

## Jackie Taylor

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**From:** om>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 06, 2021 2:39 PM  
**To:** jackiesims@ci.oakridge.or.us  
**Cc:** mayor@ci.oakridge.or.us  
**Subject:** Letter in Support

Honesty, integrity, and the ability to be fair and respectful to city employees and city residents.....that's what I look for in an administrator. The ability to find funding for city projects and to make hard decisions is also important. If you have that person as your administrator, hold on to them tight because they are rare. I will say to the current CA and to current city councilors, find a way to talk to residents that doesn't involve social media. Those Facebook polls are flawed, people will always vote for their personal self interest and not what's best for the whole of the community. With social media, the loudest voices win, but that doesn't mean they are speaking for the majority. Those loud voices were not hired or elected to make tough choices for the rest us and they should not be relied on to make decisions. The city councilors were elected for their good decision making qualities, not to be ventriloquist dummies.

Pam Wright  
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Oakridge

## Jackie Taylor

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**From:** Oakridge City Administrator <cityadministrator@ci.oakridge.or.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 07, 2021 9:39 AM  
**To:** Jackie Sims  
**Subject:** Fwd: CA recruitment  
**Attachments:** CA letter of support.jpeg

For the record.

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** **Melody Cornelius** <mayor@ci.westfir.or.us>  
**Date:** Mon, Dec 6, 2021 at 3:43 PM  
**Subject:** CA recruitment  
**To:** Kathy Holston <mayor@ci.oakridge.or.us>, Dawn Kinyon <councilorkinyon@gmail.com>, Chrissy Hollett <councilorhollett@gmail.com>, Melissa Bjarnson <councilorbjarnson@gmail.com>, Audy Spliethof <elkdodger@gmail.com>, Michelle Coker <councilorcoker@gmail.com>  
**Cc:** Oakridge City Administrator <cityadministrator@ci.oakridge.or.us>

Hello Oakridge Mayor and City Councilors,

I'm writing to ask that you consider renegotiating with Bryan Cutchen in order to retain him in his position as City Administrator. I am attaching a letter I wrote in support of renewing his contract back in March. The same points still ring true, and I believe it would be a disservice to the City to lose him from your staff. Citizens I have spoken to, both Oakridge and Westfir, are supportive of Bryan and appreciate the work he does. He stepped up to a challenging position and has provided solutions to difficult problems. I have yet to meet anyone who thinks Oakridge would be better off without him, myself included.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**Melody Cornelius, Mayor**

City of Westfir  
PO Box 296  
Westfir, OR 97492  
(541) 782-3983  
<http://www.ci.westfir.or.us>

**Public Records Notice:** This email and its attachments may be a public record and subject to disclosure under the Public Records statute of the State of Oregon.

March 16, 2021

Oakridge City Council  
48318 E 1st St  
Oakridge, OR 97463

Dear Oakridge City Council,

I Melody Cornelius, Mayor of Westfir, am concerned to learn that the City Council is considering to not renew City Administrator Cutchen's contract. The City of Oakridge is facing economic challenges, but this is not new. The City Administrator has taken steps in the positive direction for businesses in Oakridge and he should be allowed to continue this important work.

In 2020, the CA

- led the Council in developing a realistic and sensible strategic plan;
- secured a highly qualified and excellent RARE AmeriCorps staff;
- helped the school district secure a \$600K USDA-RD grant for an emergency operation center;
- built an evacuation plan for the Labor Day wildfires;
- stood up a community COVID-19 vaccination center;
- help designate the Greater Oakridge-Westfir Area as a Firewise Community;
- assisted Westfir in writing a successful grant from Travel Oregon that will benefit both cities;
- continued open and transparent dialogue with Westfir in regards to common interests/goals;
- and has helped Oakridge apply for a \$250K grant for a biomass utilization campus to rebuild milling infrastructure at the OIP
- The CA also volunteers in acts of public service such as volunteering Saturdays at the Great Willamette Clean-Up and Community Yard Waste collection days.

The CA has demonstrated strong job performance and has laid the groundwork for future economic stability. Under his leadership, Oakridge has received renewed attention and commitment from important economic development partners such as Regional Solutions, Business Oregon, Lane County Economic Development, Oregon RAIN, USDA-Rural Development, Oregon Department of Lands Conservation, US Forest Service, State and Congressional delegations as well as many smaller nonprofit groups such as Travel Lane County is what Oakridge needs to be successful.

As for all rural communities, regional support is critical to Oakridge's ability to thrive. We must maintain the momentum the CA has worked toward for creating jobs, developing workforce housing, building up industries related to forest products and tourism, and welcoming new businesses and residents. Our community's reputation in the region is critical to future health and success.

By electing you as Oakridge City Council, the citizens of Oakridge have placed faith in you to conduct wise decision-making to support a strong, stable future. To date, no evidence of misconduct by the CA has been made public; there is no cause to warrant not extending his contract. Removing the CA would be a mistake with serious consequences for all residents of Oakridge and a costly setback.

