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THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW.COM

Wednesday, August 3, 2005

A SPOKESMAN-REVIEW INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Online relationships

Mayor West offered perks, internship to expert posing as 18-year-old during Web chats

By Bill Morlin / Staff writer

May 5, 2005

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An 18-year-old Spokane high school senior meets someone who says he's 53 in a gay chat room online.

After talking for several weeks using the online alias "Cobra82nd," the older man suggests the two meet for a dinner date, and the teenager accepts.

The older man arrives in his late-model blue Lexus convertible on a warm June evening, and the two talk face to face for the first time over dinner at a trendy restaurant in north Spokane.

Afterward, the young man picks up the tab. He smiles as he's given the keys to the convertible in the restaurant parking lot.

Minutes later, while driving curvy roads north of the city, he asks the older man, whom he doesn't recognize, what he does for a living.

"He basically asked, 'Can I trust you?'" the young man said in a recent interview.

"I'm like, 'Yeah,'" he continued. "I think this guy's crazy. What now? Then he says like, 'I'm the mayor of Spokane.'

"I was kind of silent for a minute," the young man said, recalling his disbelief, "but then it clicked: his face, TV commercials, stuff like that."

Until that moment last summer, the young man, who asked that his name not be used, said he had no idea he was on a date with Spokane Mayor Jim West.

The evening ended with consensual sex, according to the young man, who has not told his family about his personal life. "I've never wanted to see him again after that."

The young man's story raised questions for the newspaper. If West was online at Gay.com, was it the public's right to know? Would it be the public's business

Full coverage

The latest stories, background information, email and chat transcripts, interviews and reader responses.
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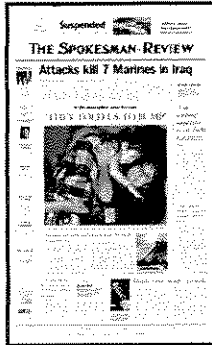
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Read today's e-paper

if West was using city computers to chat during his working hours as mayor? What if he was using the Internet to meet people who weren't 18, the legal age of consent? Was he abusing his public office in any other way?

The questions became a critical part of the ongoing investigation into the sex abuse allegations against West.

To verify the 18-year-old's allegations that Cobra82nd was Jim West, the newspaper asked the young man to save any additional online conversations between them.

In November and December, they talked again. This time, the 18-year-old said, the man changed his online screen name from Cobra82nd – a possible reference to the helicopters West flew in while a paratrooper in the Army's 82nd Airborne Division – to "RightBi-Guy."

The paper then hired a forensic computer expert in November to help verify the young man's allegations that West was online.

The expert, a former federal agent who asked not to be identified for these stories, has helped track child pornography through the use of online chat technology.

The computer expert registered on Gay.com as "Moto-Brock," a fictitious 18-year-old Ferris High School senior questioning his own sexuality and eager to meet older gay or bisexual men. Once in the chat room, which has a policy that all participants be 18, the consultant changed his age to 17 because the newspaper wanted to know whether West was using the Web to meet underage children.

Within two months, Moto-Brock and RightBi-Guy were discussing sex in the Gay.com chat room, and the dialogues were being recorded by the newspaper's consultant.

West, interviewed Wednesday, admitted his online relationships with the 18-year-old and Moto-Brock.

After a long pause in the interview, he said, "They were both adults, and I was in public office when I dated women in this community. So what's your point?"

According to the transcripts of those online conversations, RightBi-Guy was the first person to raise the issue of sex.

He also suggested that he and Moto-Brock switch their conversations from the Gay.com chat room to America Online instant messaging, which is transitory in nature and disappears quickly unless steps are taken to record chats.

Over a period of several months, RightBi-Guy offered Moto-Brock autographed sports memorabilia, prime seats for Seahawks and Mariners games, help getting into college, an internship job in the Spokane mayor's office and the promise of trips to Washington, D.C.

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In mid-March, Moto-Brock told RightBi-Guy that he'd turned 18.

On two occasions, RightBi-Guy appeared to believe he was engaging in mutual online masturbation with Moto-Brock, according to transcripts of the explicit exchanges.

Asked about simulating masturbation online with a teenager, West said Wednesday, "You have a better memory than I do." He declined an offer to look at the transcripts of the dialogue.

"We never had sex online," West said of his relationship with Moto-Brock. "You've got words on paper."

According to the online conversations, RightBi-Guy asked Moto-Brock to meet him for golf at Indian Canyon at 10 a.m. April 10. So Moto-Brock would know whom to look for, RightBi-Guy e-mailed him his picture.

The picture was of West. He also e-mailed Moto-Brock a link to the mayor's Web page on the Spokane City Hall site.

Three people affiliated with The Spokesman-Review reported seeing West arrive at the course in his blue Lexus at 9:45 a.m. April 10. He was seen looking around the parking lot. As he waited for Moto-Brock, he purchased two buckets of balls and kicked one of them across the driving range.

The two never met in person. Shortly after that failed meeting, the consultant was asked by the newspaper to stop communicating online with RightBi-Guy. But West subsequently sent the consultant two more e-mails, including a final message sent April 28. Sent from the mayor's office, the e-mail has "internship" in its subject line. The e-mail asks Moto-Brock "still interested?"

While the consultant was online over a period of a couple of months, the newspaper attempted to identify other young men listed on West's Gay.com profiles as his "hot picks" and "buddies."

One of them, a 19-year-old Eastern Washington University student, was identified and located for an interview. He asked not to be identified in this story, but he confirmed that he was one of RightBi-Guy's "hot picks." The EWU student said he and RightBi-Guy chatted online several times, but haven't met.

"He sounds a little too old for me," the student said.

He said he did not know the real identity of RightBi-Guy.

The following are excerpts from online conversations between RightBi-Guy and Moto-Brock from February to April.

Background: In their first online chat Feb. 19, RightBi-Guy says he's home watching Gonzaga beat San Diego in the West Coast Conference basketball tournament.

Within the first 100 words of their conversation, recorded by the newspaper's

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consultant, RightBi-Guy brings up the topic of sex. He also appears to be trying to impress the young man, claiming he gets sports perks, knows Microsoft founder Bill Gates and baseball star Edgar Martinez and has a job that allows him to "hang out with rich people."

Moto-Brock: "What kind of stuff do you do?"

RightBi-Guy: "For fun or are you talking sex here?"

Moto-Brock: LOL (laughing out loud)

RightBi-Guy: "I like to camp, hike, scuba dive, boat."

Moto-Brock: "Oh, man, I always wanted to learn how to scuba. It just looks so cool."

RightBi-Guy: "It is. I used to be an instructor. Learned in the Army. Paratrooper."

Later, after small talk about sports, RightBi-Guy asks if Moto-Brock is interested in girls.

Moto-Brock: "You know I try to. I go out on dates and stuff."

RightBi-Guy: "What did you think of when you shower at school?"

Moto-Brock: "I try like hell not to get hard."

RightBi-Guy: "Okay, then I remember that from my school days. Ha Ha Ha."

Moto-Brock: "Keep the conversation light. Think about homework, stuff like that."

RightBi-Guy: "I see. Hey, I'm enjoying this. Do you get turned on by guys?"

Moto-Brock: "Yes. I know I'm gay or at least very bi-sexual."

RightBi-Guy: "I think I was in the same place when I was your age. I dated because I was expected to."

RightBi-Guy: "I've always liked people younger than me. Just felt more comfortable with people either younger or older."

RightBi-Guy: "My name is Jim, by the way."

Moto-Brock: "I'm Brock."

RightBi-Guy ends the conversation by telling Moto-Brock that he prefers chatting through America Online's "instant messaging," where host monitoring is less likely than on a Web site such as Gay.com. He also says he has to go to a "cancer fund-raising dinner" but would rather remain online with Moto-

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Brock.

Moto-Brock: "Man you have my curiosity up about your job."

RightBi-Guy: "When we meet, I'll tell you."

Background: Their second conversation occurs a week later, on Feb. 26, another Saturday, through AOL's instant messaging, with West using the screen name "JMSElton," apparently derived from his full name, James Elton West. Moto-Brock complains that his parents don't give him enough privacy.

JMSElton: "Kids get into a lot of trouble in today's world. Parents should be concerned."

The two then talk about various people that JMSElton knows, including Bill Gates and Paul Allen.

Moto-Brock: "God you know so many people. You know it really makes me feel a little better about my future if you have been so successful and are gay."

JMSElton: "Remember, I'm very closeted. No one knows I like guys. Except the few guys I've been with and highly trusted."

JMSElton: "It's just that the openly gay guys are a little over the top for me. I don't really like the in-your-face attitude some guys have. And the massive political agenda either. I say live and let live. Most gay guys turn me off, too."

