

Transcript of 4/8/2024 Grievance Hearing.

MAYOR: David you ready? All right, we are going to get this meeting started tonight. It is a special city council meeting for some grievances filed against a council member roll call please.

Aaron here

Jacob here

Jason here.

Victor here

Jackie here

David's going to explain a little how this is going to work, go ahead David.

CITY ATTORNEY DAVID LEVY: Okay thank you. Good evening mayor, council members, and the public. I am David Levy City attorney. I am going to talk just briefly about what this is and what this is not. This is not a public hearing. This is a special meeting for a single purpose which is under the city's municipal code and the city's rules of conduct for its city council to consider and hold a hearing regarding certain grievances filed against one of the council members. So, my recommendation to the mayor is the presiding officer of this body and of this meeting and every other meeting of the council based on the city's Municipal Code Iowa state law and the city's rules. so, the mayor can conduct the meeting however he likes. My recommendation to you, Mr. Mayor and I want to say this in front of all the council members and the members of the public, is a few things, again this is not in my view. It is legally not required to be a public hearing. There are two different things. there is a public meeting where we have a quorum of the council present, and we have the public here. there's a public hearing which is a different thing where you have to give people members of the public an opportunity to be heard this is not the latter this is the former and so my recommendation Mr. Mayor is as the presiding officer of this meeting is that you give the people who have filed grievances an opportunity to speak that that opportunity has a time limit to it that is shared by everybody. Council Member Wahl is the subject of these grievances; I recommend that you give her an opportunity to speak. She has an attorney present. I recommend that you give him an opportunity to speak again all under the same time limit. Everybody gets the same opportunity and the same limit at that time. And for Council Members, you are elected officials, you have a lot of discretion, right, you sit up here, you have these microphones you can do as you wish in terms of the people who come and speak. My recommendation to you is that you do not get into a back and forth with them they are in a sense. Witnesses, if you want to ask them questions you again, you're certainly free to do so but I recommend that you be very judicious in doing that. once we complete that process, which again there should be six, I think speakers, 5 minutes each that's about 30 minutes my recommendation, is then that the council go into closed session to discuss a personnel matter, uh and at the conclusion of that closed session, the council can take action on this matter, it cannot take action on this matter, I will have a recommendation for you at that point based on what I hear for whatever that might be worth again, you're always free to follow my recommendations or not I always say clients are sometimes better off or not but I hope they will um at that point I'll make a recommendation and the council has some actions that are limited by state law and the municipal code that you can take and I'll explain those to you, actually, I'll read those to you now, just so you know going into this.

The council May dismiss the complaint, set a hearing before the Council or impose sanctions under section one of the chapter above the council may also direct my office to conduct an investigation of what we hear tonight and bring the report from that investigation back, if the council were to do that what we would likely do is hire somebody who's a professional investigator to investigate the entire matter take all the evidence under submission and give us a third-party report on what they find and at that time the council could take action at this point I think that's probably a good idea but I'm not going to give you my final recommendation until we hear from the four complainants, Councilwoman Wahl and her attorney so I think that covers my recommendation. If any of the council members or the mayor have questions for me at this time. I am happy to take those otherwise I recommend to Mr. Mayor you call up the first complainant.

MAYOR: well, we heard from our legal counsel so. Michael, you want to step up here and give your version you'll get in five minutes.

ATTORNEY Michael Winters: All right sure many years ago I was in the city attorney's office and Council Bluffs and we faced a lot of issues that you had before you today but uh one of the things I've read the code and if there's a vote to remove Jackie as a council member it takes a 2/3 vote of the entire Council and the entire Council includes Jackie Wahl so she would also have an opportunity to vote by my math it would take four out of the five Council people to remove her from Office under the Iowa Code. Your lawyer may have a different opinion about that but that's the way I read it Jackie knows the chain of command she knows that she can't hire employees she can't fire employees she knows that if she's got a problem with an employee of the city of Carter Lake that she has to bring that problem to you Mr. Mayor and then you decide where it goes from there when you're elected to the city council it's not your responsibility to just come to Council meetings and sit on your hands you've got a right to know what's going on in your city you've got a right to look into uh employees if you think that they're not doing a good job and then report that to the mayor based on their recommendations she knows that she can't fire anybody but she can certainly say to people that she knows you know you ought to apply for this job I think you'd be good for it but she can't hire that person all she can do is make recommendations for people if they if she thinks they'd be good at a certain job with the city she has a right to ask people how they feel about the jobs that are being performed by employees she has a right to ask what do you think of so and so or what do you think the job this person's doing she has a right to know what's going on in the city but again she has to report back to you if she's got a complaint or thinks that an employee is not doing a good job she has a right to make sure that everybody's performing their work honestly and uh and doing it according to the rules um I think that that's it that's it all right

MAYOR: thank you Mike

Sure, thank you.

