

Letter: City uses misleading words about parking

To the community,

Words, they bring people together, they drive people apart. We use words to inform. We use words to misinform. My friend says, "Information is a lot like water; it's hard to hold on to, and hard to keep from leaking away." Often language is misused to create complexities, to mislead, to hide the truth or facts. Michael Lewis calls it the art of torturing data.



Bill Crawford

Too often in politics there is disinformation, which is the deliberate use of incorrect and misleading information. Disinformation can become an art form by creating propaganda to control public opinion and behavior, telling a lie time and time again. Sometimes it's called advertising. Sometimes it's called public relations.

In local politics it's called the financial need for city parking meters. City government has built an argument for parking meters using numbers that are hypothetical and projecting assumptions and suppositions as facts. Justice Oliver W. Holmes said, "You can build a syllogism for any conclusion." And that's what the City Council and city manager have done to sell parking meters. The argument is suspicious. The numbers are deceptively attractive, but have been shown by Tahoe-4-Tahoe to be fallacious. Mistrust is the result. And

trust, like water, is hard to hold and hard to keep because false in one, false in all.

Language is the heart of the matter. And when abused there's a price to pay. Always.

Bill Crawford, South Lake Tahoe