Later in the conversation, JMSElton asks Moto-Brock about a Ferris teacher accused of having sex with a female student.

JMSElton: "Don't have sex the first time you meet someone. You don't know what they've been doing or what disease they might have. Whatever you do, don't go anal with anyone."

Moto-Brock tells JMSElton that he'll turn 18 on March 10. JMSElton wishes him happy birthday and says he wants to send a present of his choosing.

JMSElton: "What do you want? My autographed basketball from the 2003-04 Zags? My autographed football from the 2002 Seahawks? My autographed football signed by Paul Allen and Dennis Erickson? Or my Edgar Martinez autographed rookie card that I got two weeks ago when he was in town? Or maybe you'd like my autographed Seahawks, signed by No. 1 Warren Moon?"

The conversation changes course.

JMSElton: "I still date women once in a while. Last weekend I went to a charity dinner auction and took a date."

Moto-Brock: "I don't hate being around them (women) or anything. They just don't turn me on that way."

JMSElton: "Understand. But kissing me would do it?"

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Moto-Brock: "Umm, sure feels like it."

JMSElton: "Okay, well, I'm off to bed. Be careful out there. We should meet up sometime."

Background: Their third online chat, again using instant messaging, occurs March 8. When JMSElton asks for a picture, Moto-Brock sends a random photo of a young, dark-haired athletic-looking man.

Apparently believing the picture to be that of Moto-Brock, JMSElton says he's handsome, "real stud material."

JMSElton: "I could never be into the gay scene with its politics and all. I've just seen too many guys decide once they come out that it becomes everyone else's problem to deal with. I'm not into femmy guys."

JMSElton: "It's our secret here."

Background: The two chat online again March 8 and then March 9, mostly exchanging small talk. JMSElton says he's going to Washington, D.C., on business and mentions taking a couple of high school interns with him on a business trip there years earlier.

Moto-Brock: "Ohhhhh. You are killing me here. I want an internship! So I can go to DC."

JMSElton tells Moto-Brock he has a friend who might be able to get the teen an internship.

On March 21, Moto-Brock receives an e-mail from Spokane Mayor Jim West. It reads, in part, "A friend of mine has asked if I would consider you for an internship in the mayor's office. He informs me that you are a high school senior at Ferris High School in Spokane. ... If you are interested please contact Melissa Murphy in my office at 625-6250. She will have you fill out an application which will need your parents' and school official's approval. We look forward to hearing from you."

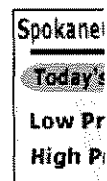
Moto-Brock e-mails JMSElton the following:

"Holy crap, is this for real!?!? The mayor of Spokane sending me an e-mail inviting me to apply for an internship? I can't hardly believe it! He is really a friend of yours? That is unreal. Well, I don't know what to say ... "thank you" seems like not enough."

JMSElton replies: "Don't thank me until you see how it works out. It should be fun and better to put on your resume than working for me."

Background: In another AOL instant messaging conversation, Moto-Brock asks JMSElton if he's too young for him.

JMSElton: "Careful. Let's take it slow here ok?"



Readers r

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Moto-Brock: LOL

JMSElton: "I don't want to ruin our friendship before we even get started."

JMSElton: "But yes, you interest me alot."

JMSElton: "But I'm not sure how I would handle your father.....or your mother..."

JMSElton: "So you saying you are attracted to me?"

Moto-Brock: "Well, yeah, kinda"

When JMSElton and Moto-Brock talk online April 9, they talk about meeting. West electronically sends his photo during the chat, but Moto-Brock acts like he doesn't immediately recognize him. West then sends an Internet link to the mayor's biography page at City Hall.

Moto-Brock: "So what u doing this weekend?"

JMSElton: "Have a dinner in about an hour that I really don't want to go to but said I would."

Moto-Brock: "Lucky u!"

JMSElton: "Tomorrow afternoon I have to be somewhere at 3:30 for about an hour. ...may golf in the morning tomorrow. ... or just go to the driving range."

Moto-Brock: "Want some company?"

JMSElton: "Maybe ...you interested?"

Moto-Brock: "Sure."

JMSElton: "We could hit some balls."

The two talk for a while about sports.

JMSElton: "You will be online tonight about 10pm?"

Moto-Brock: "It depends on if u want to get up early to go hit some golf balls."

JMSElton: "Maybe go to golf course about 10 am."

Moto-Brock: "10am would be cool"

JMSElton: "I still worry about meeting you."

Moto-Brock: "Why?????????????"

Moto-Brock: "Cause you aren't in shape? I don't care bout that with u"

JMSElton: "Because guys like you don't come along very often and I want it to last. ... am I crazy here?"

Moto-Brock: "I don't understand why it wouldn't. ...why wouldn't our friendship last if we meet for golf swings???"

JMSElton: "It willbut it will be different ... hopefully better but different"

Moto-Brock: "Why? Really?"

JMSElton: "We trust each other right?"

Moto-Brock: "Of course."

JMSElton then sends Moto-Brock the photo.

Moto-Brock: "What is that?"

JMSElton: "This is me."

Moto-Brock: "You are not fat why would u say that I wouldn't like u?"

JMSElton: "I didn't say you wouldn't recognize me ... just that you might be surprised"

Moto-Brock: "U have a nice face."

JMSElton: "You are so sweet. Thank you."

JMSElton: "OK, let's meet tomorrow at the driving range at Indian Canyon. Can you find that? 10am?"

JMSElton: "I'll be driving a blue Lexus convertible. You'll be in a Ram pickup?"

Moto-Brock: "And u look great, I'm kind of relieved."

JMSElton: "Good. ...that's not really what I was worried about."

Moto-Brock: "I thought maybe u were nervous for real reasons like u looked really bad or something"

JMSElton then sends Moto-Brock the link to Mayor Jim West's Web page.

JMSElton: "Check this out, but please don't tell anyone at all."

Moto-Brock: "Huh? That's you?"

JMSElton: "Does that change things alot?"

Moto-Brock: "Holy crap."

JMSElton: "Shhhhhh"

Moto-Brock: "That is u? U r screwing with me aren't u?"

JMSElton: "Shhhhhh. No I'm not."

Moto-Brock: "You are who I'm applying with?????????????????"

JMSElton: "See this is what I was afraid of. Now you won't apply."

Moto-Brock: "The heck I won't!"

JMSElton: "Well please be careful ok?"

Moto-Brock: "Of course I will. ... I wasn't sure I should because I didn't think I'd get it and I didn't wanna disappoint u."

JMSElton: "Oh you were going to get it. Don't worry about that."

Moto-Brock: "Now some things u said make more sense."

JMSElton: "Maybe so."

Moto-Brock: "Like all the peeps you know. Wow, that is so cool."

JMSElton: "Well it's a part of my life I don't share at all and is somewhat new to me."

JMSElton: "And the last thing I want is some high school kid getting into trouble because of me. ... I hope this isn't too big of a responsibility for you."

Moto-Brock: "No, I'm cool and it's cool. Now I see why u get the press box for the Cougs!"

JMSElton: "Someday I may run for governor and this would be bad if you know what I mean."

JMSElton then gives Moto-Brock a cell phone number that Mayor Jim West uses.

When he didn't show up for golf, Moto-Brock sent an e-mail saying a relative was sick. West responded that "family always comes first. Always."

After brief e-mail exchanges, Moto-Brock stopped communicating.

On April 28, he received one last e-mail from West, asking about the City Hall internship.

"You still interested?" the mayor asked.

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A SPOKESMAN-REVIEW INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Email from Jim West to city employees

Sent May 5, 2005

May 5, 2005

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The following is the text of an email sent by Mayor Jim West to city employees the morning of May 5, 2005.

From: West, James
Sent: Thursday, May 05, 2005 9:20 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: TGIM

It's only three and a half days to Monday and boy am I looking forward to that. As you know, Monday is my favorite day of the week because it is a new beginning and it comes every seven days. That's 52 new beginnings a year! What a blessing.

This morning I want to sincerely apologize to you personally for the shame I have brought to the Mayor's office and the city and the embarrassment my lack of judgment may cause you. I consider each of us Ambassadors of the City of Spokane and we carry a responsibility in that role. I stumbled and let you down.

If you haven't read the Spokesman Review (or if you have) I'll try to shed some light on what is or has occurred. If you have questions please feel comfortable to ask me at any time.

