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The Employment Source was contracted by Brooks Law Firm to conduct a personnel investigation, prompted by a formal complaint authored by Ray Nees, Inspector for the City of Eldridge, Iowa. Ray presented his complaint to the attention of Ms. Kotter, City Administrator for the City of Eldridge, Iowa, via email on **August 5, 2021**.

Based on the seriousness of these allegations as well as the claim that these issues are ongoing, Annette Snyder, personally interviewed all staff members working directly with Ms. Kotter. **While Ms. Snyder intended to investigate each of Mr. Nees claims to the extent possible, her overall goal was to determine whether any employees were subject to sexual harassment, discriminatory practices, hostile work environment, biases, or unethical behavior.** Below are the findings from Ms. Snyder's interviews.

Please note that to protect the confidentiality of employees and to prevent the potential for retaliation, employees have been numbered and will not include identifying information. If additional information or clarity is needed, each request will be reviewed and a determination will be made specific to each request. Mr. Nees is named as he is the employee who prompted this investigation. It should also be noted that Ms. Snyder did investigate whether there was a bias prior to Ms. Kotter's hire as the previous City Administrator was with the City for 30+ years and was very well respected. Ms. Snyder determined there was no obvious or outward bias toward Ms. Kotter at the time of her hire.

The following information was brought to Ms. Snyder's attention during her interview with Employee #2:

When Ms. Snyder inquired about the culture prior to Ms. Kotter's arrival, Employee #2 said it was like a "family"; it was an awesome environment and Employee #2 loved coming to work. Conflicts here and there. When asked to describe the conflicts, Employee #2 mentioned typical coworker conflict, people not wanting to share job knowledge, etc. Employee #2 said typically everyone got along until Ms. Kotter was hired. As soon as Ms. Kotter discovered Angie (King) was a councilman's wife, Ms. Kotter latched herself on to Angie. Ms. Kotter became Angie's best friend. Ms. Kotter turned Angie against everyone. When asked for an example, Employee #2 recounted a time when Ray went on vacation and didn't inform a vendor. Angie allegedly became quite upset because Ray didn't tell the vendor he'd be out. Angie had an outburst of explicit words towards Ray; this stood out to Employee #2, as this kind of language and behavior is out of character for Angie.

In your opinion, why did Angie quit? My opinion is that she quit because of the pressures Ms. Kotter was putting on her for trying to be her friend. Angie changed once Ms. Kotter got here. (Employee #2 stated Employee #2 tried to give Ms. Kotter the benefit of the doubt, but Ms. Kotter turns things on people. While Employee #2 couldn't give specific examples, Employee #2 was privy to a lot of conversations after the fact.)

How does Ms. Kotter treat you? Like I don't even exist.

Have you made any mistakes that would put you on her radar? I don't think she knows what I do. I think she could tell you the basics of what I do.

Have you ever heard Ms. Kotter swear? Yes.

Was it appropriate for the "subject matter"? Yes.

Have you heard Ms. Kotter swear at people? Nothing that comes to mind.

Do you feel Ms. Kotter creates a hostile work environment? Yes.

Why? Ms. Kotter's personality. She doesn't understand what else we have to do. Ms. Kotter puts you on edge all the time. I've talked to my doctor about my anxiety. I've never had to do that before. The tone in the office is awful. Employee #2 recounted a story that Ms. Kotter referred to a utility employee's wife and personal life. When the utility employee had to leave early from a meeting, Ms. Kotter reportedly said, maybe his wife will "give him his balls back someday".

Do you know why the Police Chief left? Because of her (Ms. Kotter) and Bruce Cheek (councilman). They forced him out. Things could've been done differently.

Why do you feel that way? Bruce would spend HOURS in Ms. Kotter's office. "We" were wondering what was being plotted now? Ms. Kotter would stab anyone in the back as soon as you turned around if she thought it would help her. I feel she is a very "me-me-me person". Before she came, we all worked as a team. It didn't matter that you worked for utility or city. If things needed to get done, it was.

How are things now while Ms. Kotter has been on leave? 100% more relaxed. Everything with Ms. Kotter is total chaos. Ms. Kotter took over planning Eldridge Day; she had a lot of great ideas, but she has no follow through.

If you had a magic wand, how do you hope this resolves itself? For her not to be here. The City has never had this much conflict and chaos, ever. I feel that Ms. Kotter thrives on creating that atmosphere.

Does she have any redeeming qualities? I think she is very smart. It's how she portrays herself in public. She portrays herself as "I'm always getting picked on, I'm a victim, I'm a woman". Because I am a woman, and I work here. I don't see that whatsoever. I see it as how she treats other people. For example, the conflict between her and the Mayor. The public sees the Mayor yelling at her, but what they don't see is when the Mayor is at the office, she is screaming at him. Ms. Kotter is smart enough to know that she can push his buttons at a council meeting, let him lose his cool, then she sits back. Then it's, "Oh, look at how he treats me!".

Why do you think we are where we are today? People went to council within months of her starting. Nothing was done, then it's escalated. It wasn't like it slowly got this bad, it was almost immediate.

The following information was brought to Ms. Snyder's attention during her interview with Employee #3:

- 1) Employee #3 echoed Mr. Nees' claim that Ms. Kotter has said the City of Eldridge is "fucking stupid" on multiple occasions.

- 2) Employee #3 claims that Ms. Kotter wants to be involved in every conversation and meeting, and she wants to make all final decisions.
- 3) Ms. Kotter allegedly blamed Employee #3 for an issue Ms. Kotter was ultimately responsible for. Ms. Kotter gossiped to several employees about a deceased citizen. When word got out that staff members were aware of the situation, but the deceased's family had not yet been notified, the Police Chief went to Ms. Kotter and asked her to stop the spread of information. Employee #3 claims Ms. Kotter then blamed Employee #3 for the spread of information; although, Employee #3 had overheard Ms. Kotter telling several staff members about the deceased.
- 4) Employee #3 claims that when Angie King was still employed by the City, Ms. Kotter gave her preferential treatment in an attempt to indirectly influence City Councilman, Frank King.
- 5) Employee #3 claims that after a week-long city-wide event, Ms. Kotter took one day's cash total and "hid it in the basement" of the office although she knew there was a safe in one of the employees' offices. She then directed Employee #3 to deposit the money. Ms. Kotter then inquired about the total amount deposited as if she was unsure of the total. While this may be an isolated incident, Ms. Snyder believes this behavior is another indication of the distrust staff members have for Ms. Kotter.

Employee #3 shared that Mr. Nees' outward displays of frustration in response to interactions with Ms. Kotter are very out of character. It's obvious Ms. Kotter "gets to him". Employee #3 believes that if the Board would have acted when they were first informed of these issues, the staff members and City of Eldridge wouldn't be where they are today.

Do you think Mr. Nees' claims have any validity? I do. I've heard them both have words with each other. Ray sent a video to two coworkers regarding the "worst boss ever". If you didn't know the history between the two, you wouldn't think anything of it. Ms. Kotter made the comment you shouldn't be sending things like that during work time. The next day, Ray sent it to her.

What would your general response be when Ms. Kotter said the process was "fucking stupid"? Most of the time I didn't say anything, but a few times I would say, it's worked for us in the past.

Did you take offense to her words? Yes, it's insulting and offensive.

Have you implemented some of her ideas to improve the process? A lot of times she didn't have suggestions to change, it was just stupid the way we were doing it.

Are you still using the same processes now? 90% yes. A lot of the times she said things were stupid wasn't what we were doing in the office, but what was going on "out there". She has control issues. Everything must run through her. Everyone knows it. You couldn't make decisions on your own like we could in the past.

Give me example of "total control": A coworker knew an elderly woman lived alone. The resident was late paying her bill. My coworker asked the police to do a welfare check on her. Ms. Kotter went to the police department to find out about the resident. The police informed Ms. Kotter the resident was found deceased. Ms. Kotter came back to our office and told the coworker what she had found out. I was in my office, but I overheard the conversation. Ms. Kotter proceeded to go back to her office. The police and fire chief stopped in, discovered "we" already knew about the resident. They then went into Ms. Kotter's office to talk to Ms. Kotter about telling others the resident had died because family hadn't

been notified. Ms. Kotter told both chiefs that it was me that told the office. I had nothing to do with it. Ms. Kotter doesn't like when we talk to the Mayor or Council without her knowing. Ms. Kotter blames me for the gossip with the council. I think Ms. Kotter thinks I am a mole.

Did you have hiring authority over your department? Yes and no. The resumes were collected and three of us went through the resumes and rated the applicants separately. We were going to interview the top candidates. I asked to see Ms. Kotter's list from Angie King. I discovered she gave a low score to anyone who knew Chief Kopatich or me. Ms. Kotter had notes on her list detailing as much. Ms. Kotter wouldn't give a person a chance if they knew either one of us. However, she did let "us" pick our applicant after she went and red-lined the others because of association.

Why do you think the Chief is no longer employed? I think Ms. Kotter is a user. I think she got Bruce Cheek on her side and used him. I think she pushed Bruce to get the information. She's a user.

Why would Bruce fall victim to it? I think the more attention she showed to him, he fell under the spell. He was drinking the Kool-Aid. I think because she knew he was a retired police officer she could use him. There was times Bruce would be at City Hall in Ms. Kotter's office three (3) or four (4) times a day with the door shut. This went on for weeks. Then after Dave (Kopatich) left, he didn't stop in as much.

Was anything inappropriate going on between Bruce Cheek and Ms. Kotter? At times I thought so, but I've never seen anything.

Do you trust Marty (O'Boyle)? I do.

Do you trust Ms. Kotter? No.

What else have you witnessed about the culture now? Ms. Kotter always likes to be in an argument. Maybe it's because she wasn't getting her way. After the Sesquicentennial the Council asked several times about the revenue. She just wouldn't give it to them. I think it's because she didn't separate the button sales vs. the beers sales, etc. Ms. Kotter just lumped it all together. The Council posed the question, "how much did we make from beer?" Ms. Kotter couldn't tell them that because the money wasn't separated.

At the end of day how would you like this to play out? In my opinion, she will rub it in your face that she beat the city. It will be twice as bad.

The following information was brought to Ms. Snyder's attention during her interview with Employee #4:

- 1) Employee #4 echoed that Ms. Kotter has said the City of Eldridge is "fucking stupid" on multiple occasions. Employee #4 also echoed Mr. Nees' claim that Ms. Kotter compared everything to her time working for the City of Geneseo.
- 2) Employee #4 described a comfortable work environment with no trouble and no issues, and everyone got along prior to Ms. Kotter's arrival. Employee #4 thought Ms. Kotter had good ideas and wanted to give her a chance/opportunity to be successful before making a judgement about her.
- 3) Employee #4 described Ms. Kotter as a narcissist. Employee #4 claims Ms. Kotter can cry on cue and manipulates people and situations with tears. After Ms. Kotter found out about the closed

Personnel Committee session, she began crying; however, when Employee #4 told her to stop, she had no problem doing so. Employee #4 believes Ms. Kotter intentionally created division amongst city employees, but now feels the division has been recognized and city employees are reconnecting.

- 4) Employee #4 was repeatedly put in an uncomfortable position as Ms. Kotter frequently gossiped and complained about staff members in a very demeaning manner in the presence of, and directly to Employee #4. Employee #4 described this as "relentless bashing" of employees. Employee #4 told Ms. Kotter to stop, she then targeted Employee #4 and began complaining about Employee #4's work ethic and intelligence. In one specific incident, Ms. Kotter made fun of Employee #4 in front of direct reports and colleagues in a staff meeting. Employee #4 waited until the meeting concluded and the room had cleared before confronting Ms. Kotter and telling her directly "Don't you ever do that to me again!".
- 5) Employee #4 believes City Councilman Ray King, and Mr. King's wife, Angie, are rallying against the city in support of Ms. Kotter, likely due to Ms. Kotter's personal friendship with Ms. King. Specifically, Employee #4 believes City Councilman King is pitting Ms. Kotter and the City against each other.
- 6) Employee #4 echoed that the Personnel Committee met 9 months ago, and these issues were brought to attention; however, no action was taken at that time or since that time.
- 7) Employee #4 echoes there is contention between Mayor O'Boyle and Ms. Kotter. Ms. Kotter previously mandated Department Heads to attend City Council meetings; however, Employee #4 believes Ms. Kotter did so to force the public division between Ms. Kotter and the Mayor, as Ms. Kotter frequently manipulates their interactions during City Council meetings.
- 8) Employee #4 believes Ms. Kotter would be "more than delighted" if Mr. Nees and Employee #3 quit. Employee #4 describes Mr. Nees as a nice guy who is intelligent and overly helpful, and describes Ms. Kotter as "the exact opposite", a narcissist who nobody can trust.
- 9) Employee #4 was offered a promotion and was hopeful about the opportunity before observing Ms. Kotter's leadership first-hand. After witnessing Ms. Kotter's treatment of city employees, Employee #4 stated they would think twice to accept the promotion because of the toxic work environment they'd be subjected to.