KENDRA: All right we're going to get into the grievance um Kendra, mayor somebody timing the five minutes, or would you like you I'm before I start I just want to say that I have nothing but respect for Mike Winters however I do think that there's a conflict of interest as he's my husband's lawyer as well and has been disclosed information

KENDRA: Good evening I apologize in advance for the length of this statement this in 2 & ½ years of events compiled into one. I hate the nature of this meeting as I'm sure you all do as well and hope not to have to do it for a third time so I want to try to get everything out I would like to start off by noting that all of these acts were done maliciously behind my back never in 3 years as an employee of Carter Lake has an issue with myself or my job performance been brought to me by a council member or the mayor the absence of never being spoken to about negative performances but constantly hearing from citizens employers and employees that I was being talked about by council member Wahl initiated a severe hostile work environment in case of anxiety it is crazy to me that what has started as an issue of playing time three football seasons ago has grown into such a tornado of Destruction here we go three football seasons ago it was my first season in this position as Parks director that season, I went all season without a complaint with an exception for playing time naturally this is the common complaint and I addressed it with the parent and coaches accordingly it was not until after the season was over that I received notice that a coach my husband had cussed while coaching when I was finally notified about it by the parent I addressed the issue put a process Improvement in place to help make sure that a similar situation didn't happen again what should have been the end was only the beginning of a complete hostile takedown attempt over the next several months my husband and I were lied about slandered and mocked Mrs. Wahl attempted to talk negatively about me to my former boss and athletic director at TJ my position with the city in TJ had nothing to do with each other the conversation was told to me that it was nothing but negative talk about myself and my husband thankfully at the time my boss saw it for what it was and shut it down aside from contacting my place of employment she contacted the league director of the football league that the city program played for she told them that not only did I not perform background checks but that I was allowing criminals and a murderer to coach our kids and sent them screenshots of a news headline for those of you that don't know sorry relax my husband was involved in a horrific accident 15 years ago where a young man was accidentally shot those of you that know us are aware of the situation tragically that young man lost his life but not before being able to give his statement to the police officer at the time validating this statement made by my husband ultimately the accident was expunged from my husband's record and he was not charged you will

not find this on his background check because it was ruled what it was a terrible accident this situation although several years ago plagues my husband and I to this day he suffers from PTSD and his own emotions from that night having myself and my husband painted as monsters by Jackie Wahl to others because of the situation caused all of those emotions to come back heavily as well as PTSD responses at the time our 9-year-old son came home from school asking us what a murderer was when we explained a murderer is someone who kills someone intentionally he said at school a kid told him that Jackie Wahl told his mom that his dad Shane was a murderer after these events I filed my first grievance when turned into the mayor I was told that he sent the Letters Out and asked council members to come in for a meeting to address the issues and hopefully work together to resolve them Jackie did not show up to the mayor's request and I was forced to just deal with what happened and continued happening I was finally able to get Jackie to agree having a meeting with me to discuss our differences formal council member K Kesler sat in as a third party witness while we talked at the conclusion of that meeting we both agreed to move forward from this situation I wish I could say that held true the green space I was invited to attend one of the very first green space meetings I could tell the direction of the Green Space was not going to have anything in common with my department at Carter Lake days that Year Jackie was running a poll for the community to vote on what they would like to see there after several of the parents and kids went to vote Jackie was very vocal about being upset that they were voting I went over and asked her what was going on she said all of your people are coming over here and placing all their votes on the kids' Sports options I told her that my people had a right to vote like anyone else this situation got drawn out and stirred up everything once again after that I withdrew myself from Anything Green Space related to avoid any unnecessary negativity when the former Community Center Director was hired I withheld all information between Jackie and myself from her I wanted her to be able to form her own opinion there was a moment that she asked me about Jackie which I thought was weird it wasn't long until she informed me that she had felt targeted by her due to a situation that happened between them I then shared my former grievance with her and she responded that Jackie wasted no time to do nothing but talk negatively about me as she was hired Jackie continued to talk about my husband and I to several employees but never to me never to the mayor and if it happened I was never notified my job at TJ was also contacted again moving forward to the next football season I was notified by the league director that Jackie reached out to him again as a council member asking that our city program not be allowed to play I had a meeting with the director and our differences were reconciled and we played two more seasons with them since after being told that she reached out to the director again the negative things that was said to Sandy other employees and citizens about me I filed a second grievance to try and once again resolve the issue I addressed the council via email and at a meeting although I cannot remember the order of actions I know that the council at one point discussed the ongoing actions and put a policy and probation in place at this meeting Jackie Wahl gave the council an anonymous letter that someone had written her talking negatively about myself and my family the council said that they would not accept Anonymous letters and Jackie refused to disclose who wrote it well last year one of the people that they uh sponsor falsely accused my brother of harassment my brother thankfully won his case but in court this person stated under oath that Jackie Wahl asked him to write this letter he stated Jackie Wahl's name a few times in her requests of him all of which are public documents at the Pottawattamie County Courthouse last summer I was approached by the mayor former Library director and several council members about taking over the community center I was very hesitant to accept because I was at a job that I not only loved but I was appreciated and respected I had a meeting with the mayor two council members and Shannon to discuss the position I stated in that meeting that I was very hesitant to accept because of the experience of ongoing harassment and hostility that I had received from Mrs. Wahl I was assured by council members that I would have their support and that they would help with the situation I accepted the position and unfortunately have been subject to A continuing and a growing hostile work environment I was told by senior center members as well as employees that Jackie told them I was fired from TJ which is absolutely not true the negative environment was already set before I even got a chance to start Jackie also held a center at the event and refused to work with me or provide any communication my employee Nick was forced to be the middle man against his want the Parks Board since transitioning and sitting over the Parks Board four members have been added each time the board recommended the new members I communicated them to the mayor and he requested their appointment to the council with the last appointment after Jackie Wahls has been resigned Jackie proposed that all citizens wanting to sit on a City Board fill out an application you're the time's up I'm sorry I didn't I have three years of things compared to a day I think she should be able to finish all right I would like the council to agree with that yeah let yes finish carry on thank you thank you are you going to extend the other if they don't finish we're going to let them read their statement yes are you going to there's no comments yes we're going to allow them to complete their statement go ahead k um at the council meeting the mayor suggested the appointment