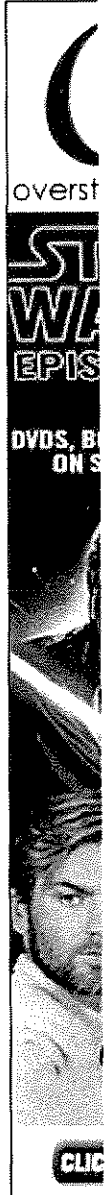
One of the new policies I brought to the City requires that if you make a mistake you admit it, fix it and then move on and do your job to the best of your ability. That is one of the tones we have set here.

The paper this morning reported that a 36 year old convicted felon who is suing the County swore in a deposition that I had molested him as a young boy. Another convicted felon has come forward and suggested the same thing. Both of these allegations I categorically deny. I've been told of allegations that these men were molested by a co-worker of mine at the Sheriff's Department in the mid-seventies. I have no direct knowledge of that. I was told that their parents came forward to the Sheriff's Department in the mid-seventies and reported those allegations against that Deputy. He was confronted by Sheriff's detectives and later committed suicide. Allegations against me have only been made in recent years about events which supposedly occurred 24 years ago. Again, I deny those allegations.

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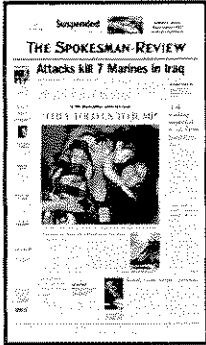
The paper also reported that I have visited a gay chat line on the Internet and had relationships with adult men. I don't deny that.

I have always considered a person's private life private and have respected others in this way. I intended to keep my private life private as well.

And I apologize.

I do ask one thing if you are willing. Since my cancer I've taken to prayer and believe it has healing power. Please pray for me, the rest of your leaders, the City and our community. And let us not forget our primary job is to provide the best service possible to our citizens - please do everything in your power to do that.

James E. West
 Mayor
 City of Spokane
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 Spokane, WA 99201-3335
 (509) 625-6250
 www.spokanecity.org.



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THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW.COM

Wednesday, August 3, 2005

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A SPOKESMAN-REVIEW INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

City to investigate West's computer use

Mayor's admission to visiting chat site prompts inquiry

Mike Prager / Staff writer

May 6, 2005

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Full coverage

The latest stories, background information, email and chat transcripts, interviews and reader responses.

[Full coverage »](#)

Spokane city officials Friday said they expect to launch an independent investigation into Mayor Jim West's internship program and the use of e-mail and the Internet.

The investigation will look into West's admission that he visited a gay chat room on the Web and had relationships with adult men. Part of that activity occurred on city computers, according to information uncovered in an investigation by The Spokesman-Review.

The city investigation is not expected to include allegations that West sexually abused two boys during the mid-1970s when he was a Spokane County sheriff's deputy.

West has denied the sex abuse allegations, but admitted to the online activity, calling it part of his private life.

"We believe this investigation is appropriate because it is in these areas that the allegations have a potential in involve city business," said City Attorney Michael Connelly.

The Spokesman-Review reported Thursday that West offered a man he believed to be an 18-year-old gifts, favors and a City Hall internship after meeting on Gay.com. The 18-year-old was actually a forensic computer expert working for the newspaper.

West, a Republican who served as state Senate majority leader before becoming mayor, Friday morning resigned his position on the board of directors of the Morning Star Boys Ranch, one day after resigning from the executive board of the Inland Northwest Council of the Boy Scouts.

Documents

City of Spokane policy on Internet and email use.

[Press release](#) announcing city investigation.

(All documents require free Adobe Acrobat Reader)

Audio

» [West's appearance](#) at a sign unveiling.

» [Listen to an interview](#) with Councilwoman Cherie Rodgers.
» [Former prosecutor Don Brockett reacts.](#)

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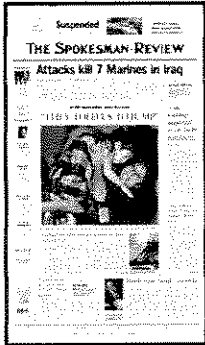
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P.J. Watters, public relations and funding director for the Boys Ranch, described West as "a wonderful supporter," but noted West never had any contact with boys at the ranch.

Also on Friday, West appeared at an unveiling of new signs showing the directions and distances to Spokane's four Sister Cities. He declined to answer media questions about the political earthquake that has shaken City Hall.

He continued to show no signs of relinquishing his post, despite concern in some quarters that the scandal will paralyze the city.

"I have 1,149 days left (in his four-year term) to keep this city moving," he said, repeating a similar line he had used in front of the media on Thursday.

One city official, who did not want to be identified, said top staffers were working on a plan to launch an independent investigation, even as one city council member and a former county prosecuting attorney issued calls for an independent probe.

"The city should have an independent investigation of all those accusations and allegations," said Councilwoman Cherie Rodgers. "Find out the truth. What really happened there."

Rodgers said, "I would get that computer and go through it with a fine-toothed comb."

Rodgers said members of the Republican Party have told her they want to see West ousted. She declined to identify those Republicans, but said she fears West's problems will cast a shadow over the city as long as he is mayor.

Former Spokane County Prosecuting Attorney Don Brockett, a Democrat, said the investigation should focus on the use of city equipment or city time "to troll the Internet in order to find individuals with whom Jim West wanted to associate, if as alleged, promising them either positions as interns or trips to Washington, D.C., and so on."

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THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW.COM

Wednesday, August 3, 2005

Adve

A SPOKESMAN-REVIEW INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

City to examine internships, computer use

Outside agency will be called in for independent investigation

Mike Prager / Staff writer

May 7, 2005

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Full coverage

The latest stories, background information, email and chat transcripts, interviews and reader responses.

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Spokane city officials Friday announced an independent investigation into Mayor Jim West's internship program and his use of city e-mail and the Internet.

The investigation revolves around West's acknowledgement this week that he visited a gay chat room on the Web and had relationships with young men. Part of that activity occurred on city computers, according to information uncovered in an investigation by The Spokesman-Review.

On Thursday, the newspaper reported that West, 54, offered gifts, favors and a City Hall internship to a man on Gay.com whom West believed was 18 years old. The man was actually a forensic computer expert hired by the newspaper to confirm that West was using a Gay.com chat room to seek dates.

Documents

City of Spokane policy on [Internet](#) and [email](#) use.

Press release

announcing city investigation.

(All documents require free Adobe Acrobat Reader)

KHQ-TV VIDEO

City to investigate

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The city investigation is not expected to examine allegations contained in the newspaper's report that West sexually abused two boys during the mid-1970s when he was a Spokane County sheriff's deputy.

West has denied the sex abuse allegations, but he acknowledged the online activity, calling it part of his private life.

"We believe this investigation is appropriate because it is in these areas that the allegations have a potential to involve city business," said City Attorney Michael Connelly, adding that steps were taken to secure all relevant information.

Investigators from an agency outside of the city police department will be sought, officials said.

The former Republican state Senate majority



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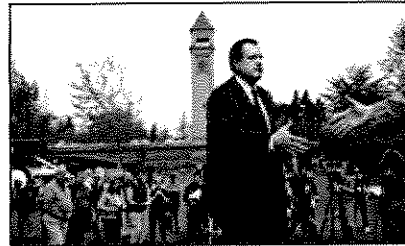
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Interview with Councilwoman Cherie Rodgers.
 » Former prosecutor Don Brockett reacts.

leader won what he called his dream job as mayor of Spokane in 2003.

His resolve to stay in office continued Friday, despite concerns from some quarters that the scandal could drag down the city with him.

West appeared at an unveiling of signs that show the directions and distances to Spokane's four Sister Cities in advance of an international Sister Cities convention in Spokane in July.



Spokane Mayor Jim West is back in the public eye as he unveiled a sign for Spokane's Sister Cities on Friday morning at Riverfront Park. (Brian Plonka/The Spokesman-Review)

During the Friday event, he declined to answer media questions about the controversy that has shaken City Hall.

"I have 1,149 days left (in his four-year term) to keep this city moving," he said afterward, repeating a similar statement he used in front of the media Thursday.

Also Friday, West resigned his position on the board of directors of the Morning Star Boys Ranch, one day after resigning from the executive board of the Inland Northwest Council of the Boy Scouts.

P.J. Watters, public relations and funding director for the Boys Ranch, described West as "a wonderful supporter." Watters noted West never had any contact with boys at the ranch.

Even though West controls the city administration through his power to hire and fire, top officials at City Hall were moving Friday to launch the independent investigation without his approval. West subsequently was informed about the plan to have an independent investigation and agreed to it, officials said.

Among City Council members, only Cherie Rodgers had called for an investigation.

"I would get that computer and go through it with a fine-toothed comb," she said. "Find out the truth. What really happened there."