Describe the culture prior to Ms. Kotter's hire: Very comfortable. Everyone got along, very little conflict. Really good place to work.

Describe the culture after Ms. Kotter's hire: When Ms. Kotter first arrived there were several employees that liked her and several who did not, right away. Tremendous amount of conflict between public works and city hall.

Was there prior conflict? No.

Give an example of conflict: The biggest conflict by far was the negative talk that Ms. Kotter did to every single person who has worked here.

Any more examples of conflict? Ms. Kotter and I were close. I was one she would come to a lot and constantly complain about everyone. **Including Angie?** Yes. No one was safe.

What did she say? Their attitude, their work ethic was poor. Things they did were stupid. They gossip, which is ironic. Demeaning stuff. At first, I took it as, she's new, and I'm someone she can vent to. I tried to be nice and listen, but it got to the point I had to tell her to stop.

How did you have that conversation and how did it go? Just flat out. I just came in and said stop. The next time it started, I just said you've got to stop. Then it was me; I was talked about. My coworkers told me it was during negotiations. I was in the room, and she started talking about how over the top I am. That I was trying to be overly nice to the council and suck up to them. I did not take it well. I try to be cooperative. She was making fun of me for that. I left the meeting, waited for my coworkers to leave, then I marched back into her office and said that was a bunch of crap. Don't ever do that to me again! I was very unhappy with her.

Did she deny it? She played it off like it was a joke. And then she started crying.

Do you think the tears were real? No. I've seen it 5 or 6 times. She can turn it on and off.

Tell me about the 5 or 6 times: It's been when she's explaining how other employees are treating her. I have confronted her about talking about other people and employees. When she came here, everything was "the way things done around here are 'effing stupid'". She has stated over and over that everything is "effing stupid". John, the old administrator, is "effing stupid".

Did she use the actual "F" word? Yes. It was the constant, "in Geneseo we did this way". It made us staff feel like we didn't do a good enough job. I called her out on that, too. I told her; you must stop saying that. Of course, she cried. You're making people feel terrible. The rest of the staff started to see what the other staff had seen in the beginning. We reconnected as a group.

How did you reconnect as a group? We started to see the micromanaging and the narcissist behaviors. Shortly thereafter, the council started to become divided. I said a lot of negative things; Lisa did do a lot of good things too. She started staff meetings. It bridged us together.

How do you see this playing out? Right now, it's as comfortable as it has been in a year. We are having a softball tournament and the consensus is we are there for each other. We are absolutely slammed with work, but we are enjoying it. We are there from 7:00am to midnight, we aren't getting paid, but we don't care. Unfortunately, if she was there, no one would want to be there. There would be constant badgering; do this...do that...you're doing it wrong. How do I think this plays out overall? If she comes back, it will be ten times worse. I think people will quit.

What would you do? I wouldn't quit, but because I work 3 miles down the road. Since then, I've been offered to transition to the main office on a trial basis for a different position. More challenges. I accepted to do it for a trial basis with Ms. Kotter. It started off fine. Lisa is smart. The positive thing is I think she would teach me anything I wanted to know. If she comes back, I don't know if I want to do that. I'm a strong Christian, but I don't think it will ever work. In my mind, these bridges can never be repaired. I just don't think all parties involved will ever be able to forgive her.

Is it justified? Yes.

Based on your experience, your capacity to forgive, if you had the ultimate decision, would you terminate her based on everything you have witnessed? Don't base it on a one-time event, base your decision on the year: On the totality of it...there would be a very strong case for it. I think 9 months

ago, action should've been taken. We had a meeting to discuss how we were feeling about everything. It wasn't to bash Lisa. We went around the room, 85% said things were frustrating, and things are bad. Let's talk about what is good. She should've been let go at that time or given an ultimatum to change. One of the good things was that she had department heads come to council meetings. It was good because we learned a lot, but it's now bad because we are forced to watch this division.

How would you describe Ray? Very intelligent, very knowledgeable, very outgoing, he's animated. Nice guy. Ray is overly helpful in my interim of the new position. Good guy.

Do you think Lisa has it out for Ray? Yes. I think it's both ways.

Why do you feel that way? The communication, attitude. Ray has expressed his displeasure about her to me. But she has done it more to me about him. They don't like each other.

What has she said about him? The way he emails citizens, his attitude.

What has he said about her? She's a narcissist. Most of those comments were made when the division was happening. He talked about how she talked negatively about everybody. At that point we didn't see that. It came off then that he was being a jerk, but as it turns out he was right. And "we" told him that. At the time we just didn't know it.

Do you think Ray is treating her differently because she is a female? No, I don't think anyone is. It's trust. She lost the trust of us a long time ago.

Do you think she went after the police chief to get him to quit? No, I think she wanted ultimate control. She wanted to micromanage. She will claim she didn't. She absolutely did. The police chief would not put up with that. She was relentless. He was standing strong. Then one day he caved. A week later he quit. That was the time Bruce was requesting records.

Any sexual harassment? Just normal joking things.

The following information was brought to Ms. Snyder's attention during her interview with Employee #5:

- 1) When Ms. Snyder asked Employee #5 why they thought she was speaking with them, they said, "Because of the shitshow and drama going on?"
- 2) Employee #5 echoed that Ms. Kotter is demeaning to and makes fun of staff members.
- 3) Employee #5 also echoed that Ms. Kotter must be in control of everything and described her as a "control freak."
- 4) Employee #5 echoed that Ms. Kotter creates division among staff members. While Employee #5 was on vacation, Ms. Kotter asked Employee #5's direct reports if Employee #5 was doing a good job. When Ms. Kotter met one of Employee #5's new direct reports, she told the new hire she knew Employee #5 would be difficult to work with when she began work there. Ms. Kotter went on to say that Employee #5 and the former Chief of Police are/were the most problematic employees.

- 5) Employee #5 claimed that Ms. Kotter said that "[REDACTED]". This statement was made in the presence of Employee #5 and another employee.
- 6) Employee #5 claimed that after Ms. Kotter found out Kristi had made a \$5,000 billing error, she yelled at Kristi, making her cry. Ms. Kotter then told Employee #5 that she "can't fucking trust her (Kristi) to do anything right."
- 7) Employee #5 claimed that in a staff meeting, Ms. Kotter shared that she had spoken to a citizen on the phone earlier and after hanging up the phone she said, "fuck you".
- 8) Employee #5 said the employees have agreed they need to stick together because they can clearly see how much division Ms. Kotter created among them.
- 9) Employee #5 claims everyone seems happy Ms. Kotter is currently on leave pending this investigation.

Ms. Snyder feels it is important to note that Employee #5 was very emotional during the interview. Employee #5 said the stress from their job has negatively impacted their marriage and that they're a bad spouse and crabby at home. Employee #5 also said they're having difficulty sleeping because of the stress at work.

The following information was brought to Ms. Snyder's attention during her interview with Employee #6:

- 1) Employee #6 feels the previous City Administrator didn't have a vision for the future, so Employee #6 was initially excited about Ms. Kotter's hire and thought she would be a mentor; however, a clear culture shift happened within the first 6 months after Ms. Kotter's arrival. Employee #6 described the environment as toxic. Half the day on Mondays is spent just talking, festering.
- 2) Employee #6 is aware of Ms. Kotter having several inappropriate side conversations with staff, including a conversation in which Ms. Kotter said Employee #6 is a "hothead" which is why Employee #6 would "never be promoted" to a desired management role. Furthermore, during a meeting with Mr. Rupe, Mr. Wessel, and Ms. Kotter, Employee #6 was recounting a story with a sense of sarcasm directed to another staff member (admittedly inappropriate), and Ms. Kotter laughed at the comment and proceeded to say, "that's why you're never going to be a manager".
- 3) Employee #6 echoed that Ms. Kotter talked about [REDACTED]
- 4) Employee #6 claims that if you don't serve Ms. Kotter any benefit, she doesn't need you, and makes that clear with her words and actions. Part of Employee #6's job has always included union negotiations; however, in December 2020, Ms. Kotter went as far as to exclude Employee #6 from negotiations. Ms. Kotter told Employee #6 that Brock didn't "give a fuck" about the Utility Board. Employee #6 feels strongly that Ms. Kotter was painting the picture that she was trying to do her best but not making much difference because Brock is the Chair.

- 5) Employee #6, along with 2 other coworkers, has been referred to as a "boy toy" by Ms. Kotter on multiple occasions. Initially, it didn't seem like a derogatory comment, but that has changed.
- 6) Employee #6 believes that if you cross Ms. Kotter, there is realistic fear of retaliation.
- 7) Employee #6 describes Ms. Kotter as a super smart lady and a smooth talker, but "sucks as a manager". For example, the night of the infamous derecho, Employee #6 witnessed a staff member arrive at the office intoxicated, smelling of alcohol and glassy-eyed. Ms. Kotter asked what she should do about the staff member arriving intoxicated.
- 8) Employee #6 stated that if Ms. Kotter is brought back, Employee #6 will quit.

The following information was brought to Ms. Snyder's attention during her interview with Employee #7:

- 1) Employee #7 describes the work environment prior to Ms. Kotter's arrival as very relaxed, a great staff, and department heads trusted each other. Department heads oversaw their own day-to-day operations, and since Ms. Kotter's arrival, department heads are expected to ask Ms. Kotter for permission on most daily functions. Employee #7 said you're expected to report if you "turn on a faucet". Employee #7 stated everyone is frustrated and it is absolutely a hostile work environment.
- 2) Employee #7 no longer believes Ms. Kotter's hire was right as she has created and fostered controversy and distress between City Council members and staff members. Employee #7 says that now when you attend City Council meetings, you get your popcorn and "watch the shitshow".
- 3) Initially, Employee #7 thought Ms. Kotter was amazing, and the City of Eldridge was incredibly lucky, but then Ms. Kotter started trying to control Employee #7 through manipulation tactics. As a whole, Employee #7 believes Ms. Kotter manipulates people into believing in her agenda and then using that employee as the messenger/fall person.
- 4) Employee #7 believes Ms. Kotter always has ulterior motives. For example, manipulating City Councilman, Bruce Cheek, and having him put pressure on Former Chief of Police Kopatich, regarding handgun permits.
- 5) Employee #7 stated that several members of the Chamber of Commerce have refused to work with Ms. Kotter due to her attempts at control. The issues happened enough that Ms. Kotter was eventually asked to resign from the Chamber Board. Employee #7 stated they respect a person who "risks it all for what they believe in"; however, this does not apply to Ms. Kotter as her behavior stems from her desire for control. Employee #7 said it appears that Ms. Kotter can't help herself; she doesn't know how to work *with* people, rather than control people and situations.
- 6) Employee #7 stated Ms. Kotter said she was known as the "Rubber Stamp Girl" when she worked for the City of Geneseo, Illinois. Employee #7 described observing the following process and why Employee #7 believes the "Rubber Stamp Girl" moniker still suits Ms. Kotter:
 - a. Ms. Kotter directs department heads to submit writing packets directly to her.

- b. Ms. Kotter then reviews the writing packets prior to distributing the original information to City Council members.
 - c. Ms. Kotter then speaks to City Council members covertly and attempts to get a feel for their position/stance on the topics at hand.
 - d. Ms. Kotter then modifies the writing packets to both appease City Council members as well as ultimately fit her own agenda.
- 7) Employee #7 claims Ms. Kotter talks behind employees' backs. Employee #7 knows that Ms. Kotter constantly asks employees how their managers are performing.
 - 8) Employee #7 stated there is no trust with Ms. Kotter as everything said to her is slightly twisted and then repeated to other staff members. During Former Chief of Police Kopatich's employment, Ms. Kotter told Employee #7 she hated the Chief of Police and referred to him as "lazy". Regarding Chief Sisler, Ms. Kotter told Employee #7 that he's "not friendly" which Employee #7 believes to translate to "unable to manipulate".
 - 9) Employee #7 mentioned at least thrice during the interview how much fun the staff had at the recent National Fastpitch Softball Tournament. Everyone came together and worked together to put on a very successful event. Employee #7 firmly believes this was possible due to Ms. Kotter being on leave as she was unable to be at the event, and because of this, teamwork really shined.
 - 10) Employee #7 knows of ~2-4 people who would quit if Ms. Kotter came back to her position, and Employee #7 said they may be one of those people. When asked what "needs" to happen moving forward, Employee #7 stated Ms. Kotter should be removed from her position. Employee #7 went on to say that the last week (since Ms. Kotter's leave pending this investigation) has been the most peaceful week they've had in the last 16 months.

