

Deceit is Boulder County Commissioners' only tool

By Vince Hirsch

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The latest public release from the Boulder County Commissioners on subdivision roads came as no surprise as they continue their policies of arrogance, misrepresentation and deceit, unwillingness to listen to their constituents, following their own flawed agenda, while blatantly and obstinately ignoring the law, judicial decisions and the will of the people. The commissioners have once again proven they are not to be trusted and are unbecoming of their office. It is one thing to respond with careful thought and consideration presenting pros and cons of a plan, and it is another to deride the BoCo FIRM (Boulder County Fairness In Road Maintenance) plan with false statements, sins of omission and innuendo. Just a few examples in their public release are:

(1) The \$10 million for road and bridge fund increases would result in \$9 million to \$10 million cuts to other county programs. So, what is sacrosanct about the commissioners arbitrary allocation of your taxes? When spread over the behemoth budget items like general government, open space, and health and welfare that are on the order of \$90 million each, there is little impact. These budgets have been growing at a three times rate for 20 years while public safety and infrastructure maintenance have been essentially flat. Since they began violating their statutory responsibilities to maintain the roads in Boulder County 20 years ago, the county has been digging a big hole for all of us by not adequately funding maintenance of infrastructure. A case in point is the dilapidation of our schools and the focus on new construction while de-emphasizing maintenance.

(2) The proposed increased levy to the road and bridge fund would decrease the commissioners' arbitrarily allocated county funds to other spending by \$5 million per year (due to 50-50 split with cities required by state law.)

This decrease pales in comparison with the nearly \$400 million county budget. This decrease would be graciously accepted by cities that now tax their residents for roads as a result of the flawed policy change for road and bridge funds in the early 1990s.

(3) The county claims that it is spending \$955,000 this year on rehabilitating subdivision roads when it really spent roughly \$860,000 on planning, contractors and bid preparation while attempting to carry out the failed Local Improvement District effort.

The real story is that they are spending a mere \$140,000 on three subdivision road sections.

(4) The county insists they have kept up with subdivision road maintenance. Nothing could be farther from the truth as road maintenance has been starved and essentially non-existent for more than 20 years. The preponderance of evidence is not hard to find and the commissioners offer an outright lie on this one.

The continued arrogance and deceit by the commissioners we see in written form and at most public hearings should give cause for serious concern. That is why BoCo FIRM initiated the next lawsuit to get subdivision roads fixed. They cannot be trusted for carrying

out their duties defined by state law, so how can we trust that they have been or will ever be open and honest in the tax initiatives that they put before us this November or the future? They have their hand in our pockets for far too long, have not given us sufficient justification for their needs, and we don't deserve this sort of leadership.

Vince Hirsch is vice chairman of Boulder County FIRM. He is a resident of unincorporated Boulder County.