Rodgers said some members of the Republican Party have told her they want to see West ousted. She declined to identify those Republicans, but she said West's problems aren't going to disappear.

A citizen recall effort, through a petition and a public vote, would be required to remove West from office if he refuses to resign. The petition would need 12,567 valid voter signatures.

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everything that happens," Rodgers said. "Those questions are always going to be out there."

Rodgers said West can't start over and act like nothing has happened. "The public is extremely concerned. They want an answer," she said.

Former Spokane County Prosecuting Attorney Don Brockett, a Democrat, said the investigation should focus on the use of city equipment or city time "to troll the Internet in order to find individuals with whom Jim West wanted to associate, if as alleged, promising them either positions as interns or trips to Washington, D.C., and so on."

Brockett said, "I certainly don't think the city police can investigate it, because people wouldn't believe that was independent. I don't know that the Sheriff's Department can, only because everybody knows Mark Sterk was a city policeman at one time."

Connelly, the city attorney, said he had yet to make arrangements for the investigation.

Brockett has been outspoken as an advocate for victims in Spokane Diocese's sex-abuse scandal involving Roman Catholic priests. He suggested that either the Washington State Patrol or a private investigator could be used for the city investigation.

He said the stories of two men who are accusing West of sexually molesting them in the 1970s should not be dismissed. West had characterized both as "convicted felons" in his statement to the media Thursday.

"I think we were too quick to discount victims' stories because of the lives they've led," Brockett said.

The former prosecutor said that when he was in office he was not aware of any information involving West and molestations. "I wish I had known some of this stuff was going on," Brockett said.

Brockett said a state criminal law against "abuse of office" may have been violated.

That law states, "A public servant is guilty of official misconduct if, with intent to obtain a benefit or to deprive another person of a lawful right or privilege: (a) he intentionally commits an unauthorized act under color of law; or (b) he intentionally refrains from performing a duty imposed upon him by law. (c) Official misconduct is a gross misdemeanor."

In addition to the law against abuse of office, the state also has a code of ethics for municipal officers.

That code states, "No municipal officer may, directly or indirectly, give or receive or agree to receive any compensation, gift, reward, or gratuity from a source except the employing municipality, for a matter connected with or related to the officer's services as such an officer unless otherwise provided

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The city of Spokane does not have a code of ethics for employees that covers gifts, officials said.

There is a policy governing use of the Web, but it does not address the use of chat rooms. A separate policy on e-mail states, “Obscene, offensive, illegal, or unprofessional communication through e-mail is prohibited,” including any “reference to or discussion of any sexual acts, sexual relationships, dates, dating, personal relationships, or sexually related graphics.”

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THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW.COM

Wednesday, August 3, 2005

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A SPOKESMAN-REVIEW INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Mayor says sex act happened at home; living 'this double life has been hell'

Bill Morlin/ Staff writer

May 9, 2005

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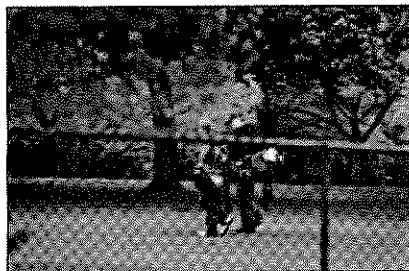
Mayor Jim West ended two days of public silence on Sunday in a rambling, sometimes emotional 30-minute conversation over an expanding controversy linking his sexual activities and the trappings of his public office.

West responded quickly to The Spokesman-Review's front-page story on Sunday that revealed new details about his activities, calling the newspaper's editor at 6:37 a.m. to deny the new allegations and offer responses to several elements of the newspaper's investigation.

West began the conversation with Steven A. Smith, editor of The Spokesman-Review, by saying City Councilwoman Cherie Rodgers mischaracterized comments he made to her in a telephone conversation on Thursday.

"I didn't masturbate in my office - never, not ever," West told Smith.

"There was a misunderstanding," West told the newspaper's senior editor, and "Cherie (Rodgers) misunderstood me."



Mayor Jim West chats with a golf partner Saturday at Esmeralda Golf Course. (Jed Conklin/The Spokesman-Review)

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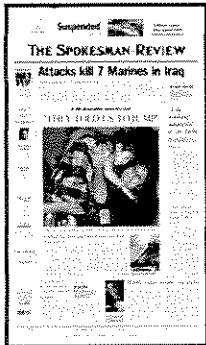
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comments, which included him saying:

"I'm being destroyed because I am a gay man, which is fine. I've been in public life, I can accept that. Because I am a gay man, because of this double life, it has been hell."

"Yes, I know it's not about being gay, I know that. There are other things."

"It's OK to destroy me, but stop destroying this city."

Smith said West "talked briefly about his double life, and he was clearly crying during this part of the exchange."

West also said:

"I'm not mad at the paper. You're just doing your job, I know that. I'm glad at least you're trying to verify everything, you're trying to verify these stories."

"I led a life of hell. I know the rumors (of sexual orientation) have been out there for a long time. It has been hell. I didn't date. I was celibate. That was true. Oh God. Oh God."

"I don't know what to do. I just want to get through tomorrow."

When the newspaper editor asked the mayor if other men claiming to be abuse victims are likely to come forward, he said, "probably so."

"For some people, they'll do it for the thrill. Some people are confused. I need time," Smith said West told him.

While not denying the conduct, West said he wasn't in his City Hall office but at his home when the simulated online sex occurred. "I would never, ever sully or disgrace my office in this way," he told Smith.

Rodgers, however, stood by her version that West had told her he was in his City Hall office during one of his online sex conversations with the teenager who was really a computer consultant hired by the newspaper.

"He maintains one thing, but I still have my memory and my notes of what happened that day," Rodgers said on Sunday.

Rodgers said she told West in another telephone conversation on Sunday morning, ".I know you said it.'"

The councilwoman said that in their conversation last week West also confirmed that he engaged in sexual activity last June while on a date in Spokane with an 18-year-old he met earlier in the Gay.com chat room.

It was that young man's story about allegedly meeting the mayor in the online chat room that led the newspaper to hire a forensic computer expert to verify the teenager's claims that the man he met online was West - a process that took six months to complete and involved creating a fictional teenager known

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as "Moto-Brock."

On April 9, West sent his photo and City Hall Web site biography to Moto-Brock, asking him to keep the secret. "Please don't tell anyone at all," the 54-year-old mayor told Moto-Brock, who he thought was a gay teenager. "It's a part of my life I don't share at all," he said.

"Someday I may run for governor and this would be bad, if you know what I mean," West told the teenager.

The complete transcript of that dialogue between the mayor and Moto-Brock and eight other online conversations that occurred between mid-February and early April can be found on the newspaper's Web site, www.spokesmanreview.com.

City officials have called for an independent, outside investigation, and have seized city computers used by West.

The newspaper has e-mails West sent from City Hall computers, offering an internship in the mayor's office to Moto-Brock., the fictional 18-year-old he meet in a Gay.com chat room before the two engaged in simulated sex dialogues using AOL "instant messaging."

The mayor complained about Rodgers' comments in Sunday's editions during his early morning call to Smith.

"He was initially emotional, slightly choked up, but otherwise calm and soft-spoken," Smith said in describing West's demeanor during the call.

The mayor "went on to talk about the general scope of the allegations more generally. His emotions began to build and there were moments when he would choke up, sounding near tears, pausing to gather his thoughts," Smith said.

The newspaper editor said West again denied abusing Robert J. Galliher and Michael G. Grant Jr. in the late 1970s and early 1980s when he was a sheriff's deputy and Boy Scout leader.

"I categorically deny abusing young boys," West told Smith in reference to Galliher's and Grant's claims.

"Those things never happened. I ask myself, did I live some sort of double life? Do I have a split personality? I don't think so," Smith said in repeating West's comments.

West said he is "trying to piece together specific evidence that will show he could not have molested" Galliher and Grant, but "how do you prove a negative?" Smith related.

The mayor said the newspaper had "how many months, months and months" to get these articles, and he has to have time to gather his defense, Smith said.

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West said he would be meeting with a lawyer on Sunday.

"We're going to talk about everything that happened. It would be one thing if this was like a trial, where I could present evidence and cross-examine ... but I can't do that. I can't prove a negative," Smith said he was told by West.

"I don't have a chance because I can't account for my time 25 years ago," West told the newspaper editor.

Smith asked him why he hasn't talked to Spokesman-Review reporters since Wednesday, and why he has refused to defend himself if he believed he was being destroyed.

"I want to have a full statement relating to all of these charges. But I want to wait to see where things stop dribbling out (in the paper)," West responded to Smith.