of the two boards coincidentally two males were appointed to the board of adjustments even though they had not filled out Jackie's requested applications and then two Parks Board recommendations were denied due to their gender at the following Workshop discussing the Parks Board it was brought up that they wanted the new parks board members to oppose me since then talks amongst the council has been to rewrite the ordinances and bylaws just for the Parks Board and allowing two citizens to bring our allowing them a vote to bring in two citizens making the Parks Board number nine the focus is continuing to be on the Parks Board and not matched with the other City boards fast forward to recent events which a couple of my employees will give firsthand details to things are getting progressively worse lies are continuously being made up about people but also hostility in the community center between my co-workers is happening Jackie offered one of my employees hours to another employee she has talked about employees and their pay and job concerns to other employees and has offered citizens my employees job even though they still hold it in the most recent event filed false reports with our Police Department in efforts to ruin someone after the last council meeting on March 18th I received a statement from a worker at Jonesy's that Jackie and a group of people met there ironically at that time two false reports were made one against my employee the other one against my family both of these statements have been false and legally dismissed but they just go to show that the malicious and hostile acts are not going to stop they are getting progressively worse she also had a citizen that was in her group meeting challenge my Integrity with the ball fields there is a record of every consistent team that uses the field in their payments however why is this Focus not being placed on Maybre Park and the weekend visitors that it gets from the Nebraska traffic and them be and them not being charged there is a constant focus on a group of kids and their coaches and I cannot figure out why this group of now 11-year-olds give back to their Community more than their Community gives to them they have had it challenged that they are not a Carter Lake team and get misuse of the field they have had their coaches challenged on their integrity and ability to coach they have been turned into their league as not doing things the right way aside from wearing C L proudly on their jerseys they volunteer countless hours within the community and its seniors these kids even tried to personally get Jackie involved with them and went to her house to invite her them to their golf fundraiser to which she replied she didn't golf although Carter Lake has always allowed kids from Omaha and Council BLS to be part of the programs I've included their the team roster in here I won't read it out loud but every kid has affiliation with uh Carter Lake as well as their coaches Shane Hollenbeck Bryce Snipes Jonathan Love Sean Hollenbach and Dale Silick all of which have grown up I was going to Rally everyone that continuously chooses to sign their kid up for Carter Lake programs but I've done that already and quite frankly it's humiliating and I don't want to subject people to the hostility that I have been forced to endure everyone like myself doesn't understand why this continues to happen so I will just provide their statements of support if you'd like in closing up there has to be something said for the people in the city employment who are leaving or have left because of the hostile work environment that they are forced to be in none of us wake up every day wondering what we can do to defy and get one over on the city we wake up working to do our best to make a positive impact on the community of Carter Lake and build strong relationships with its members people that have been passionate about this community your community are leaving because of this I have been front in front of the council before and I'm here again asking you for your help in an area that the city desperately needs its elected leaders to act at this point I have tried everything to rectify this situation I have tried to ignore it I have written emails I have had conversations with council members I have tried to have meetings I have tried to file Grievances and hopes that the mayor and City officials would help I have gone to City Clerks I've moved my kids school districts I have asked our previous City attorney and last month I publicly asked our City attorney for guidance the situation continues to spiral people are having to go to court to prove false allegations my genuine goal in life is to do good things and help others I have been told to get thicker skin and tougher nut however I am who I am and I love that person I'm compassionate I'm generous I'm loving I'm positive and I want the best for everyone my focus and character will not derail from these things just because of what I'm going through but due to my nature of my personality I'm a natural people pleaser and constantly having somebody talk negatively about me my family or inflict hostility over me and how this situation has been handled or hasn't been handled has made me suffer from anxiety talking to other people and even former employees finding out that this is the action that happened until I quit has plagued me I find this to be completely unprofessional and I am over the witch hunts and take down attempts I have made positive changes in my job performance from when I initially started 3 years ago we as city employees are held to job ethics standards and I don't think elected officials should be any different in my opinion the council is a team and you are over the city and I view you as a pyramid what you pour out onto and into others is a direct reflection of the city's success if it really is viewed that the council is the boss then they should operate accordingly at any other place of business if a boss thinks an employee isn't performing to standard they are talked

