

City of Howell Failed to be Transparent About its Plans to Provide Clean Water for the Shredder

Newly released government document shows the plan to provide city water to the industrial shredder was signed 13 days before then-Mayor Proctor fought against the assertion in a city council meeting

HOWELL — The City of Howell failed in its obligation to provide transparency in governance during its October 25, 2021 city council meeting when it failed to disclose its plan to provide potentially millions of gallons of clean water to the proposed industrial shredder.

Industrial shredders are inherently dirty and dangerous operations known to cause fires, explosions, heavy truck traffic and pollution. Padnos is seeking potentially millions of gallons of our clean water to be used during the shredding process, as well as to wash pollutants off of shredded automobile parts, old appliances and other junk metals.

In an October 26, 2021 WHMI news story entitled “[Parker Alleges Road Transfers Accommodate Industrial Shredder](#)”, then-Howell Mayor Nick Proctor openly fought against assertions made by Protect Livingston that the City of Howell was seeking to provide up to 18,000 gallons of clean water per day to the industrial shredder being pursued by out-of-town scrap metal company Padnos.

As WHMI reported:

- “Parker went through a timeline of Padnos and water service requests and called it “interesting chronology.” He questioned what provisions were made for water after the City issued a building permit, stating that after MHOG denied the request “the flurry of activity that has transpired since then is suspect at best”.
- “Mayor Proctor interrupted Parker to question if an accusation was being made, Parker later asserted that he was, to which Proctor responded “I knew it was coming.”
- “Parker eventually stated, “Mr. Mayor, I’m not making an accusation, I’m making an assertion and that assertion is all logic leads that the City plans on providing water to Padnos.”
- “Parker said he thought the real intent of the (roads) transfer was that the City is trying to provide water to a project that residents and neighboring townships don’t want – questioning if so, at what cost, and how the City planned on doing it.

- “Mayor Proctor clarified that nothing on the agenda was related to water but accepting roads into the City and if it comes before Council in the future, then it will be discussed.”

Contradicting Proctor’s lack of transparency that night, a newly released city document shows that, under Proctor’s leadership, the City of Howell had in fact already finalized a deal to provide city water to the shredder two weeks prior, on October 12, 2021.

That day, a City of Howell Water Supply Memorandum of Understanding with Padnos, the owner of the proposed shredder, was created to confirm that the plan for the city to provide water for the shredder was already signed 13 days before the meeting in which Parker spoke:

- “WHEREAS, the City intends to extend its water supply system (“System”) south from Industrial Drive in or along Lucy Road to provide water supply to the Property and other properties in the vicinity.” (“Property” is defined in the memo as land owned by Padnos, which is being used for the shredder).

Protect Livingston’s Donald Parker said the city was not transparent about its plan to send clean water to be used in the dirty shredder and that the public now knows only because of FOIA requests exposing the MOU between Padnos and the City of Howell.

“On October 25th, I made it clear that all signs pointed to the City of Howell seeking to provide the water for the shredder that MHOG would not, yet city officials provided push back instead of transparency,” said Parker. “Today, because of our work to reveal the truth to the public, we know that the city had already signed an agreement to provide water to the shredder several weeks before that meeting on October 12th.”

“The City of Howell failed to meet a basic level of transparency that night when they did not explain that the agreement was already signed, sealed and delivered. It is past time for Howell to pull back the curtain on the shredder and start answering questions, including how many taxpayer dollars it plans to spend building a water pipeline to the shredder.”