The following information was brought to Ms. Snyder's attention during her interview with Employee #8:

- 1) Employee #8 stated that prior to Ms. Kotter's arrival, they had a good team and could count on each other. Things remained good for a short time but then Ms. Kotter created a division between staff, City Council, and now citizens. Employee #8 stated Ms. Kotter has no leadership skills and Employee #8 doesn't trust Ms. Kotter.
- 2) Employee #8 asked Ms. Kotter several times not to talk about employees, yet she did not stop.
- 3) At a budget meeting, Employee #8 witnessed what was clearly a work phone call between Ms. Kotter and an unknown employee. After ending the phone call, Ms. Kotter said she wanted to "shove being right" in the employee's face. Employee #8 believes this clearly shows division Employee #8 shouldn't have seen and demonstrates Ms. Kotter's inability to control herself. Employee #8 said there is no trust with employees from top-to-bottom, including the Mayor, City Council, and Ms. Kotter. Ms. Kotter has created the division that led to this distrust.
- 4) Employee #8 stated Ms. Kotter said Chief Sisler is "totally incompetent".
- 5) Employee #8 feels that the city lost two good employees (James Martin and Former Chief of Police, Dave Kopatich) and strongly feels the pressure applied to these employees prior to their departures was deliberate on Ms. Kotter's part.

- 6) When asked if there was anything Ms. Kotter could do to regain the trust of staff members, Employee #8 said it simply was not possible. When asked if it was possible to hit the reset button, Employee #8 said no; she needs to go. Employee #8 believes there will be a mass exodus from staff if Ms. Kotter is brought back to work.

The following information was brought to Ms. Snyder's attention during her interview with Chief of Police, Joe Sisler:

After learning about this investigation, Chief of Police, Joe Sisler, asked to speak with Ms. Snyder. Chief Sisler said that although he felt former Police Chief Kopatich's resignation was untimely, he wanted to give Ms. Kotter the benefit of the doubt when he accepted the position as Interim Chief of Police; however, he quickly determined Ms. Kotter was untrustworthy. On July 6th, Chief Sisler and Sergeant Lellig prepared a letter to be presented to the Mayor and City Council; however, they did not present the letter as they feared repercussions from Ms. Kotter. Some of the information from that letter is included below:

- 1) Chief Sisler described Ms. Kotter as having a snobby, disrespectful demeanor. He described Ms. Kotter as a micromanager, toxic, and power hungry. He feels Ms. Kotter has created a hostile work environment by using manipulation and control tactics to make people uncomfortable. He claims Ms. Kotter degrades and talks down to staff. Although he's a Department Head, he can't do anything without her approval. He claimed Ms. Kotter questions him on everything. Most telling is that he said he would rather go back to Iraq or Iran than work with Ms. Kotter because at least he knew who his enemies were when he was there.
- 2) Chief Sisler stated that within 2 months of accepting the position, he learned to always have a witness present whenever he spoke with Ms. Kotter.
- 3) Chief Sisler claimed Ms. Kotter specifically directed him to not approach Denise with any questions regarding budget.
- 4) Chief Sisler claimed Ms. Kotter told him he must speak with her before he was allowed to speak with any Elected City Officials; however, this was bothersome for Chief Sisler, and when he made Ms. Kotter aware of this, she said she has never told any staff they cannot speak with Elected City Officials. This is quite obviously contradictory and gives Ms. Kotter control of the flow of information.
- 5) Upon promotion to Chief of Police, Chief Sisler wanted to hold a meeting with his Department. During his time as Interim Chief of Police, Chief Sisler determined that Ms. Kotter attempted to be involved in all communications and meetings with city employees, so to prevent Ms. Kotter from "ambushing" his meeting, he held the meeting at the Fire Department in a room with a locked door.
- 6) Chief Sisler alleged that Ms. Kotter has asked several employees whether he should be the Chief and if there were any wrongdoings or things Ms. Kotter needed to know about Chief Sisler.
- 7) Chief Sisler feels he's been undermined, unsupported, and attacked by Ms. Kotter's words and actions. Chief Sisler claims Ms. Kotter has made negative and slanderous statements to and in front of employees and citizens to discredit his ability to be Chief of Police.

- 8) Chief Sisler alleged that he was informed by a citizen that Ms. Kotter was talking down about him at "Coffee with Cops".
- 9) Chief Sisler alleged that a citizen overheard Ms. Kotter saying she wanted to get rid of Ray Nees at the initial S.A.F.E. meeting.
- 10) Chief Sisler alleged that during a S.A.F.E meeting, a citizen asked why the Mayor didn't weigh in on a subject, and Ms. Kotter said the Mayor "doesn't talk to her". Chief Sisler interjected and said that wasn't true. Chief Sisler went on to detail several attempts the Mayor had made that day to contact Ms. Kotter but that Ms. Kotter had someone in her office each time the Mayor was there. Ms. Kotter then claimed the Mayor attempting to contact her was "news to her". Chief Sisler felt it was important for the citizen to understand that Ms. Kotter was uninformed and that the Mayor was not at fault for not communicating with Ms. Kotter.
- 11) Chief Sisler alleged that Ms. Kotter has intentionally withheld information that was supposed to be shared with the City Council as a whole. Beginning in mid-May, Chief Sisler has created weekly reports that were to be distributed to Ms. Kotter, the Mayor, and City Council members. Ms. Kotter directed Chief Sisler to send reports to her directly and she would forward to the Mayor and City Council members; however, she only shared the information with City Councilman Bruce Cheeks. Ms. Kotter and Mr. Cheeks never took responsibility for failing to distribute the information, thus reflecting poorly on Chief Sisler in the eyes of the Mayor and other City Council members.
- 12) Chief Sisler alleged Ms. Kotter directed him to go to the former Chief's house to inquire about the former Chief's missing personnel file. Chief Sisler said he would not participate in a "witch hunt".
- 13) Chief Sisler alleged Ms. Kotter expressed a desire to be involved in the interview process for new Law Enforcement Officers. When Chief Sisler inquired about her qualifications to be involved in interviews of this nature, Ms. Kotter said she'd "been around law enforcement long enough, so why wouldn't she be qualified"? She then went on to say she felt she could be a Law Enforcement Officer herself.
- 14) Chief Sisler alleged that when he and Bernie Peeters, Mayor Pro Tem, delivered the Notice of Leave letter to Ms. Kotter, she said "this is just like Geneseo all over again".

Ms. Kotter Interview

Ms. Snyder interviewed Ms. Kotter on **Monday, August 24th at 1:00pm**. Ms. Snyder gave Ms. Kotter the opportunity to discuss her complaint against the City of Eldridge before discussing the allegations against her.

Ms. Snyder asked Ms. Kotter when she formally put the council on "notice" that she felt she's been discriminated against because of gender. Ms. Kotter explained the hierarchy of the council and explained that the Mayor is not her supervisor, but she has the most contact with him. Ms. Kotter believes the issues started to "ramp up" in September 2020, prior to her 6-month review. She said the council has known for a solid year she's felt she's been discriminated against, then went into detail in explaining her role with the city and the Mayor.

Define "they've known". The council members knew about the conflict. Meetings have become more vocal. There's been more heated conversations between me and the Mayor. I know Frank (King) and Bruce (Cheek) have confronted the Mayor.

Has anyone other confronted the Mayor other than Frank and Bruce? I think Bernie (Peeters) might have. Frank and Bruce have said to the Mayor that he's going to have a gender discrimination case if you don't stop treating her that way.

How is he treating you? By ordinance it assigns me the responsibility of personnel. It states I have authority. When I have tried to hire people, specifically billing clerks, he said I wasn't allowed to advertise a lower wage.

Did you want to pay lower wage? Yes. I advertised \$15-20 because I wanted to see their qualifications and experience. He got upset. Said I didn't have the authority to. He said everyone in Eldridge comes in at the same wage. He was correct. There is nothing in union contract about starting wage.

Did you take your names to the personnel committee? Yes, after he forced me to.

Why was it forced if you're on the committee? John never had to take the names to committee. No past practice of giving to personnel committee. The male never had to give names to the committee.

Would John get involved in hiring for billing clerks? He let department heads make decisions. Brian W. (Wessel) and Denise we never had to take the names to the committee before.

Why are you getting involved with an entry level position that reports to Denise? The very few times that they hire, we might, to make sure we hire right.

Again, why are you getting involved with a hiring billing clerks/entry level? I'm not. Overseeing the hiring process? I have the authority to. In some cases, I hired for a position that didn't have a job description. The last time Denise (Benson) hired was 10 years ago. It's by ordinance with the oversight of me. I wear the hat of HR. I explained to city council I would be consistent. Advertise properly, etc.

Did they welcome input or offer resistance? They may have felt it was different. I got a lot of positive feedback from Brian W. Much more professional. I had employees get involved. Tony (Rupe) and Brian both gave positive feedback. They got to pick the candidate. It wasn't me micromanaging the process, it was me assuring the City Council things were done properly. I was treated differently. John was not expected to get elected officials involved in the process.

Do you think there was any frustration with you getting involved? It's possible, but at the same time by ordinance, I am to administer personnel. I believe there has been a level of frustration because of the Mayor's involvement in the day-to-day work. The negativity of my employment is because of the Mayor and Brian D. (Dockery). I know there are negative vibes. I think when someone has the same boss, it's not always an easy transition to a new boss.

Going back to same boss for 30 years, how do you feel the department heads felt about your employment? Difficult. One week before Covid. Nothing normal getting to know each other. City Council welcomed a more outgoing person.

Do you think the department heads welcomed it? In the beginning they complained about all the meetings.

Do you think they welcome you? Brian W., Tony Rupe, Denise Benson, Derek Hamilton, James Martin, and Jake Rowe were all welcoming. Dave Kopatich and Ray Nees were not welcoming. It was not a good vibe.

Define vibe: I feel like it was very standoffish, not talking to me.

Was it immediate? I was focused on Covid, the first 6 weeks. It wasn't a normal time. I believe it was about two (2) months in when I asked to have one-on-one meetings. I gave 8 questions sometime in May that were both personal and work. The "Tell me about yourself" kind of questions. Whatever you want to share type of things. Do you have a good personal work life balance? Any training opportunities you'd like? Ray and Dave both took offense to it. Both of them said, "there is no fucking way I'd meet with her if I answer to any personal questions." They complained to Bruce Cheek as a council member that basically the audacity of me to ask anything personal.

What happened from March to May to have that response? Ray applied for my job. It doesn't always start out well. He was standoffish.

What happened to between March and June that you'd have 2 employees who would go to a council member and say, there's no fucking way I'm meeting with her? I think Ray wanted the job. I don't interact with either of them.

Go back to other than Ray not getting the job, what event triggered the response of "no fucking way?" I don't think there was any event. I had very little interaction. I think the Chief got feedback from Geneseo. I think he was programmed to think I was anti-police. The Police Chief (Kopatich) chose to retire due to an external investigation in his department.

I believe people think you had a part in his early retirement. Who did you hear that from? I had a 3rd shift Police Officer who started in August that would tell me things.

Was he your hire? No, I wasn't allowed to be involved in Police Officer hiring. Dave Kopatich did it. As a male department head. I wasn't allowed to hire without any elected official involvement.

It doesn't sound like John Doud wanted any involvement. Regardless, I wanted to be involved in the hire. My point is the elected officials pushed their involvement on my hires, praised a Chief for hiring people.

That doesn't sound like he (John Doud) wanted to be involved. You made it clear that you wanted to have involvement and you have the authority to do so. Staff can have the initial interviews and do the background checks; I would prefer to be involved in final interview.

I understand you have the authority, but I'm also looking at a previous administrator who didn't have the same interest in getting involved. I'm trying to find out if it's because you're female that they didn't allow it, or is it because the previous administrator choose not to? I'm trying to figure out the discrimination. My agreement with City Council is do what the ordinance states.

What else could have triggered the response? I think Ray was interacting with a Building Inspector in Geneseo.

What's the significance of Geneseo? You can go back and read it.

Did it not end well in Geneseo? No, it was perfectly wonderful. What happened was the Mayor who was no longer the Mayor when the Chief left, started a petition against me as a citizen. If you speak to any of the city officials I was working for, it was very amicable. I believe that's why those things are happening. Fast forward, I know those two (Nees and Kopatich) were saying negative things about me. In August we hired a new Police Officer 3rd shift. He would be in the office ending shift. They (Nees and Kopatich) would come in early. He reported to me they have regularly called me a "fucking cunt".

Why did they call you that? They don't like me. I really don't know why they don't. I had very little interaction with either of them. Ray would interact with James Martin. Once I knew he (Ray) was adversarial to me, I tried not to get into his business.

What do you think triggered him to say the first comment? The view was that he (former Police Chief in Geneseo) was forced to resign under pressure. I know what I did in Geneseo is what 99% of what most City Administrators would do. Sometimes you get a bad rap for doing the right thing.

If things were amicable and wonderful, why did you leave to go to Moline? Heavily recruited. \$75K raise. That's the natural progression. Going from 7,000 residents to 42,000 is a big leap.

When you left Geneseo, was there any non-disparagement agreement signed? No.

