

- **Jean Mendoza** <jean.mendoza@zimbracloud.com>

Jan 15 ★

To marc

Hello Marc,

When we last talked by email in December you said that you would set up a meeting to discuss the YRCAA agreement to serve non-English speakers in Yakima County. Since then my icloud email has frozen as well as my landline. So I do not know whether you have tried to contact us. If you are available to talk with FOTC please let me know using this email address or my cell phone 509-367-3581.

Thanks
Jean Mendoza

- **Marc Thornsby** <marc@yrcaa.org>

Jan 18 ★

To Jean Mendoza

Sorry to hear about your technical difficulties. I don't remember old stories about things freezing when there was an operator at the other end, but I suppose they had their own share of difficulties as well.

If you go back and look I think you'll find I said I would look at a meeting after the first of the year and that remains the case. However, a variety of pressing issues have pushed their way into my schedule and generally made a nuisance of themselves. As a result, my time has not been my own (as evidenced by the fact I am sending this to you at 10pm). Don't worry, I haven't forgotten. Still, I do have several questions for you before we meet. I'd figured we'd go over them at lunch, but since you've declined, I'll commit them to paper as they come to my recollection and time permits.

Regards,
Marc

- **Jean Mendoza** <jean.mendoza@zimbracloud.com>

Jan 19 ★

To Marc Thornsby

Hello Marc,

I want you to know that I am aware of how difficult your job is. In fact I discussed your challenges in a Bible Study group this morning.

Looking forward to meeting with you in person soon.

Jean



- **Marc Thornsby** <marc@yrcaa.org>

Jan 19 ★

To Jean Mendoza

Thank you. I am the proverbial duck...serene above the surface and paddling to beat all under it. I'm here four days a week until I can get permanently moved and most days are over 13 hours so I typically put in about 53 hours each week (unless there's a holiday).

Regards,
Marc

- **Jean Mendoza** <jean.mendoza@zimbracloud.com>

Jan 23 ★

To Marc Thornsby

Bcc jtsavatewa2002, wendellhannigan, fotoc94, sbraden09, ronlin111, Razom721,
simlaw39

Hello Marc,

Good to know. Here is our dilemma. The window to complain to EPA ECRO is not open ended. If we do not file a complaint within a fixed time, ECRCO cannot legally address it. The FOTC Board of Directors decided last December that the courteous thing to do is talk with you first before filing a complaint. If we do not discuss this with you soon, we must file a complaint or give up.

Please schedule a meeting with FOTC as soon as possible to discuss how well the YRCAA complies with your agreement to serve people in Yakima County with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

Thanks, and best wishes.

Jean

● **Marc Thornsbery** <marc@yrcaa.org>

Jan 25 ★

To Jean Mendoza

While I can't speak to the details of any "agreement" of the Agency (due primarily to the limited free time I have had available to me), I can say from direct experience Agency staff work to accommodate anyone who needs assistance, including those for whom English may be a (distant) second language. For example, within the first week or so I was here, I happened to overhear a meeting with a person who—based on their statements and a conversation they had in Spanish over a cell phone—might have had difficulty understanding what was being said and this person was promptly given the opportunity to have a translator present (which they politely declined). I have also overheard a number of conversations in Spanish (largely with respect to various Agency programs such as the woodstove bounty and low-income woodstove replacement programs) and the offering of Spanish-language forms/documents or the translation of them if desired (though I don't believe we've had any takers on the latter to date). Again, I can't speak to the letter of any agreement, but from what I have seen I can't find a factual basis for concluding the Agency is failing to meet the demand for effective communication as expressed by the community—including those with limited English comprehension—in a reasonable and timely fashion (taking into account the size and budget of the Agency).

As a result, while there is always the potential for a problem, I'm having difficulty finding actual evidence a negative impact exists while there is a plethora of evidence practical needs are being met. Meanwhile, the Agency has real inspections to do, complaints to investigate, landfill fires and vents to resolve, and a host of administrative and procedural matters to address. In the absence of unlimited resources, I am forced to triage the issues before me and demonstrable problems simply outweigh hypothetical ones (at least for now). My apologies if that's not what you want to hear, but I've never hidden the fact I'm a pragmatist and this is a case in point.

As for your dilemma, what you do is up to you. All I know is what lies ahead of me and it is unlikely I will be able to beat whatever deadline may be approaching. At the end of the day, I am just an administrator and the only thing I can do for you right now is offer two bits of unsolicited advice I've offered to many (in a variety of circumstances) through the years.

1. One definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. That seems a fairly straightforward statement to me, but during my career I have seen many slip (often without even realizing it) into patterns of behavior that became habitualized. They tackled the same problem in the same way using the same tools and the same methods and, to no one's surprise—other than their own, ended up with the same result. If, as the bits and pieces of information you've shared with me over several months suggest, the FoTC has spent the better part of two decades lodging a variety of complaints to nearly anyone that would lend an ear (and a few that wouldn't) and hasn't substantially achieved its objectives, perhaps a change in tactics is warranted.

2. Burning bridges is a lot easier than building them—which is, perhaps, why so many people are willing (if not eager) to put the proverbial torch to them. The only problem is that most people who do so have an expected outcome in mind, but unrealized goals, broken relationships, and unanticipated results occur just as frequently. When it does go bad, these folks often want to “call a do-over” (to borrow from my old elementary school days) only to find there are no “do-overs” in life and once the damage is done, it takes years to repair. With that in mind, I often urge people to “know when to hold ‘em, and know when to fold ‘em”. Yes, I know it’s a hackneyed reference—my apologies to you for using it and to Kenny Rodgers for calling it hackneyed. Still, it gets right to a fundamental question inherent in many decisions: Is what I might gain really worth what it might cost me? That kind of evaluation requires a level of dispassion and objectivity some may have trouble mustering, but it has saved me from turning a short-term reaction into a strategic blunder on more than one occasion.

Have a good weekend.

Regards,
Marc