West also said, "I was sure you would have another name in today's paper. Then I see this big story (about masturbation). But I was sure there would be another name and I was thinking, who? I don't know."

West denied "checking out" boys from Morning Star Boys' Ranch, but said he knew his late friend David Hahn was a volunteer there. Hahn's brother-in-law, Republican businessman Dick Walters, said Saturday he clearly remembers being told by Hahn that he and his good friend West both took Morning Star boys on trips in the late 1970s and 1980s.

West, who resigned last week from the boys ranch board of directors, later told Smith he "vaguely remembers" maybe he and Hahn "both took one kid on a hike or camping trip once."

The mayor also referred to a story in Saturday's paper in which a man named "Scott" said he was sexually molested by Hahn and reported the conduct to West during a 50-mile Boy Scout hike around Mount Rainier in 1980.

Smith said West "couldn't remember the kid. He doesn't recall the incident."

West said another adult on the trip, whom he didn't identify, "told him not to worry about it, that we didn't know about sexual abuse in 1980," Smith said in relating the mayor's comments.

But West also said, "It may be possible that the kid said something, maybe about being fondled, and maybe I just didn't recognize how important that might have been."

"If I knew and didn't do anything, then I have to apologize. I should have," West told Smith.

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A SPOKESMAN-REVIEW INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Two accuse West of offering jobs

Bill Morlin / Staff writer

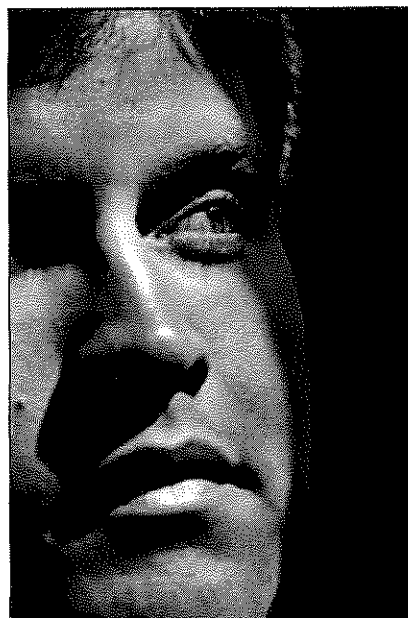
May 9, 2005

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High-salaried City Hall jobs and a position on a city policy-making board were offered to two young men after they met Mayor Jim West in an Internet chat room, both men told The Spokesman-Review on Monday.

Ryan M. Oelrich, a 24-year-old openly gay man, said he was appointed by West to the city Human Rights Commission in April 2004, but didn't know at the time that West was the same man he'd met earlier in Gay.com using the screen aliases "Cobra82nd" and "RightBi-Guy."

Sometime after the appointment, Oelrich said he realized the mayor was the same person he'd been talking to online beginning in 2003. While on the commission, Oelrich said he rebuffed a series of sexually explicit online advances from West.



Ryan M. Oelrich, 24, says he rebuffed sexual advances from

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After appointing Oelrich to the policy-making Human Rights Commission, West "offered me \$300 cash if I'd swim naked with him in my swimming pool," Oelrich said.

He declined West's offer as "being totally inappropriate," said the 2004 graduate of Gonzaga University.

Another man, who is 24 and has a business degree, provided his name to the newspaper but asked that he not be publicly identified because his family doesn't know he is gay.

The unidentified man said West offered him a job as the city's human resources, or personnel, director.

"When I told him I wasn't qualified for that job, he told me I would be qualified if I was a friend of the mayor's," the

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Mayor Jim West. (Brian Plonka/The Spokesman-Review)

young man said on condition of anonymity.

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West offered him a job as "aquatics director," overseeing operations at the city's swimming pools.

When he rejected the job offer, he said

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The man, who doesn't currently live in Spokane, and his friend, Oelrich, both said they met "Cobra82nd" on the Gay.com Web site before changing to AOL "instant messaging" with the man who later identified himself as the mayor of Spokane.

A computer program allowed the young men to save some of the "instant messages" with West, who used the screen name "JMSElton." West's middle name is Elton.

Oelrich and his friend said their online conversations with West substantially paralleled conversations West had between February and April with "Moto-Brock," a fictional Ferris High School student created by a forensic computer expert hired by the newspaper. The two men said they read the "Moto-Brock" transcripts in the newspaper.

The expert was hired by the newspaper late last year in an attempt to confirm the claims of an anonymous 18-year-old man who said he met West online. The 18-year-old told the newspaper West was using the screen names "Cobra82nd" and "RightBi-Guy." The 18-year-old said he and West had consensual sex last June.

West on Wednesday acknowledged that he visited Gay.com and developed relationships with various men including the 18-year-old who talked to the newspaper.

West was interviewed the day before The Spokesman-Review published a series of stories stating he has abused positions of public trust _ as a sheriff's deputy, Boy Scout leader and politician _ to develop sexual relationship with boys and young men.

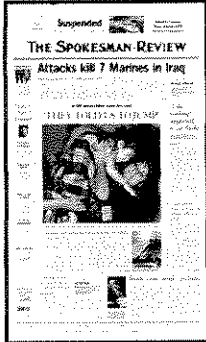
Oelrich said he quietly resigned from the city's Human Rights Commission in January after West "hounded me for months, telling me I was cute and asking me out on dates."

"I refused all his advances," Oelrich said. "He was totally inappropriate."

Oelrich said he wasn't going to come forward publicly after news reports of West's conduct were first reported last Thursday in the newspaper.

"I was actually hoping that the mayor would resign, and because he still hasn't I felt it was important that this information did come out," Oelrich said.

He turned to the media, he said, after talking with his friends and not being able to find a governmental agency where he could file a complaint about West's conduct.



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Oelrich was interviewed just a few hours before West told the City Council that he is taking a vacation and said he was being "persecuted" by The Spokesman-Review.

His announcement came the same day that a Spokane woman said she is organizing a petition drive to recall the mayor.

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A SPOKESMAN-REVIEW INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

FBI to look into West allegations

Bill Morlin / Staff writer

May 10, 2005

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The FBI is in the initial phases of a "public corruption" investigation into allegations Spokane Mayor Jim West abused his office by offering jobs to young men he hoped to entice into sexual relationships, a senior Justice Department official said Tuesday.

FBI agents today are expected to interview Ryan Oelrich and another man, both 24, who said they were independently offered a position on the Human Rights Commission and City Hall jobs after online chats with a man who turned out to be West.

Oelrich, who is openly gay, told The Spokesman-Review on Monday that he also knows of two other young men who were approached by West in a gay chat room and later urged to apply for City Hall jobs.

"The FBI has opened what's called a 'preliminary inquiry' to determine whether a full-blown investigation should occur," said Thomas O. Rice, chief criminal prosecutor in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Washington.

"It's almost certain a full investigation will occur," said another source familiar with the case.

On a related front, former Spokane County Prosecutor Donald C. Brockett said he believes West's activities should be reviewed in light of Washington state laws involving "official misconduct" and solicitation of minors for immoral purposes.

Brockett, who has called for an outside independent investigation, said neither the Spokane Police Department nor the Spokane County Sheriff's Office is in a position to conduct the state investigation.

At the U.S. Attorney's Office, Rice said he couldn't discuss particulars of the federal investigation or where it might lead.

"We can assure the public it's being looked at for possible violations of federal law," Rice told The Spokesman-Review.

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Rice said the "preliminary inquiry" by special agents of the FBI was begun "late last week."

Justice Department guidelines allow him to confirm the existence of the investigation because it involves issues that are generating substantial public interest nationally through media accounts, he said.

"Normally, we can't talk about investigations that are under way unless there has been some publicity or media attention that puts the matter in the public arena," Rice said.

On Thursday, The Spokesman-Review reported that West has abused positions of public trust for a quarter-century - as a sheriff's deputy, Boy Scout leader and politician. West has denied allegations that he sexually abused two boys in the late 1970s, but admitted having private online relationships in the past year through Gay.com.

After The Spokesman-Review stories appeared Thursday, top city officials, including City Attorney Mike Connelly and Deputy Mayor Jack Lynch moved to seize West's computer and capture information on its hard drive.

It's not known if city officials also have trapped or saved Internet usage logs that link West's computer and the city's computer domain or Internet on-ramp.

The FBI has jurisdiction to open an investigation under the fairly broad public corruption statutes. Sources described the potentially applicable statutes as follows:

Under one law, the Federal Program Funds section, the FBI can investigate matters involving cities or counties or any other governmental entity that receives \$10,000 or more a year in federal funding.

With that law as the authorizing statute, federal investigators can then use wire fraud or mail fraud laws to charge or indict public officials. Use of computers and the Internet come under provisions of the wire fraud statute.