to they are given a performance plan something they are not talked about targeted slandered and set out to be destroyed the council's role for city employees should be to support us and offer constructive criticism when needed in my 2 and a half years as the youth sports and recreation coordinator I have taken what consisted of t-ball coach pitch baseball and one softball team and have grown it into 19 program teams for the baseball and softball season I have added competitive baseball, flag football, T football, cheerleading, basketball, and what I hoped would be golf. Although that correspondence has stopped since taking over the community center 8 months ago. With the help of my amazing team, we started in July with 160 members and since then the community center has reached over 800 members. We have started successful programming for every single age demographic in Carter Lake; as well as a successful group fitness program where we were able to help a local business; My focus through all of this has never been taken off my goal to positively impact people. I was called to lead and despite what you may think, I am qualified to do so in a positive way. I strive every day to provide people with a great experience in my departments; my heart and passion is in serving my community. I believe I bring a lot of positive direction and aspects to my position. However, I will not continue to accept this position if ongoing harassment and slander is part of my job description as well as a hostile work environment caused by a council member. I am a team player and I hope that city officials would be as well. So, I'll leave you with this, if you've been affiliated with councilwoman Wahl, ask yourself, how many times my name, my family's name or my departments have been brought up and see if my grievances are just. I have made every attempt to get this malicious behavior to stop. This is my final attempt; I am mentally and emotionally exhausted and I just want peace. I wish I could give you the reason why this is gone on so long, I myself have asked many times without an answer the only thing I can say for certain is that I will do anything literally anything my life my husband's life and my children's lives have been turned upside down here is how desperate I am if you tell the mayor tonight that you don't want me in my positions and that is why I have been forced to live through this if you can tell him that you will forget my name my family's names and promise to forget that I ever existed I'll Sprint for the door and I won't turn back you may think that that sounds exaggerated but after living through the turmoil and hostility that I have for two and a half years I'm desperate um I would like to enter into evidence a statement written by former uh Library director Shannon Putney

KENDRA READS STATEMENT: I hope this letter finds you well my name is Shannon Putney and I served as the library director at the Carter Lake Public Library from April 1st 2022 to March 15th 2024 it is with a heavy heart that I write to address several concerns that have deeply troubled me during my tenure as you are aware collaboration between city entities and the library is essential to ensure the provision of resources in programs benefiting our community members regardless of their socioeconomic political racial sexual age or religious backgrounds however regrettably the Dynamics between the city leadership in myself compelled me to Tender my resignation throughout my time in Carter Lake I encountered challenges in navigating the professional relationship with certain members of the city council notably Mrs. Jackie Wahl while I understand the importance of cooperation I found myself consistently undermined and subjected to unwarranted interference despite my efforts to maintain professionalism and focus on enhancing Library Services I faced persistent attempts from Mrs. Wahl to involve me in personal agendas and projects unrelated to the core mission of the library furthermore I must express my dismay at the unprofessional conduct displayed by Mrs. Wahl particularly her derogatory remarks towards myself and others during discussions regarding Community projects such as the Green Space initiative such behavior not only undermines collaborative efforts but also Fosters an environment of exclusion and divisiveness moreover the baseless rumors and unjustified criticism of my performance orchestrated by Mrs. Wahl and propagated by individuals such as the library board president further EXA exacerbated the UN the working conditions that I was forced to work in the undue stress and anxiety caused by these actions including unfounded threats of dismissal were detrimental to both of my professional well-being and the overall morale of the library staff while I acknowledge that conflicts may arise in any professional setting the persistent harassment and hostile environment fostered by Mrs. Wahl and her Associates have crossed the boundaries of acceptable conduct it is disheartening to witness the misuse of authority and propagation of false narratives for personal gain especially with the realm of Public Service everyone deserves to work in a safe and supportive environment that is free from harassment and other inappropriate behavior in conclusion I wish to convey my gratitude to those individuals within Carter Lake community and city government who did support and appreciate my efforts during my time regardless I could no longer reconcile my commitment to serving the community while working in a toxic environment perpetrated by certain members of the city leadership if I had any regrets it's that I didn't know that I could file a complaint against Mrs. Wahl and others into the Iowa State and Pottawattamie County equal employment opportunity office on the basis of harassment however I can only hope that this letter will serve as a catalyst for reflection and dialogue within the city council regarding the

importance of fostering a respectful and collaborative work environment for all city employees I'm optimistic that those within City leadership will begin to see that a toxic work environment doesn't only affect the employees but the community as a whole and therefore choose to make a positive change to ensure the future will bring prosperity and well-being to the cake Community thank you for your attention in this matter.

Shannon Putney

MAYOR: Thank you, Kendra.

Thank you      thank you      thank you      thank you.