Did you get along with the current Mayor (Geneseo) at the time of your hire? No one disclosed she didn't want me to get the job. I got along great with the next Mayor. The Geneseo Mayor who didn't like me, came to an Eldridge council meeting. I confronted Marty and accused him of talking to the ex-mayor. He admitted it. Those things follow you.

What are you referring to as a "witch hunt"? Brian Dockery said I was on a witch hunt. Even though the Chief was clearly violating the open records law by not turning over the records that were requested two months prior. We (Bruce Cheek) had reasons to believe he was violating laws regarding qualifications of weapon.

How did the Mayor exclude you from Ashley (Atkins)? There was two meetings. One was regarding lower wages with the Utility Board Chair. I believe I was purposely excluded from the hire. The meeting set up with the men, but I wasn't invited.

2nd example: This is what set the whole deal in motion. Ashley is frustrating. I understand she can be frustrating. I was trying to be supportive of Ray. I understood his frustration. Ashley thought she could camp. She is probably one of those people who only hears what she wants. Ashley is trying to tell me she was told she could camp. Look, even if a staff person misled you, or she misinterpreted what was said...even if that did happen, you still can't camp.

Why did you have to have a meeting about that situation? I'm supportive of Ray. I'm saying the same thing. Ray sent me email on Monday forwarding the email he sent to Ashley. It kicked back to him because he didn't have the correct email address. It was a very disrespectful email to a citizen. Ray told a citizen that from that moment forward she would be charged for speaking to him if she's not going to get a General Contractor. It also said he was going to charge for his time and mine. Ray should've run that past me.

Other than last sentence...about you. Why did you read tone into that email? Ray sends emails most people should wait before they hit send. His pattern is to send emails without thinking. They're rude and disrespectful. Council knows about it but does nothing. Ray sent one in September to a citizen that was disrespectful, too.

Does she (Ashley) play the parents? Meaning, if Ashley doesn't like the answer she gets from one parent, she'll ask the other? Yes.

What happened with the other meeting? Ashley calls the Mayor. The Mayor calls me. I wanted to set up a meeting with the Mayor and Ray to discuss Ashley. I understand why Ray is frustrated. She is difficult. The Mayor comes in around 2:00pm on Monday. I was in a meeting. I go into Ray's office and they're already talking about Ashley. I wanted to be in the meeting. Ray was short during the meeting. Ray informed me he wasn't staying late and then left. The Mayor and I had a fairly heated conversation.

Did you both raise voices during the meeting? More of tone, than loud.

If people were listening, would they say tone or loud? I really don't think I got loud.

But they could hear your tone? I was in the doorway by Ray's office. If the girls were there, they could hear the tone.

Have you ever raised your voice to the Mayor? I feel like when he has gotten belligerent with me, there are very few occasions in a slightly louder tone, but I am definitely not a yeller.

Have you raised your voice to the Mayor? If raising your voice is louder than normal tone, than yes. I'll ask him to come into my office. He will say, "No, I'm not coming into your office because I don't trust you". He stands in the hallway so that everything he says to me can be heard by everyone. He always brings employees in when I am getting reprimanded.

Is that for a witness? I think that it is to put me in my place. To let people know that he doesn't like me on a regular basis.

Tell me about the Mayor moving your seat during the council meetings. John Doud always sat next to the Mayor. When I went to this meeting, my name plate was moved. I assumed it was in the wrong place. I went to put my name plate back. The Mayor told me to move it back.

Did you ask why? He said, "Because I said so".

Do you think the Mayor wants to sit next to you? He has no use for me.

If he doesn't want to go into your office, it sounds like he wouldn't want to sit next to you. Is that a fair statement he doesn't want to sit next to you? Regardless of where you are supposed to sit. I feel he has no use for me as City Administrator. So, yes. However, he has adversarial conversations with men, and he doesn't move them around. He has adversarial conversations with John, and he doesn't move him.

But does he like you? I think the Mayor liked me in the beginning.

And what do you think happened? I think I started to do things that would be common practice as a City Administrator with responsibility. I don't think he allows me to do my job as City Administrator.

The things that John did as his role as CA is less common, he's more of a Finance Director. Because John didn't do a lot, Mayor got to do more. Therein lies the divide.

I understand the angst, but with you saying that, technically you think the Mayor thought he was the City Administrator without the title. He ran the city of Eldridge. Would you agree with that? I think he did things that were out of what a Mayor should do.

I understand that, but do you feel that based on the conversations with you, it felt it was really his place as the "City Administrator" without the title, with no authority whatsoever, do you feel that you he felt you were stepping on his toes? Do I believe he thinks that, yes. But again, I tried very hard to respect the fact that on a regular basis the Council reminded me that I don't work for him. And that I work for the Council. The Council gives me authority. The Mayor was constantly reprimanding me as a female, in front of people.

Do you think it's because you're female or do you think it's because he'd been running the city all this time and then you come in and try and change things? You're trying very hard to get everything into code and compliance. I'm trying to see the connection between you being female or if a male tried to change things. Based on my conversations with you and others, it's about the ego he has. Do you think the end result would be the same? I believe if it weren't, examples such as the Police Department, you could conclude that. Kopatich gets praises for doing things that he's supposed to do.

Is that because he doesn't like you? I can't answer that.

I'm just trying to connect the dots of where there is discrimination/bias. I'm trying to connect the dots regarding, is the Mayor doing "this" because you're female, or would he behave accordingly if a male tried to change things too?

Tell me about the hiring of the Police Chief. The Mayor 100% respects Joe as the Police Chief. What I didn't support was the process we were going through. I didn't believe we were following the process. It got twisted in me not supporting Joe. I recommended Joe. I was forced, in a meeting, to recommend Joe Sisler as the Interim Police Chief. So, I do support Joe. I didn't support the unprofessional process of selecting someone. I made that clear to Joe. Before he was appointed, I told him (Joe), I know people have told you I don't support you as Chief.

Did you have any conversations and/or are those sentiments true? I think people have twisted things. I believe my words are twisted on a regular basis by people to make sure no one respects or believes things that I say. I do support Joe. I don't think he's as ready he could be if there was more succession planning.

You said in the beginning the Mayor supported you. You were a female in the beginning, so connect those dots for me. I believe if a female directs the change, he doesn't accept the change. And when a male does, he accepts it.

He's refusing to go to your office, he's telling people he doesn't trust you, stay in your lane. How does that relate to you being female? It just does. He doesn't listen to my opinions.

Does he listen to Denise? He can be disrespectful.

But does he listen to her? At times.

But does he listen to her? Yes.

Do you think he respects Denise? Sometimes. I think there are times he treats her differently because she's a female. She has been behind on her bank statements, and he's said something to her. But a Police Chief is nine (9) years behind on his records, and nothing is done. I think he is more respectful to Denise than me, but he doesn't call any males out during meetings.

Do you think Denise feels there's a gender discrimination? She's stuck in the middle and a people pleaser.

How does he treat Jody? He doesn't interact with her.

Have you ever directed the employees not to speak to the elected officials? Never. I made it clear that for business reasons I expect to know when elected officials are asking staff about city business. I don't want to get blind-sided at meetings. Citizens come up to me and say he is so disrespectful to you as a female. I don't make those things up. I have NEVER told them not to speak to city officials. I asked Denise in front of the Mayor, "Have I ever retaliated against anyone?" She said no.

Didn't that put her in the middle? Maybe a little.

What if they don't tell you they talked to a city official? Nothing has ever happened to anyone. No one has received a verbal warning. I work in an environment that people don't even get talked to. I am in an environment I don't feel comfortable in.

Why do you stay? It's been 18 months it doesn't appear to be pleasant. I feel as a City Administrator you have an ethical obligation to stay two (2) years. That is our ethics code. We can have a violation against us. I believe there are good people here and I enjoy working with them.

Why did James Martin quit? He never gave a reason except accepting a new position.

Why do you think he quit? When things getting to a negative level. It came back to me that I was going to fire James in July 2021. I told James there was no truth to the rumor. I've never come to a city to bring in my own people. That's not the way it is.

Why did he quit? I don't know.

Did you have an exit interview? No. I was doing Sesquicentennial.

Why did Angie quit? Because of the way it was in the office. She told the Mayor she was quitting because of him. The day she quit she told the Mayor it was him. She couldn't handle how the Mayor is running the city.

Did James give a written resignation? Yes.

Did Angie give written resignation? Yes, no reason given.

She didn't mention the Mayor in her response? No, typical letter.

Did you give her an exit interview? She received the questions but hasn't made time to meet with me. She told me she would.

Define your clothes being inappropriate. We were in closed session, and he (Mayor O'Boyle) said I wore inappropriate attire and old clothes.

What do you wear in the office that's inappropriate? This is something that I would wear. He just randomly, berated me, he said things like, "you promote the city, but it's really about self-promotion". The men can wear khakis, t-shirts, stains, because of the work they do.

Have you ever used the word "fucking"? I admit I use swear words, but I don't swear at people.

Do you recall saying most things are just "fucking stupid"? I think that's been repeated from things in the beginning. Because John (Doud) and I are so different. There are times I swear in frustration. Like when the department heads didn't know anything about revenues, but they are writing a budget. I can't believe that YOU don't know your own revenues. It was never directed at them. Those are my extroverted expressions.

Do you recall using the term "fucking stupid"? A few times. I think I made a significant effort to not talk about things being frustrating to me about how things were done.

It doesn't appear that Dockery gets along with you either. Brian, at the end of the budget, said I did a good job.

Ms. Kotter gave an example of Joe Sisler not having a "back-up" if he couldn't perform his role.

I'm trying to figure out if it's a gender bias or that people don't like you. I'm trying to connect the dots. Brian had John Doud as the back-up. John has 30+ years of experience in the position. I feel it's a stretch. Joe doesn't have any of the education. He received the top wage. Joe only had a couple of months of experience. He didn't have a back-up.

Is Joe not qualified to be the Chief based on your job description? *Ms. Kotter made it clear she wanted external candidates to be able to apply.* Most Police Chiefs have some sort of formal education. Obviously, he has number of years as a Sergeant. The counsel had no desire to look at it.

Based on your professional opinion as City Administrator, do you feel Joe is qualified? He is not "as qualified".

Is he qualified? I think that anybody can do a job if given the opportunity.

Does Joe meet the requirements of the job description you wrote? No; however, the counsel didn't subscribe to what I wrote. I'm not saying that he's not qualified, I wrote it as a professional person comparing what other communities are expecting of their Chief, the answer is, no. The criteria of what our Council set out which is nothing. If you work here, then he is qualified.

How do you think it went over with Joe? It's not my job to write things so that my coworkers are qualified.

I asked how do you think that went over with Joe, the community, the department? You are perfectly within your rights to write a job description that excludes people, but I am asking if you would've gotten your way, what do you think the ripple effect would have been? I don't want to say you don't care, but in your position there's a lot of ripple effects. I think with everything I do; people would say

you are looking out for the community and standards we should have set. And I think part of the community would say that it's too bad the way you wrote it that people internally weren't qualified.

I'm assuming you were willing to take the tsunami effect that would happen if your agenda was followed. Were you prepared for the tsunami that would probably have happened? I don't think it's my job to do things that are popular. I got a lot of flak for what we did in Geneseo. But there are 14 employees (men). Most people wouldn't have done what I did, but their lives are positively changed. It's not always popular.

Do you think Joe will succeed? Because he desires so much to have the job, I believe he will do a good job.

When was the inappropriate invitation from Brian Dockery? March.

Do you think it was out of malice him saying that? Or if he was trying to invite you to the group as a friend? I think there could be some of that, but it's still showing you there is a gender bias towards me. I don't think he would've said anything like that if I was a guy. I think they were making fun of me because I work too much. He wanted me to have fun. I don't think there was any malice intended. But I don't think if I was a man, it would've been handled like that. I don't drink, I don't like the taste of alcohol. I've been treated differently because I am a female.

How did the Kings relay the comment to you? They were like, "Hey...Brian said this." But that's creepy to me, that makes me feel uncomfortable. I know you can never have a relationship with someone who works for me. That's an absolute never. I've never experienced a Council member saying stuff like that.

When the Kings told you that, was it with malice or was it more of an invitation to come over as a friend, have a beer, and if you drink too much you can stay over? They were relaying it that way, but they were uncomfortable with that idea. I don't think they thought he had bad intentions with the invitation but going out for dinner and having drinks at a place or taking it to the next step to come over to my house, and sleep over.

Has he ever said anything that makes you feel uncomfortable besides this comment? No. He's condescending about my job. Nothing like he's coming on to me.

Was this a one-time event? Yes.

In March, he was a supporter of you and complimented your work product. When did the change happen? I think he was leery of me in the beginning. Stand offish. I understand where you get this vibe that I don't know what I'm doing. I think it was after the budget. He acknowledged I knew what I was talking about. We spent a lot of time together. I could answer his questions. I think that helped him in believing he could do a good job.

What happened five (5) months later? He's not a fan of yours. What changed? I truly believe the way they handled my review, long and drawn out, things getting worse with the Mayor. Brian and the Mayor are much closer than most elected officials. It appears they rehearse things. It doesn't look like they have independent thoughts.