Another federal law that can be used in corruption of public office cases targets elected or appointed public figures who intend to defraud the citizens they serve of "honest services." That law states it is Congress' intention that public officials should not defraud the public trust.

Still another federal law touching on public corruption is the Hobbs Act, which prohibits extortion of anything having an effect on interstate commerce.

Brockett said he believes there also should be an investigation to see if state laws have been violated.

"Some independent body should be called in because Jim West has the ability to hire and fire (Police Chief) Roger Bragdon and I don't think (Spokane County Sheriff) Mark Sterk would be independent because he used to work for the Police Department," Brockett said.

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The current county prosecutor, Steve Tucker, was not reached for comment, but he likely cannot freely discuss potential violations of state law because his office ultimately could be presented the case.

But Brockett, now retired, agreed to review transcripts between West and "Moto-Brock," a fictional high school student created by a forensic computer consultant hired by the newspaper. Moto-Brock was offered an internship in the mayor's office after the two met in a gay chat room and had online simulated sex using "instant messaging."

Since publication of the Moto-Brock chats, Oelrich and another man who asked not to be identified, have come forward and said a nearly identical scenario happened to them when they met West online.

Brockett said he believes the state law outlawing "communication with a minor for immoral purposes" - a gross misdemeanor - is relevant to the conduct described in the Moto-Brock transcripts with West.

"Any time there's sexual talk that's predatory, in other words, that's aimed at gaining an introduction or a meeting with somebody or just talking about sex, that is soliciting a minor for immoral purposes," the former prosecutor said.

Under the state law, Brockett said, a crime occurred if the victim is "either a person under 18 or a person that the perpetrator believed was under 18.

"To me that seems to clearly cover fictional characters such as Moto-Brock," the former prosecutor said.

Another state law that is implicated, he said, pertains to abuse of office or "official misconduct," a gross misdemeanor punishable by up to a year in jail.

"That law involves the use of public office, under color of law, to obtain a benefit," Brockett said.

"The latest revelations about (City Hall) internships and some specific (government) jobs being offered to these two young men" may make state law applicable, he said.

"It obviously would be a matter of investigating this and putting a case together for presentation to a prosecutor to see if they felt it was sufficient," he said.

The Washington State Patrol is qualified to do such investigations, he said, but the City Council or other city officials must request that assistance.

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A SPOKESMAN-REVIEW INVESTIGATIVE REPORT

Interview with Ryan Oelrich

May 10, 2005

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The following is an interview Spokesman-Review reporter Bill Morlin conducted with Ryan Oelrich on May 9 in Spokane. Oelrich is talking about his appointment to the Human Rights Commission by Spokane Mayor Jim West. See related story: [Two accuse West of offering jobs.](#)

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Oelrich: "First off, I think it's important to say that my motivation for coming forward is I was actually hoping that the mayor would resign and because he still hasn't I felt it was important that this information did come out. As I looked into trying to file a report with a government body, I talked to some friends who work in Spokane government, I realized there really isn't an organization. My hope is that the mayor would resign. With that said, I'll walk you through the timeline.

"Starting around August or September of 2003, I was messaged by "Rightbi-Guy" on Gay.com. Most of the time I ignored this individual because he was overly flirtatious and frequently inappropriate. However, on several occasions I engaged in dialogue discussing local politics and progress of his acts with this individual. This individual knew who I was as he claimed he had seen some of my balloon sculptures. However, I did not know who he was at the time. Later, this individual started messaging me using the screen name "Cobra82nd" and he informed me he'd gotten a new screen name but was formerly Righbi-Guy. He told me his name was Jim, he worked in a business somewhat like marketing and that he traveled a lot.



Oelrich

met with the mayor in his office in City Hall in April of 2004. The mayor was very friendly and told me immediately that he would appoint me to the Human Rights Commission.

"During one conversation Cobra82nd asked me what I thought of Spokane's mayor. He told me he thought the mayor to be overly full of himself and somewhat old and fat. He asked me if I thought the mayor was attractive and what I thought of the individual. I don't recall how I responded.

"In March of 2004, I was told by a friend, [NAME REDACTED], who wishes to remain off the record, that he discussed my name with the mayor and the mayor had told him there was an opening on the Human Rights Commission. I was told I should apply and that the mayor knew who I was. I applied for the commission and

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"The same day I met with Mayor Jim West in his office in City Hall, I was messaged by him online that evening. He did not reveal his identity, however, he told me I was very attractive and should meet him for dinner. He also told me I was smaller than he thought. At the time, I assumed he was once again referring to seeing me on television for the creation of a balloon sculpture, which happened relatively frequently at the time.

"In May of 2004, while I was setting a world record for longest time spent living in a balloon house at River Park Square, the mayor stopped by almost everyday to say hello."

Morlin: "Did you set that record?"

Oelrich: "Yes."

Oelrich: "My conversations with Cobra82nd continues sporadically and sometimes I ended the conversation when he became inappropriate and crude.

Oelrich: "At that point I still did not know who he was."

Morlin: "What name was he using when that was occurring?"

Oelrich: "Cobra82nd."

Morlin: "What time frame was it?"

Oelrich: "This would have been up through May. I don't want that on the record, but [NAME REDACTED] was my screen name.

Morlin: "I won't use that."

Oelrich: "Conversations with Cobra82nd continued sporadically and several times I ended the conversation when he became inappropriate and crude. I declined his advances in which terminated the conversation. He asked me out on dates on several occasions and I always declined. During these conversations he would drop hints as to his identity and several times he told me he'd seen me in public.

"From the hints he dropped, I suspected his identity as mayor. My friend and colleague [NAME REDACTED], who wishes to remain off the record, confirmed that the person I was talking to was indeed the mayor. I finally confronted James West online and he admitted he was indeed the mayor and told me to keep it a secret."

Morlin: "When did that occur?"

Oelrich: "This happened in late June 2004."

Oelrich: "Shortly after the mayor admitted his identity, he offered me help finding a "real" job as he called it. He offered me an internship in City Hall and said I could come in and chat with him and he could see if there were any other positions available. He sent me an e-mail with the information on where to apply. I declined his offer for help. He also asked me to accompany him to a Gonzaga Bulldogs game in California."

Morlin: "When was that?"

Oelrich: "I don't recall right off hand."

Oelrich: "He told me there would be one bed in the hotel room and I would have to share it with him. He told me he would pay for all the expenses. I declined. I began my term as a Human Rights Commissioner with my first meeting in June.

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"Sometime in August the mayor told me online he'd been trying to figure out a way to get to know me and he thought I was attractive. He told me how hot he thought I was when he saw me on the news on occasion building a balloon sculpture and how sexy he thought I was the first time I met with him in his office. He told me he knew he had to figure out a way to get to know me because he didn't think I'd otherwise ever meet a guy like him. I understood very clearly that his way of figuring out how to meet me was to appoint me to the Human Rights Commission. I was upset by this at the time and confided in my friend, [NAME REDACTED], who wishes to remain off the record.

"I believed I was appointed to the commission because of my experience and commitment to human rights in Spokane, which is what I told my friends and family, without realizing it was simply a way for the mayor to meet me and to ask me out on a date because he thought I was hot, really cheap and devalue the experience. I continued to serve on the commission but finally came to the conclusion in November that continuing to serve in that position would be unethical.

"At the time I knew that what Mayor West had done was inappropriate, however, I wasn't sure how to remedy the situation or who I should talk to. After an article had run in the newspaper regarding myself and my work with the Gay Youth Association, a local nonprofit, the mayor frequently asked if he could come over and swim in my swimming pool or use my hot tub. I always declined.

"During one conversation, he told me I had a nice house but the roads to my house were horrible. I told him he should fix the roads. This conversation startled me as I realized that Mayor West had gone out of his way to track down my address and do an actual drive-by of my home. He asked me out on dates on several occasion and several times suggested he would pay me if I went skinny-dipping with him in my swimming pool.

Morlin: "When did that occur?"
Oelrich: "This would have been August/September."

Morlin: "When you were on the Human Rights Commission?"
Oelrich: "Yes."

Morlin: "Did he specifically on one occasion offer you \$300?"
Oelrich: "Yes he did."

Morlin: "\$300 if you could go skinny-dipping together in your swimming pool?"
Oelrich: "On one occasion he suggested \$300, which he said is how much money he had on a recent gambling outing."

Oelrich: "I declined and told him that was inappropriate. He told me he'd be driving over to see where I lived. He asked me what I would do if he just showed up at my door one night. I declined his visit and told him that showing up at my door would alarm me. I felt very uncomfortable with this conversation. I was very worried at the time that the mayor might just show up at my door as he suggested. The mayor became more inappropriate online and I realized in November/December of 2004 that I would not continue to serve on the Human Rights Commission.

