

Partial transcript of the April 13, 2015 Whatcom County Charter Review Commission meeting beginning at approximately 15:30 on the recording (recording can be found at <http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/1651/Agendas-Minutes-and-Audio>):

[This is immediately following Matt Petryni's public comment on behalf of RE Sources]

Ben Elenbaas: Mr. Petryni

Matt Petryni: Question?

Ben Elenbaas: Yeah I do. I have a question for you.

Matt Petryni: Yeah.

Ben Elenbaas: So this is your Action Alert: In 2013 Voters in Whatcom County soundly rejected coal companies' attempts to buy our local elections. To overcome Whatcom County voters rejection of coal interests coal companies are now funding an effort to fundamentally alter how Whatcom County conducts its elections to make it easier for their pro-coal candidates to win....

Ben Elenbaas began reading the RE Sources action alert at approximately 15:42 and was still reading at 17:04

Matt Petryni or voice from commission : Is this a question?

Ben Elenbaas: I'm getting to it. [Ben continues to read]

An audience member shouted: This is a misuse of public hearing! [Ignoring that call-out from the audience member, Ben Elenbaas did not stop reading the rest of the RE Sources call to action].

Matt Petryni: Is there a question?

Ben Elenbaas: Yes there is. [Ben continued reading]

Audience Member: What is the question, Ben?

Voice from commission: Ben, ask your question.

[Ben Elenbaas continues reading Matt Petryni's Call to Action]

Todd Donovan: We've been cut off by you as chairman and we've done far less than that in interrogating.

Ben Elenbaas did not stop reading the rest of the Call to Action, which took until about 18:00 on the recording.

Ben Elenbaas: So this was your call to action?

Matt Petryni: Definitely. What's the question?

Ben Elenbaas: My question is which one of us, or majority of us, are funded by coal or backed by coal companies?

Matt Petryni: Well, I would refer you to the PDC forms for the SAVEWhatcom political action committee which declares all of the support and opposition statements. So you can look it up.

Ben Elenbaas: Someone like myself who didn't take a penny from anybody.

Matt Petryni: Well you may have and not known.

Ben Elenbaas: How did I not know?

Matt Petryni: Well, the, the coal companies put money into the election and they have to declare whether or not they support or oppose certain candidates and so they put money to support certain candidates and those candidates are now on the commission and that is all public record and that's available on the public disclosure commission website.

Ben Elenbaas: So, your concern, your concern is that outside money is influencing elections here in Whatcom County.

[Loud laughing and applause from the audience]

Matt Petryni: My concern is that coal money is influencing elections in Whatcom County.

[Laughter continues]

Ben Elenbaas: No, this, this... is a very important issue for me and these are you know, I don't know if you know but I ran for county council at one time.

Matt Petryni: I do know that. I do remember that.

Ben Elenbaas: And it was very troublesome to me that my opponent had, at about August of the election, he had 52 people who donated over \$100 from outside Whatcom County and outside the state.

Matt Petryni: Was it similarly troublesome that you had similar donations

Voice from commission: Mr Chair. Mr Chair.

Matt Petryni: Was it troublesome that you had similar donations on your side or is it only when your opponent did?

Ben Elenbaas: I had, I had 2 donations from outside Whatcom County. One was a relative and one was a high school friend.

Audience member: This is a public hearing.

Ben Elenbaas [raising his voice]: I'm concerned about this outside money!

[Vice Chair Joe Elenbaas sounded the gavel twice]

Matt Petryni: There's a lot of people here tonight that came out to speak, and I think it would be respectful to them to allow them to speak.