attorney only.
- Enroll in a series of training sessions offered through the Missouri Municipal League and the Municipal League of Metro St. Louis to be completed by July 1, 2024.
- Refrain from all teaching/instruction of municipal/legislative/grant writing classes on City property until the above-mentioned training has been completed.


A copy of this letter along with supporting documentation will be forwarded to the Missouri Ethics Commission and the Attorney General's office of the State of Missouri for review and prosecution of any violation of the laws of St. Louis County or the State of Missouri. Additionally, a copy of this letter along with supporting documentation will be forwarded to the Auditor's Office of the State of Missouri along with a formal request to audit the financial records of the City of Bellefontaine Neighbors.

Respectfully Submitted by:

  
Alderman James Thomas, Board President

  
Alderwoman Regina Harmon-Ward, Ward 3

  
Alderwoman Alease Dailes, Ward 4

  
Alderwoman Alicia Smith, Ward 4