Don't you rehearse things? Ummm, not specifically. My job is to try to apply the same information equally.

Would you say that you don't come to meetings knowing how someone is going to vote? Or try to figure out prior to the meeting to sway them? Not always. No.

You said, "not always". Define it for me. Adrian is busy. Adrian is the most disconnected. Bernie would be next. Bernie is comfortable just coming to meetings. Doesn't talk to me beforehand. Then Brian is in the middle, and then Frank and Bruce tend to be the kind to stop in. I try to send the same information out. Typically, a Mayor doesn't align himself.

Where does the term "rubber stamp girl" come from? *(Ms. Kotter was silent for a period of time and didn't immediately offer a response.)*

You don't know what that is? Is someone saying I said that? Or are you saying someone is saying that about me?

Both. Have you ever used that term yourself? No.

I'm trying to say this in a way that you can't get out of answering my question. Have you ever used or been called a "rubber check" or "rubber stamp girl"? You've never said that? No. I don't know what it means. There are lot of things people say, when I never get facts. The very few times people say what I said, I can say I don't know how things are turned into lies, it's incredibly disappointing. Usually, I can figure out something, like a telephone game, but I don't use those words.

Do you feel you had supporters when you started? Yes.

What do you think happened in the five (5) months? I believe this whole thing has been drawn out with my review. There is no formal process, no form for people to fill out. They just brought department heads to talk two times. I believe every single person outside the departments have completely discounted my performance. My entire performance was based on department heads. I strongly pushed for 360 reviews. However, 360 means everybody, not just everybody under me. It was disheartening to hear what the people who report to you think. I think Brian Dockery just got sick of it. That's the only thing I can figure out. His words in my review, "I'm sick of this. Let's just be done". Why would my subordinates know that from my bosses if they're not trying to create an environment that makes it incredibly difficult to do my job? It's a small town with a lot of friendships that don't make this easy.

Why do you feel Brian Dockery was mocking you about hosting a staff meeting? He has on a regular basis told me not to have staff meetings. He doesn't have any respect for me being allowed to manage in some ways differently than John.

How does Ray treat Denise and office staff who are female? For the most part he is not adversarial to them. I don't think he has adversarial relationships. I don't think he sees them having any authority. I don't believe he is threatened by them. Different relationship.

Doesn't Denise have authority? How does he treat her? I don't see them interact. I would say he interacts with someone else.

Have you ever seen him disrespect Denise or any other female? No.

Does he like you? I don't know. I don't think he gave me a chance.

Why did Frank repeat certain things to you? I think sometimes they don't think.

You said that Angie quit because of the Mayor? I would also say because of Ray.

You said it was 100% because of the Mayor. It was also the next morning because of Ray. I can't speak to it because I wasn't there.

I thought she quit twice. She tried to quit.

Was she quitting because of Ray? I think because all of the frustration.

What frustration in the office? She's in a unique situation. Not because of office. She's married to a Council member. How I've been treated. I think she was looking forward to a change. I think she had frustrations with the way things were done before. John chooses not to be involved with things. I think she was happy to have a new person who would address things. She saw constant resistance.

How did Ray get her to stay? It was both of us. I didn't know she had informed Ray. I recall I was going past the office. They were kind of talking about it. I kind of kiddingly said to Ray, whatever you need to say to keep her, we don't want her to leave. I don't think she stayed because of Ray.

Why did she quit both times? Why did she give you the notice and not Denise? I think she has a lot of frustrations with Denise.

Because of processes you're trying to instill, did you encourage Angie to go through proper channels? Not the first time, she didn't actually quit.

But she did quit. No, I don't think she ever gave me any resignation.

But she informed you? She talked about quitting.

It appears, she was putting you on notice that she is going to quit, but then you convinced her to stay. No, I think it was more distancing herself. I think she is the kind of person who should sleep on something. I want to make sure she is going to.

When you found out there was frustration with Denise and that Angie was attempting to quit, did you talk to Denise and say we are going to lose a "good one here"? No, because I am in an environment no one gets talked to. I can't talk about things that are adversarial or give redirection because people say that I retaliate against them. Any conversation that wasn't a good job, I truly felt like that's retaliation.

Did you direct Angie to talk to Denise regarding her resignation notice? I was not going to force her to send it to Denise. I told her to talk to Denise regarding benefits.

Prior to Angie quitting, if you would have posted that job description for the Police Chief position, that would have eliminated Joe Sisler. That would be extremely adversarial. Would you not agree with that? No, because I am doing my job. I am going out and looking at other communities.

I am agreeing with you, but I am also trying to look at the fact that you didn't want to create a ripple effect talking to Denise, but you created a job description that would eliminate Joe. The Police Chief job description isn't connected to Joe.

I understand that, but if you had posted that job description, it appears you were willing to be adversarial then.

What did Ray say to you when he stormed out of your office after Angle quit? Something like, “the things you are doing are fucking with peoples’ lives. And I’m fucking sick of it”. And he left. Ray did threaten to quit. When he came back, I asked to talk to him, but he said no. I told him I just wanted to say one thing. I told him he was a very valuable Building Inspector. When I came here, he was the one person I knew something about. I heard he was a rockstar Building Inspector. That doesn’t mean you handle your emotions the best. I hope you understand that no one wants you to quit. He asked me to leave. Then he said, I want you to know my anger has ruined relationships. I’m trying to do better. I believe he was very angry. Ray is the guy on the white horse who wants to save people. Ray takes on other peoples’ causes. He feels if you wrong someone, he takes on his responsibility to save the day. Ray was crazy mad at me because he thought I was getting rid of James. Every single person I’ve talked to will tell you it’s nothing I’ve done to him, it’s what you do to others. Ray thinks it’s his responsibility to right the wrong.

Was the video vulgar? It was a 4-minute video about how the Navy Seals pick the best people. The Navy Seals would say pick the most trustworthy people over just high performing. Because high performing is the most toxic person in your workplace. It’s perpetuated negativity about me. I’m not saying what he did was right, and the video wasn’t that bad. It was about the most toxic person. To scream at your boss.

But you didn’t write him up? No.

Is there anything else you want to talk to me about before we get to the other? Lots of stories can be told about people not liking me, but at the end of the day there aren’t a lot of examples. They don’t treat male department heads like they treat me. For example, when Ray sent email on Thursday, the Mayor responded, I’ll look into it. Then Ray sent a second email. Because I know how these things need to be handled, I called a labor attorney. This is a sexual harassment complaint. Monday afternoon Bernie handed me my papers to leave. A week later I filed my complaint, and Ray is still working.

If Ray feels his complaint is valid, you must separate the two people. That is the reason you’re suspended with pay, pending the investigation. It wasn’t necessary to suspend Ray when you filed your complaint; you were already separated. I don’t see it that way.

Let’s discuss Ray’s complaint and the investigation thus far. The scope of the work has changed. The focus has shifted from a sexual harassment complaint to an attempt to try and determine if the culture/work environment is hostile/harassing.

How was your management style described in your last performance review? I feel I had a great HR person; we would talk about it a lot.

Let’s discuss your management style? People like to tag it with micromanagement. But when we dissect it, how would I describe myself, people like to use the word micromanagement. I’m not saying this is how you need to do your job; I would describe it as “wanting to have my finger on the pulse of all things ‘city’”. And that is not what people in Eldridge are used to. I know people say I micromanage, but what I have found is that they don’t give examples. Or they’re hostile; it’s hell to work here. But what I find difficult, they don’t give examples.

You started with Geneseo and what they said about your management style, obviously you've heard the term micromanager before. What did they say in Geneseo? I followed no other City Administrator. Geneseo didn't have a CA for eight (8) years. Am I really micromanaging? Or am I asking you to give me information?

I'm going to assume it was more than one person in Geneseo. It appears you do have a micromanagement style. I didn't say that. I reiterated what I said.

Here's an example of you being defensive. You just pointed your finger at me, changed your tone, and leaned into me and said, "I didn't say that". I would describe my style as having my finger on the pulse of all things "city". I don't think I micromanage people. I've never had the opportunity to follow someone like me. And if so, what did they say about it?

Everyone that I talked to believes you're incredibly intelligent. There's no doubt you can do the job that you're being asked to do.

What was your management style in Moline? I was the exact same way. Because Moline is a bigger city, I did not get negative feedback from employees. I've been contacted by numerous employees to come back.

I was surprised you were only there for five (5) months. It's because of Stephanie Acri (former Mayor of Moline). I didn't get the micromanager tag because they were truly Office Managers. They didn't work in the field. *(passive aggressive comment)*

There's definitely a theme between your department managers. What they are hearing from you is to NOT talk to officials. Where are they hearing that theme? I believe the Mayor. I will take that to my grave. I have never said you can't talk to an elected official. It's a public sector expectation that has been twisted. I've never said that. It's Marty (O'Boyle).

Will you take any ownership where the staff is right now to where we are today? What ownership will you take or believe is yours to accept and acknowledge? I believe things have gotten twisted while trying to be accepted in an organization. I speak too freely. I need to rein that back. It's my fault. Things have gotten construed negatively about people. I was trying to have a coworker relationship rather than a boss.

Would you liken your butt-crack sweat comment and gloves in the office comment to the comment Dockery made to you about letting your hair down/spending the night? No.

Do you think it was meant in jest? No, I think he would think it was cool if I would spend the night.

When were you aware of some of your direct reports not supporting you? I would say, two different groups. Ray (Nees) and Dave (Kopatich) immediately. It was about after three (3) months. I would describe the first three (3) months as Covid-focused. In wintertime people added to the list.

You were hired in March 2020. In October 2020, the personnel committee met with staff, and they described it as half and half. Brian, Tony, and Derek were supportive of me, then sometime between October and March when they met with them, the tide started to sway against me.

Why do you feel that way? It continued to be the worst with the Mayor. As much as they talk about fearing me and the hostile work environment, there is no examples of things that people will describe

being afraid of me, but Brian Wessel got defensive with me because he was more fearful of the Mayor and the consequences of the Mayor. I've heard that I don't delegate enough, I micromanage, there's a hostile work environment, I talk too much. While I'm not saying I don't take ownership of the situation, they don't give me examples of things. Which is why you need a performance plan. The performance plan would give you facts versus feelings.

Did you favor Angie? The only person was willing to help me is Ang. I felt like I was dumping work on her because she was the only one that would help me. John (Doud) never asked anyone to do anything clerical.

Did Angle say anything about the Mayor during resignation letter. No.

Did you ask her what she meant in her letter? Well, I already talked to her about it. She literally walked out the door and never came back. She yelled at the Mayor in Council chambers.

Regarding Brock Kroeger. Did you say something after he had to leave a meeting early to the effect of, "Maybe after his wife has the baby, she'll give him his balls back"? No, I didn't say it like that. Jake wanted to go to board wage increases, I told him he couldn't at this time. Jake started to talk aggressively to me. I told Jake I was trying to coordinate a meeting, but Brock is busy. Brock said he might be able to attend a meeting that I was scheduling, but he needed to check with his wife first. These are Brock's words. In 30 years of board meetings, I have never had anyone say that if their wife tells them they can't go to a meeting, they're not going. Sometimes men in the workplace who don't have any control at home, sometimes are strongly in charge at work. I didn't say get his balls back.

What did you say? I don't recall. I remember the conversation. Maybe part of his home life is like a Police Chief in Wisconsin I worked with. He wasn't in charge at home, but he was going to be in charge at work.

You never mentioned anything about Mr. Kroeger's "balls" in any conversation? I don't recall anything like that. It was out of context, but I didn't say "balls".

If there was more than one person who said that you said it, are they liars? There was only Jake in my office. I'm not saying they're liars, but I don't recall saying that.

What is your relationship with the Chamber? I think the Mayor and Brian have a lot to do with a very negative relationship with the Chamber.

Have you ever had conversations regarding the Chamber not wanting to work with you? Yes, the Mayor and Bernie.

Anyone else? Derek. It's a difficult situation when your employee is the President of the Chamber.

What did Derek say? I'm sick of the drama.

What is he referring to? It was after the Sesquicentennial and the chamber ladies (employees). A couple of times over the weekend they got snippy. Some of the guy department heads asked why Tabitha and Heather were being snippy.

What was he talking about, "sick of the drama"? He wouldn't tell me what they said, but I'm assuming he's hearing things from them. Probably, "you're taking over, you're trying to be bossy".

Are you? I haven't been there since April. *(Meaning she resigned in April.)*

It appears the Chamber doesn't want to work with you. I told the Mayor and Bernie, I will resign. I don't need to have a relationship with the Chamber that's adversarial. I don't think it's the Chamber, it's the employees.

