

# TENSIONS RUN HIGH AT BECKLEY CITY COUNCIL MEETING

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Tensions ran high at the Beckley City Council meeting Tuesday, Jason Lockhart is upset with how Mayor Rob Rappold and the council board members are running the city.

"I came here and its been a long time coming," Lockhart said. "There's a lot of things in the city of Beckley especially in the last year two that have caused frustration."

Lockhart wants Beckley to hire a city manager. He doesn't agree with how city leaders are spending money. For example, spending millions on the Historic Black Knight Municipal Park and not spending money to curb the increasing homeless population. So Lockhart started a petition.

"I needed to do something to see if I was standing on my own with these few people or if there was absolutely actual support," Lockhart said.

Lockhart also says he's concerned that not enough resources are being put into fixing the drug problem and businesses downtown don't get the attention they deserve. One city councilman says he's open to the idea of a city manager.

"I don't have a problem with it many cities around the state have done to this form of government," Councilman Tom Sopher said.

But Beckley's Recorder-Treasurer, Billie Trump, says change for the sake of change isn't the answer.



"It gives people a sense that they may have done something, but nothing really changes and the learning curve to bring in a city manager would be pretty steep, especially on a city like Beckley," Trump said.

We reached out to Mayor Rappold's office multiple times. He was unavailable for comment.