From: D Knudsen
To: bcc@missoulacounty.us; Grp. City Council and City Web Site
Subject: Governmental services - fingerprints
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Hello,

I live in Missoula County in Missoula City Ward 5. I understand the pandemic. Nobody wants to get near another human being right now less than I. However, my profession requires updated fingerprints. I have been asking regularly by telephone since February of 2020.

The Missoula City Police Department keeps telling me that they are only doing fingerprints for first responders. They (Laurie Clark) tell me health department has limited their ability to fingerprint anyone but first responders. They tell me they have so many first responders for their appointments that they cannot see any new appointments until the end of July 2020. Today, despite the risk to Missoula County public health, I was told that Ravalli County and Helena were places that I could obtain fingerprints. Seems like the excessively funded local police department cannot properly allocate resources to meet the needs of citizens. That, or Ms. Clark is completely misrepresenting their level of appointments. Seems unreasonable that Missoula would have so many new first responders that it would take months of fingerprint appointments to work through the backlog if a reasonable level of appointments were being offered to the public. I personally don't believe Ms. Clark. i think this is just some excuse her agency has developed to be able to deter offering any in-person service to citizens. Maybe I should get myself arrested so I can get a set of fingerprint cards….seems criminals can get a fingerprint where ordinary law-abiding tax-paying citizens cannot.

Yup, as a voter, taxpayer, and citizen…this is not going to work. Especially in light of what I consider excessive local tax/funding, the failure to operate reasonable and effective local services to citizens is a big problem. I think I've decided to vote against everyone and everything in my city from now on…at least until I see measurable change. That includes the Mayor, that includes my council folks, that includes any initiatives. No, until something changes.

The Missoula County Sheriff too has a similar unacceptable story. They tell me they cannot do fingerprints because their fingerprint machine broke in the summer of 2019 and they have been waiting for a new one. Again, Missoula County is clearly fingerprinting criminals…but not regular ordinary citizens. That's a problem. Either the Missoula County Sheriff is failing in his duty to properly equip his department or the Missoula County Commissioners are failing in their duty to provide budgets sufficient to support public services. One of the two is failing. Again, I think voting no or against anyone who comes up for re-election is the proper way to proceed until change occurs.

If 100 percent of your local law enforcement bodies cannot provide a simple service like fingerprints it makes you wonder how safe you really are.

But…Ravalli County and Helena appear to have different public health and appear to be properly staffed, funded, and open for business. Sad. Very sad.

D Knudsen