

Horse Slaughter Plant Proponents Want City Records

PENDLETON, Ore. (AP) — The group behind a proposed horse slaughter facility in Eastern Oregon says it suspects the city of Hermiston coordinated with animal-rights groups in its fight to keep the slaughter facility out of the city.

The group, United Horsemen, has requested all city records and documents pertaining to horse slaughter, including any emails on the subject.

"I've battled these groups like Humane Society on a national level," said Dave Duquette of United Horsemen. "I know that as soon as you start something like this (horse slaughter facility), they start funneling money in. I want to know what kind of help they received, and from who."

The city recommended narrowing the city email accounts Duquette requested from 155 to 11 in order to save time, arguing the search would take 775 hours if all city employee accounts were inspected.

Those 11 email accounts include the mayor, city council, city manager, assistant city manager and city planner, [The East Oregonian](#) [1] reported.

The city initially requested \$651 for labor and materials. Upon appeal, the city dropped the fee.

City attorney Gary Luisi said the city decided to back down on the fee because it does not yet have a written policy regarding extensive public records requests.

"It's something that I would recommend the city adopts a formal policy on," Luisi said. "When there is a request of this breadth and depth, there needs to be reasonable payment for time."

United Horseman continues to move forward with the proposed slaughter facility but has not yet produced a land use request to Umatilla County. The proposed facility is outside Hermiston's urban growth boundary.

Hermiston's public records on the horse slaughter facility will take two weeks to process.

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[1] <http://bit.ly/U2HLVQ>