How did the Mayor have anything to do with that? I believe he talks about me. I believe the Mayor and Brian (Dockery) talk to Heather and Tabitha about me. Who's going to admit that? There is no doubt in my mind there is. The way he speaks to my face. I resigned my position. I don't believe the Chamber wanted me gone. Within 20 minutes I had chamber members calling me and asking why I was resigning. None of them wanted me to resign. Tabitha and Heather wouldn't admit to anything.

The words I'm going to use now are how your direct reports feel about you: manipulative, not trustworthy, backstabber, creates a hostile work environment, uses people, calculating. *(Ms. Kotter showed no emotion or non-verbal behavior after I made this comment.)*

How is your relationship with Tony? I think it was very good. Although, one time Tony got upset with me when I had Brian in my office. I made a sarcastic comment about his negotiations with the city. I was kidding, but he didn't find it funny. I apologized. I feel like there's been rough waters, but it's gotten better. Tony applied to be Assistant City Manager. If the relationship was so negative, why would he ask to take the role for a trial period? Something I can take out of this, not to be as sarcastic.

How many times did Tony ask you to quit talking "crap" about other employees in front of him? Maybe three (3) or four (4).

You admitted he has asked you three (3) or four (4) times to stop talking crap about other employees. Why did you continue? Numerous times I've tried to apologize. I've tried to have conversations about the backstabbing comments. I think it's talked about on purpose to get me out of here. Stories are embellished.

Why were you confiding in Tony about other employees? I feel like he displayed that he was the kind of person who would be willing to try and help. He's a bridge-builder; trying to get things to move in the right direction.

When did you make the comment that he didn't like? January 2021.

How is your relationship with Tony now? I think it's better than it was.

Things are better...? You trailed off. What do you think your relationship is with him now? I believe he knows things are bad. I think that he probably sees more than anybody else that the elected officials treat me poorly. *(Ms. Kotter started to tear up at this time).* Sometime in May, he came into my office and wanted to pray with me. It's been better, I think, I heard a lot of positive things from the Sesquicentennial. Why would he apply to be my assistant and have your office next to me, if it was a crazy negative path with him? I don't think he would've applied for the position.

What would you think if I told you he was thinking about rescinding it? I would not be surprised. Because of all of this. He doesn't like being in the middle of turmoil. I'm not surprised with all the things that have happened.

How do you think you're going to change their "reality" with all the words they used to describe you? How are you going to fix it? **I don't believe the allegation of sexual harassment, inappropriate yes, but not to the level of sexual harassment.** Obviously if I come back to work, I have to work on those relationships. I think some of the things are because I allowed more of a friendship/coworker relationship, and I have to get in the mode that it's not okay to have casual conversations.

I don't think your employees think you are their friend. Here are two examples of you not being trustworthy:

A Councilman went to Joe Sisler's office. He said you were planning on presenting a job description of the Chief's position at the council meeting, but Joe didn't have to "worry about it". When in fact, he needed to worry about it as he wasn't qualified based on your job description. You told Joe that he had your support for the position. But you didn't. You didn't have the professional courtesy to tell Joe you didn't feel he was qualified for the position. A Councilman comes to his office mid-day to tell him everything is fine, but he was going to be ambushed at the meeting. And the finger would be pointed at you for doing the ambushing. That's where the mistrust stems from.

Joe gave a report to you about the training records. You were supposed to report to Council, but you didn't. Joe was called out, and the only person who received it was Bruce. It looked like you gave the report only to Bruce. It made Joe look bad. When you ask why people don't trust you, that's why. There are two times you left Joe hanging out to dry.

There's something else you should know. You have two employees who are now taking anti-anxiety medication because they're so stressed at work and because you're the cause. That is very difficult to hear. (Ms. Kotter showed no emotion.)

I have to say, this is going to be a big hill for you to climb. There are a couple of employees that are taking anxiety medication because of how stressed they are about their job. I do see a little bit what they're talking about. I'm sharing this with you because it's going into my report; I'm not going to put employees' names in the report, for fear of retaliation. It's their reality. (Ms. Kotter asked if I had been given an example of retaliation. Ms. Kotter then gave me an example of retaliation.)

The common theme is you're not trustworthy. Who do you think supports you now? If things are being divided amongst your direct reports, who do you think would believe you could make the needed changes to come back to work? Tony, probably Brian, Joe, I don't know about Jake. Derek. I also think it's easy for them to say she should just go away. Because that's the easier answer.

I don't think that's an easier answer. No one wants to say career-ending. That's the last thing anyone wants to do. How could she ever come back? Because I can. It's disheartening all of this chaos has happened. There's a lot of people who can take responsibility. I can only take responsibility for my part. If it goes forward, there are so many people that need to take responsibility, too.

How many times have you said, something is/was fucking stupid? Processes are fucking stupid? The way things are done is fucking stupid? I don't think I've said things were fucking stupid very often. Not recently. It was a topic of conversation with the Council. Frustration, I've used the word to describe things, but I don't say that to people. I think I made a concerted effort to stop.

Did you say Brock doesn't "give a fuck about the Utility Board"? That is a comment I regret saying. Jake was refusing to talk to me for about three (3) weeks. Brock wasn't coming to represent the employees. Jake accused me of lying and not inviting Brock to the meetings. I sent out a meeting

request via Outlook. I forgot to add Brock. I was pressuring Brock to come to the meetings. Brock said to me, "Lisa, whether you like it or not, this is not my priority right now. I have a business to run." Brock got snappy with me. I finally said to Brock, can we have Jim Skala to be your back-up? As far as I'm concerned why can't you negotiate these contracts in the summer? Jake kept "hammering me". I yelled, "Brock doesn't give a fuck".

Did you tell him NOT to talk to Brock? No.

Never? No. I said bring it to me, and I'll bring it to Brock. I've always said to all of them, please let me know your discussions. I don't want to be surprised at meetings. *(Splitting hairs.)*

How is your relationship with Derek? Derek has similar work ethic to me. More than anybody on the staff. I feel like he probably more than anybody is comfortable talking to me on a regular basis. I think he sees me as micromanaging him, but I've tried to explain I'm trying to make sure things are getting accomplished. He does a lot of "not sure", and "I'll take care of it". Vague answers. I think he will interpret as I'm pushing him or getting into his business. I've tried to make sure things are getting done.

Why would he not get it done? He's been here a long time; you've only been here for a short period of time. Usually, a City Administrator doesn't get involved with a lot of extras. We threw more things at him.

Why did you think he couldn't do it? He's been here forever. Only so much time a person can give. The parks are a whole different gig than the Community Center. I'm being helpful.

How many people do you think you would lose if you came back? If I came back, I feel like most people have grown up here and while I think they would feel like they don't want to be here, I don't think they'd actually quit. There's a few, but they would have to find another job. Derek and Brian, this is all they have done in their lives. I don't know how to answer that. *(No tone in response. More of a quiet matter of fact.)*

What would you like to ask me? What is your process? Bernie explained to me you were only focusing on sexual harassment. The scope of the work has changed. **I don't believe there is sexual harassment, but I have other concerns regarding a hostile work environment.**

When you continually saying things are "fucking stupid" you're basically saying the employees were stupid. I guess that's my downfall. I get that happened in the beginning, because it is so frustrating because they thought they had a City Administrator, but I really believe he is a Finance Director. He focused strictly on finances. He didn't get involved in departments' business.

MS. KOTTER'S COMPLAINT

Ms. Kotter alleged favorable gender bias to male department heads. Ms. Kotter alleges there was gender bias/discrimination in the hiring practices, reprimanded unfairly in public and in front of subordinates because of gender bias, berated for advising the Mayor to follow the law because of gender discrimination, excluded from meetings because of gender bias.

Brian Dockery: Dockery disagrees with the statement that he's aligning himself with the Mayor. Dockery stated on more than one occasion that he's tried to settle down "both of them" in council meetings. During one of the meetings Dockery stated he told Ms. Kotter and the Mayor to go to their

corners (referring putting kids in a corner). Dockery denies he's hindering Ms. Kotter's ability to do her job. Dockery stated it's a practice of Ms. Kotter's to bring action items to the council meetings at the "last minute" and expect the council to vote. Dockery does not approve of this method.

Dockery admitted he discussed having John Doud, former City Administrator, complete the budget if Ms. Kotter was unable to complete the budget. Mr. Dockery admits saying, she (Ms. Kotter) better be able to complete the "fucking budget". Dockery does not recall saying it more than once. Dockery does not believe that Frank King would say that he did. Dockery admits Ms. Kotter did a nice job on the budget and told her that she did. Dockery states he did mention to Ms. Kotter about going to the ball diamonds on the weekend. Dockery states an employee mentioned to him Ms. Kotter is impeding their ability to do their job. Dockery admitted he said, "Lisa needed to let her hair down", but he uses the phrase often. Dockery admitted he did offer a room at his home if she was impaired. Dockery has a home bar in his basement. Dockery added during the derecho, he offered Derek and Lisa a place to stay. Both employees were working until early morning hours, and he had electricity from a generator. Dockery denies his invitation was sexual in nature. Dockery denies the allegations regarding telling Ray Nees he was going to be terminated.

Were you involved in the review process for Ms. Kotter? Yes.

Why wasn't Lisa's performance review completed on time? First, it was the derecho, then Covid, then we started to hear a lot of negative things about Lisa's management style.

How did you hear about the negative comments? I talked to all the department heads. I believe it was in November or December 2020. The consensus was divided in half. Either the department head loved her, or they hated her.

Was the performance evaluation ever completed? No. We did give Lisa a cost-of-living increase, but it wasn't tied to a performance review. I thought that was fair since her review wasn't done. The increase was NOT related to her performance.

Why didn't you take action then? We were hoping things would die down.

Did they? No. In May, we sat down with the managers to discuss Lisa's performance. It wasn't a gripe session. We went to each department head and asked about Lisa's strengths and weaknesses as a manager. Everyone said she could do the job, but there was a lot of negativities regarding her as a manager.

What was the discussion? Lisa manipulates, she isn't trustworthy, she lies, she is always the victim, morale is shit, talks shit about everyone, the list goes on. I did take notes. (Dockery provided Ms. Snyder with a copy of the notes.)

Why didn't you do anything then? I did. I talked to Lisa. I showed her the notes that I had taken. I didn't bring the notes to a council meeting because I wanted her to improve. I didn't want the notes to be made public. I was protecting her. (See exhibit 1.)

Why did you think the Mayor wanted to go through the applicants of an entry level position? We heard that Lisa wants to align herself with her own staff. We wanted to make sure that wasn't happening.

Did you object to Ms. Kotter having staff meetings? I objected to the frequency and mid-morning meetings. At first, it was a good idea to have weekly staff meetings. However, when 30% of your staff are in a two-hour meeting in the morning, it's hard to be productive.

Marty O'Boyle: The Mayor denies he berated, criticized, reprimanded, and/or interfered with Ms. Kotter's performance review. The Mayor admits he did want to view the resumes for an entry level Clerk position. The Mayor denies he publicly berated her and ignored reminders to follow state codes. The Mayor denies he purposely excluded Ms. Kotter from any meetings. The Mayor admits he will not talk to Ms. Kotter without a witness. The Mayor admits he has accused Ms. Kotter of possible retaliation, ordering employees not to talk to him, and micromanagement. The Mayor admits he scrutinizes Ms. Kotter's expenditures.

Have you berated, criticized, reprimanded, and/or interfered with Ms. Kotter's performance review? We had a meeting to discuss her performance. We had some department heads telling us they were uncomfortable with what was going on. We decided to give her a chance to change. I never rated her performance negatively nor did the other two council members rate her. We took information. Fast forward six (6) months (March), we went back and did another round table with the department heads to see if there has been a change of attitude.

What did the department heads say? Mostly negative comments. Controlling discussions. If she doesn't like where the conversation is going, she will dominate it. She goes on and on until you're nauseated, people get tired of listening to her. She keeps talking until she gets her point across and gets her way. She doesn't like to listen. Micromanaging, delegates work, very controlling, inappropriate remarks, divides camps. I had heard that one before, when I asked her about it, she denied it. I told her in the year-and-a-half, I've never heard her take ownership if something went wrong. She either defers or she will deflect it away from herself. She didn't necessarily deny it. People know it. I told her when she talks about someone in this town, they know it, and I know it, too. (Refer to exhibit 1.)

When did the angst start between you and Lisa? The first three (3) months, I tried to help her succeed. I took her around, I showed her things and introduced her to people. About the fourth month (July), things started to change.

What happened in July? She was taking on responsibilities without letting people know, or after the fact.

Give me an example. She started to go to a lot of Board meetings.

Is that wrong? No, it isn't wrong. But when you start trying to take over, it is. She tried to take over five (5) or six (6) Boards.

Do you recall any of the Boards? Park Board. Community Center Board. Utility Board. I would stop at some of the meetings. I would listen and reconnect. I would never try and tell them what to do. It got to the point she was dominating every one of the meetings.

Did you observe her doing this? Yes, I sat through a number of those meetings. I listened to the Board members. They said she was trying to take control of over everything. I talked to Lisa. I told her she didn't need to go to every single meeting and try and control everything. You're going to destroy the Board.