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"I wanted to be in a position that I'd earned because of my integrity and qualifications, not because the mayor simply thought I was attractive and wanted a date. I resigned from the commission in January by simply stating I was too busy. I had confided in my friend [NAME REDACTED] all along and in early May, and just a week ago I also confided in Jim Gotziam, the commission chair.

"Although I disagree with the mayor's actions, which I confronted him on several times, I continued to chat with him online on occasion. Whenever he became inappropriate, I would terminate the conversation. In February or March of this year, Mayor West called and asked for my help in picking up hardware to build shelves and remodel his closet."

Morlin: "Is this after you left the commission?"

Oelrich: "Yes."

Oelrich: "He asked me to come with him to, I believe, it was Lowe's and help carry hardware. I agreed and assisted him in carrying hardware and picking out supplies. The mayor was very respectful during the trip and was not inappropriate. However, when we arrived back at my home to drop me off, he invited me to come back to his place so he would show me his progress on his remodeling job. He also offered dinner and perhaps a movie while we sat on the couch. I declined. I got the distinct impression he wanted more to happen on the couch than just a movie. I declined.

"The mayor continues to message me on several occasions, however I rarely responded. Finally, in April of 2005 the mayor messaged me and made a joke about wanting to seduce some young boy he'd come across on one of his business trips. I told the mayor I was very offended by his joke and found it highly inappropriate. I terminated the conversation. He left several messages on my computer in the days to follow apologizing for his behavior and asking me if I was still mad at him. I terminated the conversations with the mayor over a dozen occasions and he would frequently would leave messages on my computer apologizing and asking me to continue talking to him."

Morlin: "Can you give me a copy of that statement? I would like to ask you a few follow-up questions specifically to the board. What did he tell you that he expected in return? Or did he tell you anything? What's your opinion of that?"

Oelrich: "At the time he appointed me to the Human Rights Commission, I did not know he was gay. I did not know he was the same person that I was talking to online. He didn't ask anything of me at the time. He just told me he would appoint me right away. It wasn't until a month later that he told me his motivations for wanting to appoint me to the commission was simply so he could meet me, get to know me and he made the comment that he couldn't think of another way of introducing himself to me and he didn't think I would otherwise meet a guy like him."

Morlin: "After you were on the commission, did he ever invite you into the mayor's office? Did you ever go into his office?"

Oelrich: "I never went into the mayor's office. I was invited to come by, I never did.

Morlin: "Invited by him?"

Oelrich: "Yes."

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Morlin: "On how many occasions?"

Oelrich: "Several times."

Morlin: "When was your first meeting on the Human Rights Commission?"

Oelrich: "June 2004."

Morlin: "How soon were you then invited to come by his office and see him?"

Oelrich: "Would have been about a month later. I was looking for employment at the time and he suggested that he had an internship program that I would be great, that I should come in. He also said there were other positions in city government that he would love to hire me for."

Morlin: "How did he do that, by e-mails or how did those conversations occur?"

Oelrich: "Mainly the instant messenger. Several times he did send me an e-mail from his office. He sent me an e-mail from his office with the information on how to, who to talk to about the internship program."

Morlin: "On any of the e-mails or instant messages when he was operating from his office, were any of those to your recollection sexually inexplicit or inappropriate?"

Oelrich: "No, I don't recall them being sexually inappropriate."

Morlin: "Did you ever go on any dates with him, other than the Loew's episode and how would you characterize what that was. It wasn't really a date, you were just...?"

Oelrich: "In no way a date, I was always very clear and very honest that I was not interested. There was never any relationship. I told him every time that I was not interested. He continued to ask."

Morlin: "Was he hounding you in your view? You give me the very best way to describe it."

Oelrich: "Hounding would be, I guess, a very good way to put it. Usually I would tell him I wasn't interested and he would stop and we would go on to some other topic and discuss local politics and he was appropriate and fine. And the next time we talked he'd try again."

Morlin: "The issue here all along, as I very carefully tried to point out, is not whether the mayor is gay or bisexual, but whether he is abusing the public trust of the office that he currently holds. What are your feelings about that?"

Oelrich: "I believe that he has."

Morlin: "Has what?"

Oelrich: "Has abused his power as mayor and he confessed to me his reason for appointing me to the Human Rights Commission, which really upset me and which was very inappropriate. That is a commission and a group of people that are working hard to try to better Spokane and to use that as simply a way to find a date to try to impress somebody so that they would be more likely to go out on a date with you is very inappropriate."

Morlin: "What do you think should happen now?"

Oelrich: "I believe the mayor should step down. I don't harbor any ill will towards the mayor. In fact, I don't envy the position he's in. I can't imagine how

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hard it must be. The mayor remarked to me one time that he didn't think there was anyway he ever could have gotten to the place that he is if people had known about his sexuality. Unfortunately, I agree with that. I understand how hard it is.

"With that said, it's not an excuse and I hope he'll face the consequences of his actions and step down and let Spokane move on and let himself move on and I'm willing to forgive and forget and move on and I hope that other people will be to."

Morlin: "In fact, if you look at his legislative history as my colleague Karen Steele has done, it turns out he's really no friend of the gay community. He's been almost homophobic. He wasn't in favor of extending mutual partner benefits in the city and I don't know if you've backgrounded yourself on all that, but what is your view on that topic?"

Oelrich: "I think that's very, very unfortunate and really it hurts me because my job is to reach out and help and support gay, bisexual, questioning youth in our community, and to see someone in the mayor's position who is struggling with his sexuality, put up roadblocks and obstacles for other people in the same position, is almost unforgivable."

"It's highly inappropriate. It really hurts me that he would do that. I understand the position he's in, I understand how hard it is, and how hard it is to live a double life and keep that secret. I don't envy him, but it's not an excuse."

Morlin: "In fact, if you were to, which has not occurred, don't you think, in fact, though, that a lot of people would accept him for who he is and what he's all about it. They would accept him more in that fashion than if he continued to live this hypocritical lifestyle? What's your view on that?"

Oelrich: "I strongly believe that people are healthier if they're honest and open and true to themselves. I would hope the mayor would be too."

Morlin: "The other question I want to ask you is why now? Why are you talking to us now, four or five days into this whole, for lack of better word, scandal or controversy? Why are you talking to us now?"

Oelrich: "I've been hoping that the mayor would resign and that's what I was hoping for. I hoped this wouldn't be necessary. But as time's gone by and the mayor hasn't yet stepped down, I realized this was the right thing to do. I know several young men who have come to me through my work and said I've talked to the mayor and"

Morlin: "These are other young men?"

Oelrich: "Yeah. I've heard their stories and I really realized that the mayor being in the position he is, is a threat to gay youth in this community?"

Morlin: "Is he a sexual predator, in your opinion?"

Oelrich: "I can't comment on that."

Morlin: "When you say he's a threat to gay youth in our community, what do you mean?"

Oelrich: "Just the youth that I've talked to. I feel it was abuse of his power and that using his office to try to influence young men."

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[DISCUSSION OF OTHER POSSIBLE VICTIMS REDACTED]

Morlin: "Has he offered any of them public positions like he's offered you, a public position at City Hall?"

Oelrich: "Yes, one particular young man came to me and just months ago was all excited because the mayor had offered him an internship. And he was all excited. The young man that maybe didn't have a lot of confidence, was all excited about this. For him, this was somebody finally believing in him and him starting to really think, wow, maybe I am worth something."

"This should be a great position. I realized at the time, it seems fishy, it seems that there is something wrong here, and as I've heard more and more of this come out and I've talked to this young man again after the story broke and talked to him further and he admitted he offered the internship because he wanted a date and he was very flirtatious and I realize that now and it really hurts because this young man who is just starting to build some confidence in believing that he's really worth something and somebody was maybe seeing something in him that was more than just a pretty face, it was really seeing some strength and some qualifications only for him to find out, not that wasn't the case."

"The person interested in him was interested in having him take this internship that wasn't because of his qualifications, it was just because he wanted a date."

Morlin: "Did he apply for the internship? Was this an internship in the mayor's office?"

Oelrich: "He told me that he did apply."

Morlin: "Can you give us his name or can you have him talk to me?"

Oelrich: "I cannot give you his name."

Morlin: "You're saying for confidence reasons you're asking not to release his name?"

Oelrich: "Yes."

Morlin: "I'm wondering if you'll reach out to him and tell him we'd like to talk to him and if he wants to be anonymous, that's absolutely fine. So the why now answer is you've come to us now because you had hoped that by now the mayor would have stepped down?"