MAYOR: The next employee Laurie

Today, Mayor, City Council and Attorney, Carter Lake Citizens I am here to discuss disagreements I have with Mrs. Wahl. I am confident most of you took time to review the grievance I provided dated March 20th. I want to take the opportunity to provide the facts and the background and clarify any misunderstanding surrounding the situation which led to my grievance against council member Wahl. It is time the council heard the facts from the employees who become the next Target for speaking out against Miss Wahl Miss Wahl's Mis misinformation and deceptions Wednesday March 13th councilwoman Wahl came tuned to City Hall to review and sign off on accounts payable checks as part of her responsibilities as a council member Miss Wahl called me the into the conference room two or three times to ask questions about checks miss Wahl also stated she did not understand how my pay was figured for working at Carter Lake Community Center I tried to the best of my ability to exp to explain the process but miss Wahl was not able to comprehend my explanation I called the deputy clerk who was taking a vacation date and the deputy K clerk also attempted to explain the pay and the reason the pay was in in place I was disturbed by Mrs. Wahl's sudden interest in my pay since Miss Wahl had approved my pay raises without question for the past four years the city council receives recommendations from both of my supervisors city clerk Jackie Carl and Carter Lake Community Center Director Kendra Hollenbeck when I was offered the second position at the community center I took the opportunity to provide extra income to support my single person household therefore since the that time the conversation this conversation took place I have had an ongoing sense of anxiety and misgiving that Miss Wahl is going to attempt to remove me from the job that I've have grown to depend on financially at the community center Thursday March 14th my supervisor Jackie Wahl was discussing the workshop with me I asked to review that video from the public Workshop it was an open meeting and it was recorded after reviewing the video I felt the need to provide a link for the recording of the council Workshop to the employees who wished to view it and to be informed what was being discussed by the council later that day councilwoman Wahl called me at City Hall to inform me the council had not discussed my w Wes at the workshop however my wages or my salary still needed to be discussed by the council during that phone call I thanked Mrs. Wahl for letting me know and I asked her why she wanted to reduce benefits for employees Mrs. Wahl became verbally defensive and upset raising her voice and yelling at me Mrs. Wahl told me she was tired of people talking about her behind her back I replied I was not talking about you behind back I shared a public video with my co-workers I was honest and informed Mrs. Wahl exactly what I had told the other city employees if I were talking about Mrs. Wahl behind her back or had something to hide I would not have disclosed that information to miss Wahl I have nothing to hide it was a public Workshop during this phone call Mrs. Wahl began yelling at me and I asked why are you yelling at me we were having a conversation and Miss Wahl was escalating conversation into an argument this conversation became verbal or very hostile and it affected me the rest of the week was difficult to concentrate and work for the rest of that day the morning of March or Monday March 18th Kendra my supervisor from the city uh Carter Lake City Community Center came to City Hall to let me and the city clerk no of a disturbing phone call the senior center coordinator di Diane Moncion had received from councilwoman Wahl. Kendra relayed that Wahl had called Diane the previous week and asked if Diane wanted to go full time by taking on my hours at the community center Mrs. Wahl also shared that I was under investigation because I was not working a complete 40-hour work week. Diane declined the offers saying she knew Lori needed those hours and that Diane did not want a full-time position Miss Wahl called Diane a second time to let Diane know she could should keep this conversation between the two of them Diane will expand on this in her statement moving into on to the evening of March 18th city council meeting I came to the council meeting after closing at um the community center wanting to hear the discussion on the agenda item clarification of Staff wages but after I arrived I found out that councilman Skinner had removed the item from the agenda after the council meeting I heard that me council members Wahl and Grill were having a discussion in Chambers with the city attorney concerning benefits I then went

into the chambers to hear what was being said in councilman GR said to me Jackie is not trying to take away employee benefits I went closer to where they were talking and I said you mean the same Jackie Wahl is or I went closer to where they were talking and I said you mean the same way Jackie Wahl is not trying to get rid of my hours at the community center Wahl said that's not true and gr said he would like to hear more about Jackie trying to take away my hours at the community center so I relayed details to grill of what I have been told about the phone call councilwoman Wahl had placed to Diane Monon targeting my community center position I want to point out that Jackie Wahl specifically asked Diane to keep the conversation between themselves because for obvious reasons this information couldn't come from Jackie Wahl and the and that councilman Jacob Hanika would be calling Diane to discuss for fur councilwoman Wahl continued to not deny the phone calls and statements made during that call I asked Diane to step into the council chambers to confirm the facts that about that phone call and Diane confirmed Miss Wahl had called her twice to discuss my hours and position at the community center present during this exchange were my adult children, Diane Moncion, Kendra Hollenbach, Keebie Kessler, Mayor Cumberlandge, Councilman Hanika, Grell and Wahl, City Clerk Carl and City attorney Levy. This discussion after the council meeting caused a great amount of anxiety and stress for me and my children according to conversations had by other co-workers who were present during this exchange it affected them also, I know because some complained of headaches, nausea and anxiety for days after this meeting.