Do you think the Boards considered her advice constructive? I think in the beginning, it was viewed as constructive, but it didn't take long for them to figure out they were no longer running the thing. That she assumed the power and the control of everything.

Did your Board members tell you this? It was a combination of having the Board members telling me this and observing her.

Do you think this was the start of your angst? I'm not sure. It got to the point where a few of the Boards asked her not to attend. They would invite her if they needed her input. Some of the things she did was fine though. But I told her she didn't need to control everything.

Give me some of the positive things about Lisa. She is good mixing with the public, she's happy and puts on a good face, she likes to be the focus of attention a lot of the times, she can put a good party together. Downside is she can't tell you how much the party cost or you can't get a straight answer. Like, the Sesquicentennial and International Softball tournament.

What about her skill set as a City Administrator? She's an eager beaver. She puts a lot of time in. Her skill set, like her budget? She has a different interpretation of a budget.

Again, does she have the skill set to do the budget? She seems to have put the last budget together. I doubt she did it by herself. She wouldn't have understood our budget process. The budget was acceptable at that time.

Did you require Ms. Kotter to present names to the council for an entry level position? Yes. I wanted to be a part of the discussion.

Why, if entry level positions generally don't go through council? The first entry level position was working for the Utility Board. Lisa decided to lower the wage scale. The wages are set under the Collective Bargaining Agreement. She said she could do anything I want. Another reason why I want to see the resumes is because she has someone that follows her around from Wisconsin. Her name is Fawn Schultz. Fawn was fired in Wisconsin, she ended up getting employed in Geneseo when Lisa worked there. When Lisa went to Moline, Fawn followed her. People told me to watch out for Fawn Schultz's name because she wanted to pull her in.

Did Ms. Schultz apply for the position? No, it wasn't. I'm trying to be protective. I've heard about how she handles money. The first thing she does when she comes in is to remove the Police Chief, then she works on department heads. The same thing happened in Geneseo is happening to us, to a "T". Only now she's refined it. I have great concerns about money and property.

What is Ms. Kotter referring to in her complaint regarding compliance with state law and berating her? What is she referring to? I told her if we need to become in compliance with the law, there is more than one way to get there. We can understand where we need to be, we can adapt and make the change over time. But to use a state law and beat us over the head with it causes a disruption of problems. Don't be threatening us all the time. Give us what we need to be, lead us to where we need to go, but quit threatening everybody with this thing.

Did you publicly berate her? We had differences of opinion. I don't know what she means by berate.

You're pretty smart. How would you define it? If I was berating her, it would be name calling. If I disagreed with her point of view and I'm questioning it, I don't consider that berating.

Do you think your approach needs to be changed to get to the end result? I think I have done everything I could with the right approach. But when it comes back to you more problematic than constructive, then it becomes frustrating. I'm sure she has felt the same way.

Have you ever had shouting matches with Lisa? We've had differences of opinion at high levels.

Did you purposely exclude Lisa from the meeting with Ashley Atkins? I didn't know anything about a meeting she was invited to or not invited to. I was talking to Ray Nees about the situation with Ashley Atkins. Lisa came into Ray's office. I started to explain to Lisa what was going on. She said she already knew about it. I said I was going to talk to her, but she was busy. I told her I was going to talk to Ray then I was going to talk to her. I told her now that you're here, let's talk. Then it became argumentative. I didn't mean for it to happen. I got involved with something (a citizen complaint), but she needs to have total control over everything. By the time the conversation was over, she was heated up to begin with, and she just continued with it.

Did she raise her voice? I can't remember if she raised her voice, but she wasn't demure about it. About that time, Ray said he was out of there. It was close to his quitting time. After he left, I told Lisa I wasn't trying to cut her out of anything. I told her I got to her office, I asked for her, they (office staff) told me she was at the park. Then it became more argumentative. I said, "Lisa...just stop...stop. Why do you always take a situation ramp it up and start a war? Why do you have to have a war with everybody? You always have to live in a constant state of war." That was the crux of it.

Have you publicly accused of her retaliation? I've had employees who have told me that she's said not to talk to the Mayor, and if he talks to you, you need to report it to me.

Why did you move her seat at the council meeting? I noticed during the meetings Lisa would making nods to Mr. Cheek if she wanted him to support something or be against it. I moved her chair next to Mr. Cheek because they got along so well. The crowd brought it to my attention that she would poke Mr. Cheek when she wanted him to say something. So, I brought her chair back to sit next to me.

Why did you go through her line items of her bill? I will ask questions to other people about their expenditures.

Has it become more so with Lisa? Like you said you had heard "things" from others the way she handles money, was that a little bit of a jab? No, not necessarily. I would describe it as mistrust. We trust our department heads because we've worked with them for years. When they ask for an expenditure, they give it to us.

It appears to me that you did it because you could, you are the Mayor. Lisa was hired in March 2020; there is no mention of any months prior to August 2021 of you going through line by line of her expenditures. It appears to the reader you did it because you could. When it comes to Ms. Kotter handling money, I did start to ask questions. There was expenditure in the hotel/motel tax column for badges and tumblers. I asked Lisa to explain it. She said it was for Sesquicentennial. I told her that the council didn't approve spending any money out of hotel/motel tax. She said it was okay because she put money into the account from the money she raised from sponsors. I asked her, what sponsors? She replied from businesses around town. Where did you put the money? She said hotel/motel. I then said to the council, "Do you understand what just happened here? She is raising money from people we do business with, she's putting it into a fund that hasn't been approved, and then she's making expenditures out of it. And you don't even know what it's for. We need to pay attention to what's

going on here. She has a history of this". It started when the stimulus money came through. I asked her what she did with the money. Lisa said she put it in sales tax. I asked her why? She said that's where everything goes. What do you mean that's where everything goes? She said that's where everything goes into sales tax. I told her, it doesn't. I asked her if she put a separate line item for the stimulus money. She said no. I told her she couldn't do that. We already adopted the budget. We need to accept the money by council by resolution and create a line item to recognize it and track it. Lisa raised \$65,000 in direct solicitations from people we do business with. She just dumped it into the hotel/motel budget. I told the council don't you see what's going on here? I told her later that she's treating sales tax and hotel/motel tax like your personal piggy bank.

Did you say that in open session? No, it was after the meeting. I told her you've done that to other cities, you're not doing that here.

Is it a fair statement to say the reason you did go through every bill from the Sesquicentennial celebration was because of how she just "put money" into an account? You were unaware of any sponsorship donations? You wanted to see exactly where all the money was being spent? Is that accurate? You're right on. I've been forewarned to watch out for the money. She gets carefree with it. At first Lisa wasn't going to produce a report for it. I told her I wanted a full report of everyone who donated, and how much, and how much have we spent? She said she couldn't do that because all the bills weren't in. I told her, she can produce a report for all the contributions and expenses to date. The next meeting, we got a partial report. Am I worried about her handling money and not be open and upfront about it? You bet.

When was the first time had the feeling? I was cautious when I had a number of people warn me to watch the money. You'll end up broke.

Have you ever made comments about her clothes? No. I've never talked about her weight either.

What was the trigger? When she started to run things by herself in the fourth month. She has a lot of great assets. She promotes the city as much as she can.

Referring to last page, what is she reported to Nees? I know there was some unpleasant feelings. I don't know of anything that prompted that comment. Lisa and Ray used to get along. She can dish it out just as much as she can take it. Like Lisa has said, she's a fighter. I didn't know we were at a war. We've had disagreements, but I didn't think it was a war.

How do you think this will play out? I don't know. Sometimes you don't want to see something that you need to or admit when you're wrong. There's nothing wrong with that. We have some great talent on the council; we have all different points of view. Usually, we can come together.

Why has it taken the City this long to act? It's about the councilmen.

What would you like to talk about? Lisa is a good person. She has a good heart. She has plenty of experience as a City Administrator in a lot of cities. But it didn't work out in those cities. The recruiter did mention there had been some issues with her past employment. We didn't look it to it. We should have taken more time to figure it out. After we hired her, people said you need to watch your money. It was documented in the newspapers and council minutes. I call the plan what she is doing here "The Geneseo" plan. What she did there is exactly what she is doing here. I told Council members if they want to see what their future looks like, you need to look at her past. History has a tendency to repeat itself. I told them to look at all four (4) cities she's worked in; it's the plan. Geneseo was a huge uproar

with the citizens. Just like here. It just continues. She learned very quickly who she needed to target at council. We gave her another chance to see if things would wind down, it hasn't winded down, people are just getting tired of talking about it. *(See Exhibit 2.)*

FINDINGS MR. NEES COMPLAINT

Ms. Kotter's employment started on a positive note in March 2020. The previous Administrator worked for the City for 30+ years and did a nice job. The addition of a new City Administrator meant career development and positive change for the City with new and fresh ideas.

Within the first three (3) months of Ms. Kotter's employment, departments who may have had minor conflict in the past, were completely divided. Within six (6) months, there was complete mistrust in all the departments with one common denominator, Ms. Kotter.

All employees interviewed echoed Ms. Kotter said the City of Eldridge policies were "fucking stupid".

All employees interviewed echoed that Ms. Kotter spoke disparagingly about several staff members, and specifically talked down to and about Mr. Nees. Most employees interviewed said that Ms. Kotter demanded that she be part of all conversations and meetings related to City business not to avoid being blindsided, but to control and micromanage employees and information.

While the group collectively described Ms. Kotter as qualified and smart, she was also described as mean, manipulative, untrustworthy, having terrible management skills, and possessing no leadership capabilities. Most employees mentioned noticing an improvement in morale and general atmosphere since Ms. Kotter was placed on leave pending this investigation. The employees are united, and not in a retaliatory or aggressive way. Staff unanimously said there was no ill treatment towards Ms. Kotter, to include gender discrimination, sexual harassment, or a hostile work environment. Most importantly, all employees stated they felt the Board allowed Ms. Kotter's behavior to continue by failing to take corrective action after the closed session meeting in **May 2021**, and all employees described a hostile work environment. *(See Exhibit 1 notes of meeting.)*

In addition to the employees' claims mentioned above, it's suspect why resignation letters for Angie King and James Martin were not in their respective personnel files. Furthermore, it's important to note that Ms. King's resignation letter detailed that if Ms. King's relationship (real or perceived) in any way influenced her husband, Frank King (Councilman), to support Ms. Kotter, or Ms. King's friendship with Ms. Kotter negatively impacted or even harmed staff members, Ms. King wanted to eliminate and correct any ill-will she may have caused.

Ms. Kotter was matter of fact when she remarked, "What are they going to do if I come back? They're not leaving." It seems that Ms. Kotter fails to understand that an apology isn't enough to right the situation.

Ms. Kotter told Chief Sisler she supported his promotion to Chief of Police, but then created and presented a job description to City Council blatantly excluding Chief Sisler from the position based on his qualifications. This is a clear example of being untrustworthy to staff members.

When asked about Angie King's resignation, Ms. Kotter said Ms. King left due to being frustrated with the Mayor. Ms. Kotter provided this insight even after reading Ms. King's resignation letter and then lied about the contents of the letter to Ms. Snyder.

When questioned about allegedly saying Brock's wife "nailing/screwing his balls to the ground", Ms. Kotter didn't recall making that statement.

When Ms. Snyder questioned Ms. Kotter about stepping down from the Chamber, Ms. Kotter said she voluntarily resigned due to the "drama". In reality, several people (citizens, employees, Council members) voiced dissatisfaction with Ms. Kotter's involvement in the QC Live event, among others. This general dissatisfaction put the President of the Chamber in an uncomfortable position as he reports to Ms. Kotter at the City.

When questioned regarding how many times employees have asked her to stop talking about other staff, she admitted, "multiple".

Ms. Kotter described her management style as "wanting to keep a pulse on the City"; but did acknowledge that everyone else says she's a micromanager.

Ms. Kotter took ownership of her sarcasm. Ms. Kotter believes that if she's less sarcastic and doesn't try to be friends with staff members, there could be a resolution. Ms. Kotter doesn't believe staff members will leave if she is brought back to work.

While employees recognize the Mayor doesn't like Ms. Kotter, the issue for employees is not the Mayor, it's Ms. Kotter. It's a direct impact from the hostile environment Ms. Kotter has created and has no basis on her relationship with the Mayor, no matter how contentious.

Ms. Kotter said she was known as the "Rubber Stamp Girl" when she worked for the City of Geneseo.

Ms. Kotter directs department heads to submit writing packets directly to her. Ms. Kotter then reviews the writing packets prior to distributing the original information to City Council members. Ms. Kotter then speaks to City Council members covertly and attempts to get a feel for their position/stance on the topics at hand. Ms. Kotter then modifies the writing packets to both appease City Council members as well as ultimately fit her own agenda.

Question #1: Did Ms. Kotter direct employees not to speak to elected officials without her present and/or give directive to report all conversations to her immediately?