Oelrich: "Yes."

Morlin: "You do think then, I gather by what you said, that he's been involved in an abuse of public trust that goes with being the mayor? Abuse of public office?"

Oelrich: "Definitely."

Morlin: "What was the date of that occasion, the money offer to swim naked in the pool? When was that, approximately, if you can remember?"

Oelrich: "It would have been in August or September of 2004."

Morlin: "You have a pool here at your house?"

Oelrich: "I do."

Morlin: "He offered you \$300 if you would swim naked with him in your pool. Is that what you're telling me?"

Oelrich: "Yes."

Morlin: "What did you tell him when he offered you the money to swim naked with him?"

Oelrich: "I told him no, that that was inappropriate. The mayor and I had an interesting relationship because whenever he was inappropriate, I would almost always terminate the conversation. I'd say Jim, we're not going here and the conversation would stop for that day. Then maybe in the future he would message me again and we would continue. I try to take people where they're at and I know everybody has strengths and weaknesses. I knew he was being inappropriate, but I also knew he was the mayor. He was somebody because of his position, deserves respect and for a long time I believed I could take the good with the bad, and I'll put my foot down, and I'll keep putting my foot down every time he's inappropriate. But it continued and continued and continued."

Morlin: "When's the last time you talked to him?"

Oelrich: "Just a little over a week ago."

Morlin: "Have you talked to him since these news reports have come out?"

Oelrich: "No, but what I did do is I sent him an e-mail letting him know that I was going to go forward. I don't believe in going behind somebody's back and obviously this has been a situation so I went and sent an e-mail to the mayor letting him know."

Morlin: "When did you do that?"

Oelrich: "I did that last night."

Morlin: "Did he respond to that e-mail?"

Oelrich: "No, I haven't heard a response."

Morlin: "Can you characterize what you said in that e-mail?"

Oelrich: "I just said, Jim, I'm worried about you. I read the stories for today, for yesterday, I'm worried about the mayor. I'm worried about his health, his safety and I just told the mayor I was worried about him, but I believed he had made mistakes and that I hoped he had resigned, but because he hadn't that I needed to do what I believed is morally right and go forward with what I know. And I told him that I believe he does need to step down."

Morlin: "Did you tell him you were going to talk to The Spokesman-Review today?"

Oelrich: "I did not tell him The Spokesman."

Morlin: "You told him media?"

Oelrich: "Yeah."

Morlin: "He hasn't responded to that? What time was that last night?"

Oelrich: "It was really late, probably 2 a.m."

Morlin: "It was an e-mail, not an instant message?"

Oelrich: "No, it was an e-mail. I included a Bible verse too that I find to"

Morlin: "What was the Bible verse, if you can remember?"

Oelrich: "I included the Shepherd's prayer."

Morlin: "What book is that out of?"

Oelrich: "Psalms."

Morlin: "The 23rd Psalm?"

Oelrich: "Yes, 23rd, I believe."

Morlin: "You put the whole 23rd Psalm in there?"

Oelrich: "Yeah. Again I think it's very important to say, I can say honestly I care about the man. We've had some good conversations, and with my work with nonprofits, he's provided some very helpful advice and I appreciate what he's done for Spokane. I really do. I think he's had a very positive impact and I hope people will keep that in mind, in the back of their minds. I hope they won't judge too quickly, and I do think he needs to step down, but I hope Spokane can forgive and move on. I don't know what the mayor's future looks like, but I know we've all, everybody makes mistakes. I don't know about some of the allegations, but I hope the mayor can move on too. ... This is one of the hardest things that I've had to do."

Morlin: "Discussing what you are discussing?"

Oelrich: "Yes. I believe in doing the right thing, and I believe that justice needs to be served, but this is not a gay issue and I'm just worried that the general public might make it that. My life the last couple of years with my job has been working to change perceptions and to show our community gay, bisexual people who are other than heterosexual, are normal and can live healthy, happy lives just like everybody else and we are deserving of those same rights."

"I just ask you as a person to keep that in mind and I've worked very, very hard and I don't want I'm sure they'll be people, I get e-mails all the time from "Christians" saying you're gay, it's wrong and even by having my name associated with this, I am worried. I'm a little scared. I'm not sure how that will affect me, affect people's responses. I just ask you to be careful."

Morlin: "I will. Did the mayor in his official capacity ever direct any public funds or city funds to Quest or any of these nonprofits you're associated with?"

Oelrich: "No, never."

Morlin: "Either personally or through the city?"

Oelrich: "No, never."

Morlin: "To your knowledge, he's never given any money to Quest?"

Oelrich: "Never."

Morlin: "What is the annual budget for Quest?"

Oelrich: "We operate on about \$100,000 a year."

Morlin: "It's been around for how many years?"

Oelrich: "Just since, it started about three years ago."

Morlin: "It was incorporated about three years ago?"

Oelrich: "We just incorporated about two years ago, September of last year."

Ryan Oelrich interview continued:

Morlin: "We're back talking to Ryan. I want to get another on the record quote. In a summary, what is your observation about the newspaper's use of a fictional 17-year-old youth called Moto-brock to verify that the mayor was in fact using the trappings of his office to develop relationships with young men? What's your view on what we did?"

Oelrich: "As I read some of the transcripts, it helped me and a colleague connect the dots, so to speak, and realize a pattern of inappropriate behavior. I wished you hadn't had to do that, but I think it was important that you corroborated the evidence. I think that was important."

Morlin: "You read those nine transcripts and the e-mails?"

Oelrich: "Yes."

Morlin: "What do they show you? That what he was doing to Moto-brock is the same thing that happened to you?"

Oelrich: Yes, I see a very similar pattern ... [DISCUSSION OF OTHER POSSIBLE VICTIMS REDACTED].

The following is an interview between Spokesman-Review reporter Bill Morlin and a man who asked for anonymity. The interview was conducted May 9 in Spokane.

Morlin: "Are we on the record at this point?"

Man: "Yeah."

Morlin: "We're on the record. How can I identify you then?"

Man: "You can identify me as a friend, colleague and associate to both Ryan (Oelrich) and the mayor."

Morlin: "You're how old?"

Man: "24."

Morlin: "What else can you tell me on the record with us not using your name?"

Man: "I provided the conduit for Ryan to become involved in the Human Rights Commission through knowing the mayor and knowing Ryan and I believe it was at that point a good involvement opportunity for Mr. Oelrich, which is why I referred him to the mayor, and through subsequent interactions, I came to find out there were probably ulterior motives. As Ryan confided with me, I came to truly understand what the mayor's intentions may have been."

Morlin: "What were those?"

Man: "I believe Mr. Oelrich was appointed to the commission to either fill a political purpose or to express interest in Ryan having a relationship with the mayor beyond a professional nature."

Morlin: "So the question is, do you think the mayor misused his office of public trust, misused the public trust to develop or attempt to develop a sexual relationship with Ryan?"

Man: "Knowing what I know, I do believe that."

Morlin: "Can you give me that in your words?"

Man: "I feel like anytime somebody is appointed to a position or put on a commission with motives other than the well-being of the community, that that is a misuse of power and I feel in this circumstance, it appears like the mayor appointed Ryan to the Human Rights Commission for his own gratification and I think that's tragic."

[DISCUSSION OF OTHER POSSIBLE VICTIMS REDACTED]

Man: "Absolutely. In conversations with the mayor online in AOL instant messenger forums, the mayor did make reference to city positions that weren't internships in which he encouraged me to apply for."

Morlin: "What were a couple of those?"

Man: "One was human resources director, which I stated I felt I wasn't qualified, and the mayor replied that it just depended on the mayor liking you."

Morlin: "What was the other job he offered you?"

Man: "A recreation supervisor position."

Morlin: "You declined both of them?"

Man: "Correct. Let me be clear. The jobs weren't offered, I was encouraged to apply for the positions, they are civil service positions."

Morlin: "Your degree is in?"

Man: "Business administration."

Morlin: "Is there anything else you would like to say on the record with us not using your name?"

Man: "I believe that's it at this point."

Morlin: "Do you agree with Ryan that you're coming forward now because you think the mayor should step down, resign?"

Man: "Absolutely. This is something that Ryan and I have wrestled with and at the point when these conversations were happening prior to your package on Mayor West on Thursday, we didn't really have the dots to connect to realize that this was a real pattern of behavior. Knowing what I know now, I feel it is a pattern of behavior and that concerns me and I don't think it's appropriate for the mayor to stay in his position".

Morlin: "You're 24 years old and can I say where you live on the record?"

Man: "I would rather you not."