Tuesday, March 19th, the morning after the council meeting. I received information that the Saturday evening prior to the council meeting Ms. Wahl had sent out several internet links about my past to at least one city council member and most likely to all the city council members. I had to ask myself if this is public information already, it was disclosed before I was hired, what was Mrs. Wahl's intention of dragging up my past from seven years ago to share with others? I believe Councilwoman Wahl acted with malicious intentions to tarnish my reputation and bring embarrassment to me personally. and it was a direct result of the hostile discussion Ms. Wahl, and I had on the phone regarding my decision to share the workshop video with fellow co-workers. Ms. Wahl was quite angry during the phone call and sharing this information about my past was an attempt to discredit me of being unworthy for dual positions within the city and clear retaliation for notifying my co-workers of the city council workshop video in which I openly shared with my fellow co-workers to keep them informed about what benefits were being discussed at the public city council Workshop the phone calls and sending of the links were part of a vindictive and malicious attempt to Target me for speaking out against her during the phone call to Diane in addition there was no truth to any of what councilwoman Wahls told Diane about me being under investigation this type of behavior from a person in leadership is unprofessional and not productive for anyone it has it has caused daily anxiety and has created a hostile work Environ environment for me at both jobs I am targeted by councilwoman Wahl because I work in for Kendra Hollenbeck because before this I was friendly with Miss Wahl and we just discussed politics and I even attended an event with Jackie Dr. Mercher speak. My understanding of our hit is my direct supervisor or the mayor May reprimand me or investigate me for poor job performance this has never happened to me while working at City Hall as the city clerk for over four years nor have I been reprimanded or written up while working under my supervisor at the community center I'm a great employee and I keep a good work working relationship with my co-workers I facilitate communication between all departments at City Hall and the community center I am at my job on time every day working with the public is a pleasure for me it is my personality to want to help people and laugh and joke with them over the last four years I have met and know many of the residents who I see on a regular basis they are Pleasant and I and a joy to work with and talk with all the drama insinuations malicious rumors have taken a physical and mental toll on me I feel anxious and it is difficult to sleep I it has created a hostile work environment at City Hall and at the community center staff are on edge and this needs to stop as the city council I'm asking you to listen and respect what I have brought before you tonight act on what is reported to you and to do the right thing because it is the right thing to do.

MAYOR: Thank you, Lauri.

Thank you      thank you      thank you.

MAYOR: The next employee would be Diane.

First, I'd like to say good evening to the council members and for those who don't know me my name is Diane Moncion. I am a resident of Carter Lake and I currently serve as the senior coordinator at the Carter Lake Community Center. Before I begin my statement, I would like to preface by saying that prior to this incident when I exposed Mrs.

Wahl as a malicious liar, we had no issue. Although I heard things, I never experienced it myself from her. She even invited me to personal gatherings. obviously I was not aware of her despicable character, but can now empathize with others. on February 26th, 2024, around 8:30 a.m. I received an incoming phone call from a number I didn't recognize. when I answered and she began speaking, I asked who I was talking to because it was a very bubbly person. she just responded Jackie. she asked me what I wanted in the upcoming July budget. I didn't understand what she was talking about, so I asked what she was referring to. Jackie then said she wanted to know what I was wanting as far as benefits and pay. I told her I would like a pay raise of course and would like to be able to accrue time off for illness and vacation. she then asked me if I was were interested in working full-time and I explained to her that fulltime in the state of Iowa is 32 hours and I was almost meeting those hours. she asked me if I wanted to work 40 hours because she was going to have Lauri's hours at the community center taken away. she then said Lauri was also being investigated to see if she was even working a full 40 hours at City Hall. I quickly and assertively said NO I did not want Lauri's hours and that I knew after establishing a relationship with her that she needed her position and ours. She responded okay I will see what I can do. the call ended almost as soon as we hung up my phone rang again. the same number it was Jackie. when I answered the phone she asked me please do not repeat this conversation to anybody she said the actions couldn't be in her name so Jacob would be calling me later today or tomorrow. I didn't know who Jacob was and I'm sorry I still don't know who Jacob is. Sorry, I already felt uncomfortable with the nature of the call but this response from her made me extremely confused and extremely uncomfortable. I wrestled with what to do with this phone call for several days. there was a period of time I was extremely upset and it was directed at my boss Kendra after the nature of Jackie's call. I was convinced that not only did Kendra not include me or my wants in her budget proposal but I was wondering what was going on with Lauri and why. it is important to note this began creating a hostile work environment after several days, more events began to unfold. Kendra had talked about her budget proposal to the council, go that it was going great, and to my surprise and confusion it included me. we were also notified that Jackie Wahl had begun questioning the other council members about City employee benefits and possibly minimizing them. it was shortly after that that the malicious act of Jackie Wahl sending around Lauri's background to paint a negative picture of her happened. I was also notified that perhaps Jackie Wahl spoke to Linda Tice's husband and offered her old job back; which is my job.

Rick Tice: That's a lie.

I wondered how it was even possible for her to do that.