Yes. All direct reports reported Ms. Kotter was adamant all conversations be reported to her. Ms. Kotter claims she wants to know "all City business". Ms. Kotter states she wants to have her "finger on the pulse of the city." She doesn't want to be blindsided at a council meeting. The interviews confirm Ms. Kotter is "splitting hairs" with this statement. The investigation proves while she claims she wants to only know City business, there is a veiled threat of retaliation if all conversations are not reported to her. There is a fear amongst the employees if they are observed talking to an official and don't report it to her. No matter how inconsequential the dialogue.

Question #2: Since March 2020 has Ms. Kotter continuously said, "Eldridge is fucking stupid"?

Yes. All direct reports have reported they've witnessed or been involved in discussions while the offensive language is being used. Ms. Kotter admitted in the beginning of her employment she used the language often, but it was about the process, not directly towards anyone. Ms. Kotter explained she doesn't believe this language is as common anymore.

Question #3: Has Mr. Nees' job been threatened?

Yes. While there hasn't been a direct threat to his job, several department heads have reported Ms. Kotter has spoken negatively and derogatory of Mr. Nees and others since her employment.

Question #4: Did Ms. Kotter sexually harass any employee?

~~No.~~ Other than Mr. Nees' allegation, no others could confirm the comment she would "insert her hand in his rectum". Ms. Kotter did admit she made the comment of it being "sweaty butt-crack" weather. While the comment is crude and unprofessional, it doesn't rise to the level of sexual harassment.

FINDINGS LISA KOTTER COMPLAINT

Ms. Kotter alleges gender bias, sexual harassment, and discrimination.

Question #1: Does Dockery hinder Ms. Kotter from performing her job duties?

No. While Dockery did ensure he had a back-up plan incase Ms. Kotter was unable to perform or complete the budget, it was the former City Administrator with 30 years of experience. The former City Administrator is male. To compare a 30+ year former Administrator and to a newly appointed Police Chief is comparing apples to oranges.

Question #2: Did Dockery use the word "fucking" in a retaliatory, offensive, and/or degrading way to Ms. Kotter?

No. While the word "fucking" is considered offense and not appropriate in the workplace, Dockery was using the word as an adjective to the word "budget".

Question #3: Did Dockery extend an inappropriate invitation to stay overnight to Ms. Kotter if she had too much to drink?

No. Dockery admits he has offered anyone to stay at his home if they have too much to drink. Ms. Kotter is not the exception.

Question #4: Does Dockery impede Ms. Kotter from her dally duties?

No. No evidence was offered by Ms. Kotter that would substantiate her allegation.

Question #5: Did the Mayor berate, criticize, reprimand, and/or interfere with Ms. Kotter's performance review?

No. No evidence was offered by Ms. Kotter that would substantiate her allegation.

Question #6: Does the Mayor create a hostile work environment for Ms. Kotter?

No. While the exchanges are extremely heated between the Mayor and Ms. Kotter, it appears both of the individuals are very strong-willed, opinionated, and like to filibuster. Ms. Kotter has admitted on numerous occasions that the Mayor is NOT her boss and he has NO authority over her.

Question #7: Do the exchanges between the Mayor and Ms. Kotter create a hostile work environment for the employees?

Yes. Both individuals are equally to blame for some of the chaos their actions towards each other that creates a very negative place to work. However, Ms. Kotter has recounted many times that the Mayor has no authority over her.

Question #8: Is there gender bias in the workplace?

No. By Ms. Kotter's own admission, the Mayor, Brian Dockery, and Ray Nees simply don't like her. Ms. Kotter, Bruce Cheek, and Frank King agree the Mayor feels like he is the City Administrator without the title. All are in agreement; he would treat a male or female the same way.

CONCLUSION

I recommend Immediate separation of Ms. Kotter. I believe Ms. Kotter's behaviors can no longer be ignored and this action is now necessary. Ms. Kotter's workplace behaviors satisfy the classic definition of a hostile work environment in every way.

The consensus among ALL department heads is Ms. Kotter can't be trusted, she is a bully, a narcissist, lacks transparency, she gossips behind ALL the employees backs, she facilitates rumors, she's calculating, and manipulative. Some of the individuals interviewed used all the above descriptions during our conversation. When I discussed these words with Ms. Kotter during the interview, she showed no emotion and did not offer a response. A more common response would be, "Who would say that about me? Or, what can I do to fix it?" It appears Ms. Kotter has heard these words before. Most shocking is Ms. Kotter's lack of reaction, response, or remorse when I brought the fact that two employees are currently on anti-anxiety medication, with both staff members believing they are medicated due to their work environment, to Ms. Kotter's attention.

By all accounts Ms. Kotter is smart. All the department heads agreed. During my interview with Ms. Kotter, I told her she is "wicked smart". However, being intelligent and capable of doing the job doesn't make you a leader. I found myself choosing my words very carefully to illicit a response to the question I posed, not an answer that Ms. Kotter wanted to provide. Ms. Kotter is eloquent when she speaks. She chooses her words very carefully in her speech. I'm certain Ms. Kotter will have difficulty understanding the decision if she is separated from employment is due to her utter lack of leadership qualities rather than performance.

While Ms. Kotter is a very good speaker, she is equally talented in "splitting hairs" and throwing a "red herring" in a conversation. When I gave the example of the mistrust Chief Sisler has with Ms. Kotter regarding the job description and his ineligibility, she replied that she had the authority to do so. Ms. Kotter went on to explain about her authority and compliance in great length. Clearly, Ms. Kotter is missing the point. It has nothing to do with the authority to do so, it has everything to do with the manner in which she went about it.

Ms. Kotter brought up her tenure as a City Administrator for Geneseo. She described it as a wonderful experience, and said she left very amicably. When she referenced a negative situation while there, I asked her about it. She told me that she could go ahead and read about it. I accepted the invitation from the former Mayor of Geneseo, Attorney Nadine Palmgren, to discuss Ms. Kotter's past

employment. Attorney Palmgren authored a synopsis regarding Ms. Kotter's employment with the City of Geneseo and provided a photo of citizens "thanking" Moline for hiring Ms. Kotter.

(See Exhibit 2. And 3.)

It was almost immediately apparent that Ms. Kotter has fostered a hostile work environment. I talked to two individuals who admitted never taking any anti-anxiety medication before and are now taking it because of her. A male employee was tearful during his interview. When I told Ms. Kotter this revelation, Ms. Kotter showed no emotion. I was expecting to see embarrassment, for Ms. Kotter be humbled, or for Ms. Kotter to express remorse for her actions; however, there was nothing.

Ms. Kotter frequently "didn't recall" conversations or situations she was questioned about throughout the course of the interview. It's unfathomable to me for Ms. Kotter to be unable to recall if she discussed someone's "balls" in front of her direct reports. Ms. Kotter stated during her interview she doesn't drink, and she doesn't like the taste of alcohol; however, in her complaint, she states she doesn't drink much. While Ms. Kotter may not have been under oath, it hardly seems reasonable that she would have such a poor memory after only working for the city for the past ~1.5 years.

Unfortunately, the complaints were leaked to the media. It's unfortunate because had the natural progression of an investigation taken place, it would've determined if there was any validity to Mr. Nees' or Ms. Kotter's complaints. I believe Ms. Kotter purposely interfered in a pending investigation speaking to the press regarding the allegations. While Ms. Kotter had every right to file a complaint, speaking on the matter to the press is considered unprofessional conduct. Based on Ms. Kotter's conduct, this might be construed as "dividing camps". As a City Administrator of 25+ years, Ms. Kotter knew or should've known better.

Based on my multiple interviews, Ms. Kotter's own statements, and the synopsis from former Mayor of Geneseo, Attorney Palmgren, I do not find Ms. Kotter to be a credible person.

Lastly, I'd be remiss not to mention that some of the actions demonstrated by some of the government leaders during the last year are embarrassing for your community. The public outbursts and the comments on social media need to stop. I would like to believe that the way everyone reacted was for the common good of Eldridge and everyone was trying to right a wrong, no matter which side of the fence they're on. Now is the time to take the fence down and mend it.

FULL DISCLOSURE: Please note the final report was completed on Tuesday, September 15, 2021. I am amending the report to include a phone conversation between Councilman Bruce Cheek and me on Wednesday, September 16th, 2021.

Mr. Cheek called me today asking if he provided me with my payment via check, could he receive an advance copy of the final report? I told Mr. Cheek that I would need final approval from legal counsel. Mr. Cheek immediately became very confrontational and indignant. Mr. Cheek stated he only wanted the sexual harassment component of the claim to be investigated and included in my report. When I explained to Mr. Cheek that my report encompassed both complaints, he became borderline belligerent with me. Mr. Cheek began to berate me stating I investigated outside of the scope of work for which I was hired. He proceeded to tell me he worked in law enforcement for 22 years and he could do what I did in 7 hours. Mr. Cheek then started to say, "That I needed to get it through my head...." before trailing off. While Mr. Cheek didn't finish his sentence, his intent was obvious. I was flabbergasted to say the least. I asked Mr. Cheek what I needed to get through my "what", attempting to prompt him to complete his sentence. Finally, he said, that I needed to get it through my head that the Council only wanted the scope of work (sexual harassment) in my claim. It should be noted that by the time this

conversation took place, I had told a few people (including Ms. Kotter), that I didn't feel the claim of sexual harassment was founded, but that I was following the natural course of an investigation, which led me to thoroughly investigate the hostile work environment claim.

While I normally wouldn't have to justify my work, I feel like I need to be explicitly clear, given my conversation with Mr. Cheek. I am a third-party investigator, hired from outside the City to avoid bias. To be clear, I have no biases on how this situation or any other is resolved. My job is and was to gather all relevant information, state the facts, and make a determination based on that information. I will report truthfully on whatever unethical, retaliatory, gender biased, sexually charged situation is put before me and tell the truth. I will NOT redact any report regardless of who is paying the invoice.

I want my conversation with Mr. Cheek to be on record as I believe he is 100% contributing to the hostile work and retaliatory work environment the employees are feeling today. He should be embarrassed and mortified by how he conducted himself and represented his community today. Mr. Cheek couldn't threaten me with retaliation, but he was doing his absolute best in trying to insinuate I wasn't doing my job.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The opinions and information stated herein are provided for **informational purposes only** and do not in any way constitute legal advice. Failure to comply with any employment law could result in legal action against you. If you have any further questions regarding your legal rights or obligations, you need to seek the advice of an attorney.

RE: LISA KOTTER

I was the Mayor of Geneseo when Lisa Kotter was the City Administrator. I was in contact with her regularly daily and sometimes met with her more than once a day.

During that time, I reprimanded her for her job performance regarding multiple issues which are too numerous to include in this brief synopsis that follows:

Just a day before Christmas Eve, Kotter hired an X Rated comedy act called The Blacklist that performed for employees at City Hall during work hours. We had already had the employees Christmas celebration prior to this. I walked into City Hall that day and saw a sign saying that it was closed. I inquired why we were closed since we never close unless it is a holiday. I was told that I should go to the police department's garage because Kotter had joined in the performance and was on stage talking about having semen in her mouth. I had other employees also confirm and complain to me about her talking about semen in her mouth on stage. When I walked in she was not on stage, but I witnessed the comedy act talking about sexual body parts "standing at attention". Kotter's hiring of this vulgar act with the City's money and without permission from anyone was unbelievably out of line. So many employees complained to me and others how inappropriate this was in a work environment. This matter was brought up at several City council meetings in open public session.

I also received complaints from many of the employees regarding Kotter's use of vulgar language most of which had sexual undertones or referred to genitals. They also complained of her personally touching them on an arm or a leg. I also had complaints from an employee's spouse that Kotter had crouched down in front of her husband at an employee baseball game and she had put her hand inappropriately in his thigh area.

During Kotter's time in Geneseo, every Department head left City employment. So many of the Department heads complained to me regarding how she treated them.

On numerous occasions she lied to employees and to the City council as to what was said or discussed in a meeting. I know this as a fact since I attended both meetings and knew first-hand what was said.

She lied to council regarding the salary that she hired the City accountant at by thousands of dollars. She tried to hire a HR employee for nearly \$70,000 when we had only 75 employees. I found out that the candidate had multiple different last names and they her prior employers were not contacted before Kotter offered her the position.

As a member of the Geneseo Chamber of Commerce, I heard complaints from the Geneseo businesses that she was treated them unfairly. Many times she was either hostile to them or chose to pick on them. I don't recall any businesses saying anything favorable about Kotter.

There was a city-wide Town Hall Meeting when the citizens finally were so frustrated by Kotter they wanted the council to not only get rid of her but also see that she never held a City position again. A Petition was circulated for her removal and was signed by hundreds of citizens. The Dispatch reported that there were over 200 people in attendance at the Town Hall meeting. Several months later Moline hired her, and citizens were grateful that she left.

Sincerely,
Nadine Palmgren
Attorney

**THANK
YOU
MOLINE!**

