

Dear City Council,

Hello my name is Stephen Dinger and I am currently the golf course superintendent at Como Golf Course. You are about to tackle the issue of golf for possibly the last time and I would once again like to encourage you to vote against privatization. As this process has gone forward I have become more and more upset about the way it is been handled. The employees have not been notified about any of the decisions that the management has been deciding. We have had no meetings to inform us of what the future may hold for us, we have not been told about any meetings that the public has been invited to, and I found out about my future job (if we privatize) through the St. Paul paper. I consider that very unprofessional and an appalling way to treat your employees.

Management has said all along that they would take care of the certified employees and it is becoming apparent that that was not true. At the Parks and Recreation meeting last Wednesday they were told that there would be layoffs and reductions. As I found out through the grape vine, I will have to choose between bumping Denise Kispert at Highland National or taking the job at the zoo for less money. Both Denise and I have over 30 years working at the city. Jeff Hable from Phalen will be laid off. The Pro Manager at Como it seems will be laid off. The temporary Golf Pro Manager at Phalen will not be offered a new job because she was maintained as a temporary for her whole time here. They do not have enough spaces for the Golf Workers at Highland national so they will have to take reductions or have their hours drastically cut.

On top of all that the people they have hired as temporaries and who worked for years, as temporaries, because they didn't want to give any tests and have any more certified people to have to deal with don't even count in any equation. Most of the people who have worked on the courses have been there for years and they talk about 20 employees. During the summer there are over 20 employees at Como Golf Course alone, call them what you may. So this is how we are being taken care of. I had the opportunity to talk with the Mayor when he was campaigning at Nina's coffee shop one day and he told me face to face that at least no one would be losing their job. Seems like he wasn't quite well informed either.

I am in a position to retire, and I know that's what they are hoping I will do (get rid of another problem) and I am not living in St. Paul so my vote is of no consequence. I have worked for some great people over the years and we operated as a community that cared for each other and worked together to find solutions to the problems that are bound to arise. In fact that is what I always thought my job was -- a problem solver. Those days are gone. In my opinion St. Paul Parks and Recreation Department is no longer a service community under the current management of the Parks and Recreation Department. It has become a business that sells it problems away to let someone else deal with. And if that fails, then tear the buildings down and put up a building with a bathroom, and that's a shame.

Management told me when they presented the performance plan that it would fail and do what you need to take care of the course and they did nothing to change the course of it. I believe they wanted to get rid of golf back five years ago when they tried to give the courses away and they just waited until it became a political disaster to do what they wanted to do five years earlier. Please make sure that the employees, at a minimum the certified ones, are not allowed to take the hit for others' mistakes. We were the ones who

were out in the field busting our tails trying to save the courses while the management seemed to be working very hard to sell out the courses.

Stephen Dinger
Golf Course Superintendent
Como Golf Course