Rick Tice: that's a lie hey

I began to wonder if Jackie did this because I didn't go along with her on her plan she called me with. I knew I needed to tell someone about the phone call I received from her and I told Kendra the day before the last council meeting on March 18th 2024. I attended the city council meeting. after the meeting I was standing in the doorway of the chambers when I overheard Lauri talking to Jackie Wahl and Lauri was questioning her on things she said to me. I heard Jackie state she never called me so I went into the chambers and stated that she absolutely did call me. this led to a necessary exchange of stories and everything was now being brought to light. I am confident had the conversation not happened in the nature it did Jackie would continue lying about the situation she created. Afterwards myself, Kendra, Risa, the City attorney, Lauri and her two kids walked out of City Hall on the sidewalk. We asked the attorney if it was certain there was nothing that could be done about City officials being unethical. at this time Jackie Wahl walked outside and everyone dispersed to go to their vehicles. I noticed she was just sitting in her car, so I walked to Kendra's car. I told Kendra I was going to wait by her car because Jackie was just sitting in her car and I didn't feel comfortable going to my car. after a few minutes Kendra said she would walk me to my car. which she did and stood in between my car and Jackie and watched me get in she said good night. I backed out and left. the next morning a Carter Lake police officer came to the community center and said I needed to write a statement for an incident that happened last night involving Jackie Wahl and her vehicle. Kendra and I were extremely confused. he then said Jackie filed a report that Mr. grell witnessed saying that I had aggressively slammed my SUV driver side door into her passenger side door so hard that it shook her vehicle. But two City officials were lying and filing false reports that were intended to damage myself and my reputation. I firmly believe this malicious action was because of the confrontation that just happened at the meeting since the meeting I have had several members that I serve that that I serve come into the community center and say that they were told by Jackie that I attacked her vandalized her vehicle and even punched her in the face from this disc from this distance I was ex that I punch her in the okay not only has this entire situation affected me personally but has it affected my job members are viewing me

differently and some members didn't even attend their normal Bingo because of this when I go to bed at night this is the last thought in my mind I wake up thinking about it and it's the first thought when I wake up I have served as a nurse I have volunteered in third world countries and I'm an active member of my church I have worked my entire life building myself as a woman of character and integrity this situation has compromised both because of Jackie's lies and malicious unfounded accusations but I want to leave you with this what was the reasoning for Jackie saying to keep our phone conversation a secret and push it off onto Jacob how can Jackie offer me someone else's hours when she is not my boss how can Jackie say she is launching an investigation as against a city employee without their supervisors knowing how can Jackie give the job that I currently hold to someone else if I were to act actually do this horrific action that two city council members are saying they experienced in the police department parking lot why was this not addressed immediately why would both council members not get out of their car and address me with multiple people present and a gain in the police department parking lot instead they chose to drive to Jones's and have a meeting then file multiple false claims I have included a copy of the police report for you to read the reason why it was unfounded and dismissed is because the damage on her car did not match up to the story they fabricated it didn't match up because it did not happen I have been forced to work in a hostile environment for the past several weeks because of the purposeful and malicious acts by Jackie Wahl I should not be forced to do it any longer and have to worry about the retaliation to come

DIANE READS STATEMENT: I would now like to read a statement from Chief Ken Kennedy. He was patrolling the city in late February and early March when he stopped at the corner of 11th Street and Doreen Avenue Rick Tice was out in his driveway at that location. We began to talk about a few different things, during his conversation Rick asked me what was going on with the city? I stated that I didn't know what he meant; then he stated that a city councilman called his wife Linda and asked if she wanted her old job back; he then stated that he told her told Linda to stay clear of the whole thing; when I asked what councilman he stated that he was not going to mention any names.

Now I'd like to read a deposition from Chelsea.

RICK TICE: I'll have a few words here.

MAYOR: hey Josh handle that please

MAYOR: go ahead Diane.

DIANE READS STATEMENT: This is from Chelsea in the library. After two fulfilling years as assistant director at the Carter Lake Library I have made the heartbreaking decision to resign. I saw firsthand the potential of the library and watched it grow from a construction site into a location where kids gather to hang out after school and families come in to play and get books however the Relentless stress and hostility from certain council members have made it unbearable to continue working here has been a roller coaster of emotions I've seen firsthand how councilmen have targeted not only the library director but also other community Center directors and department heads the constant fear of being the next Target waiting for the ax to fall has taken a toll on my mental health and well-being as my spouse and I prepare to start a family I cannot shake the fear of being pregnant in such a hostile environment every day feels like I'm waiting for the next attack like a Sitting Duck with no means of defense I refuse to be a Sitting Duck in an environment where personal attacks and baseless criticism of the norm despite pouring my heart and soul into this job it's become clear that there's no protection or recourse against the toxic behavior of those in power the absence of an HR department Human Resources leaves us vulnerable with no re recourse against the abuse of power by those in positions of authority it pains me deeply to leave behind the incredible community and my amazing co-workers but I refuse to sacrifice my well-being and that of my future family any longer I leave with a heavy heart grateful for the meaningful experiences and relationships I've built here but also with a sense of relief knowing that I am prioritizing my own mental health and happiness thank you Diane thank you

Jackie Wahl: can I defend myself?

Mayor: No

MAYOR: Lisa you are next.