Thank you for considering my perspective.

Sincerely,



Melody Cornelius  
Mayor, City of Westfir

# Brenna Chrisman

Oakridge Or 97463

12/6/2021

Dear Mayor and City Council Members,

I recently heard about our City Administrator Bryan Cutchen's resignation. The news of their resignations is extremely saddening. I have personally worked with Bryan Cutchen on several occasions, and he has always been very organized and great to work with and his love for Oakridge and its citizens is exactly what Oakridge needs. Change is never easy, and he came into a mess when he took his position. Clearly what has been done previously isn't working and things need to change, and Oakridge will never find someone as qualified or that wants only the best for Oakridge. I urge the City Council to figure out whatever your differences are, take your ego's out of the equation and stop thinking about yourselves and truly listen to your constituents and convince Bryan Cutchen to reconsider his resignation. To lose Bryan Cutchen would be detrimental to Oakridge and I can guarantee it will be reflected on upcoming ballots.

Thank you,  
Brenna Chrisman





Oakridge City Administrator &lt;cityadministrator@ci.oakridge.or.us&gt;

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**Council comments 12/2/21**

Sarah Altemus &lt;saltemuspo@gmail.com&gt;

Thu, Dec 2, 2021 at 12:41 PM

To: Chrissy Hollett <councilorhollett@gmail.com>, Dawn Kinyon <CouncilorKinyon@gmail.com>, Michelle Coker <councilorcoker@gmail.com>, Bobbie Whitney <bobbiewhitney@ci.oakridge.or.us>, councilorbjarnson@gmail.com, elkdodger@gmail.com, Jim Coey <mayor@ci.oakridge.or.us>  
Cc: Bryan Cutchen <cityadministrator@ci.oakridge.or.us>

Dear Oakridge City Council,

Please register my comments below for tonight's council meetings and incorporate them into the official record. I am sorry but I don't think I will be there in person due to family needs. Although I am personally not as available as I wish at this moment, I want you to understand that I am and will continue to track the role of the Council during this pivotal time and continue to raise concerns when necessary.

I also strongly encourage those of you who have been attending meetings without video stream to find a location (library, city hall, or fire dept) where you know you have reliable internet so that you can turn on your camera. It is unfair and disrespectful to the citizens to not see and know for a fact that you are paying attention at all times. I am not trying to point fingers, but I feel I need to state the obvious, that you are choosing to put your convenience before the duties of your office by not finding a way to fully participate. I am not opposed to an occasional call in of councilors when needed, but we are at almost 1 year of not watching a good portion of the Council fully participate. It is unprofessional and unacceptable, especially when the meeting topics are contentious. So please, find a way to turn on your camera.

Sarah Altemus-Pope Comments to Council 12/2/21:

Dear City Council,

I am increasingly concerned with the lack of professionalism and accountability of the members of the Oakridge City Council. The tone and tenor of Council meetings continues to deteriorate and it seems that this is based on interpersonal and personality conflicts and not true policy issue disagreements. As elected leaders, you have a duty to your constituents to work together and with your city administration to responsibly conduct city business. I think that there are small but significant steps that you can all choose to take that can help to reduce the level of conflict and increase the likelihood of working together productively in the coming months.

What I am advising may sound basic, but is it not. You need to be meeting in person, all together, in one room, to productively conduct City council meetings and work sessions. There is much that is missed by voice discussions alone, and it is far easier to misinterpret what a person is saying or to take offense or offend when not speaking to a person directly (there are many studies that back this up). Please, start meeting in person as soon as possible. Covid is not an excuse. If our school children can meet in person, so can you. This request is probably too late to affect tonight's meeting, but I ask that you discuss it and officially put to record which councilors oppose meeting in person. If there are none, then please make plans for future meetings to be in person.

I trust that each councilor believes they are acting in good faith in doing your jobs, but ultimately, as a whole, you have led Oakridge to a point of friction and gridlock. I ask that each of you step back and take a personal account of how your actions are helping Oakridge and to find a constructive path forward. You are not elected to be critics or watchdogs, you were elected to lead. Good leaders are good team players (there is also a lot of literature that backs that up too). So please, make it a priority to work together as a team and also find ways to work with your City administrator to build a team atmosphere. I think it would be beneficial for the Council to set aside some time once a month to focus on team building. For example, find and attend training sessions, discuss and practice reflective listening, read and discuss a leadership book of the month, or find small community projects and pair up with a Councilor you don't politically align with.

I believe team building and meeting in person can lead to more constructive council meetings. Forming a foundation to rebuild trust is the professional thing to do, and is necessary to find productive ways to work through the tough policy issues Oakridge faces. So please, step 1, get back in a room together asap.

Thank you for your time and consideration,  
Sarah Altemus-Pope