LISA: Thank you, okay, this is hard, so bear with me okay. I'm speaking today because I feel as a deputy city clerk I should speak up for our employees we have a real issue here and unfortunately we do not have a traditional HR department City Clerk and I do our best but we do not have the authority to address the issues that are being presented this is not an attack on council member Yaki Wahl we're not out to get her we truly want her to understand the environment she has created for all the employees although I have not been a target of council member Wahl I have witnessed the effect her um actions have on others her harassment has affected my job and my department there is constant stress anxiety and tension and then there's that feeling of waiting on pins and needles to see what she will do next never knowing if she will Target you or not the last couple of months there have been questions from Council Members regarding Lor's hourly wage in overtime at the community center even though the calculation of her wage was explained several times they continued to be questioned one day while on vacation I received a call from Lori and council member Wahl Lori asked me to help her explain her wage and hours at the community center after explaining the calculation of Lor's wages the council member started asking about the job description and why Lor's wage was higher than the other employee that worked the same job Lori was originally sent to the community center to help out after the former department head had resigned with no notice Lori continues to work there because of her experience and is an asset since she also works at City Hall council member Wahl argued that Lori should not be paid more than the wage the wage range listed on the job description although it is not set it's not a set wage she ALS also argued that the job description should be changed obviously Miss Wahl was more concerned about Lori being paid a higher wage than the other front desk employee who is also a good friend of council member Wahl if council member Wahl had an issue she should say what the real issue is instead of going around behind everybody instead she is creating Havoc within the two departments and now she is targeting Lori and supposedly there's an investigation going on council member Wahl also took it upon herself to call a former employee and asked them if they would like their job back at the community or at the senior center she also contacted a current employee at the senior center asking if they wanted to take over Lor's hours this is not council member Wahl's responsibility it is also unethical for an elected official to ignore proper procedures to gain an advantage for their friends or others council member W member Wahl also retaliates against anyone who confronts her for any reason if she is put on the spot she will say she never said that she didn't do that or she will blame somebody else even though she has been reprimanded in the past she continues her harassment of employees and attempts to undermine department heads creating a hostile work environment I have worked here for 29 years and this is the first time I have ever filed a grievance but I feel something needs to be done her behavior has gone too far she does things that are unnecessary and just plain malicious and I also want to make clear Jackie Carl is my boss if you have an issue with me you go to the mayor and if there's any retaliation after tonight it's going to be reported and I also think that if you guys don't do anything I think we should start coming to the council meetings every month and giving you a report of everything she's doing because that's not right

Thank you, Lisa.

next will be Jackie Wahl

JACKIE: What I would like to see is a chance to go through all this because there were a lot of false statements that were made so that I don't even know where to start there's so many things that were said that were false tonight but I will read what I had planned and hopefully I'll have that chance to do that at a later time

During the six years while serving as a council woman I've taken pride in the changes that have occurred in Carter Lake by helping to improve the infrastructure safety and increasing Outreach programs and activities now my reputation is in Jeopardy due to some false accusations targeting me I'm committed to working with the other council members to resolve these issues as quickly and effectively as possible over the past years I've made myself available to Citizens responding to their questions and concerns I've researched and reviewed the Iowa code and city

ordinances and provided opinions related to the city employee hiring practices stress Financial accountability and advised and made recommendations relevant to diverse representation on boards and commissions I've refined the job descriptions over the last few years and try to get the council to consider standardized reviews with ranges and tools to address performances of employees I served on the committee to hire and work with the project managers and Architects for the new community center I've written the I wrote the RFP for hiring a grant writer and worked with her over the last two years to help secure Grant funds I helped organize and facilitate two annual activities that are inclusive of all citizens and age group groups the pollinator workshop and the winter festival which have grown in attendance and volunteer participation each year I solicited donations for outdoor the holiday outdoor lighting displays and the light pole decorations I supported and volunteered at numerous community events I've written over 75 letters to Children annually from Santa each year I started several SP Sports programs including the ladies golf league kayaking and coed volleyball at the Improvement Center this partially shows my active participation and commitment while providing the city of Carter Lake fair and reasonable decision making to ensure our community continues in a positive and forward growth pattern toward being a great place to live I appreciate all the citizens who have given me their support by their presence this evening and the those in the past in conclusion I want to reiterate that the allegations against me most of what I heard tonight was not true and I'd like the chance to show that and prove that I'm grateful for the opportunity to challenge inconsistencies within the city government and hold officials and employees accountable for the decisions they make finally I'm thankful for the opportunity to defend myself and I look forward to continuing my work on the city council with dignity and the respect that I deserve in my role is that it.

MAYOR: What's the council's pleasure here want to talk about it here you want to go into executive session it is your call.

I think we should go into Executive session so if you want to do that, we need a motion a second and then a roll call vote.

GRELL: I have a question is Jackie uh Carl required to be in there like I asked you in the email and you never responded I'm advising that she is not required to be in there that your motion to go to Executive session second roll call please Aaron yes Jacob yes Jason yes Victor yes Jackie yes

LISA: so are you going to take the minutes Aaron I recording does that mean the employees are that sorry what was the question to discuss Personnel matters that person should be in that meeting yes I disagree okay the council can hold an executive session to discuss Personnel matters are you recording this session a Aaron's he'll take minutes all executive sessions are supposed to be recorded can you my question would be then can you record the session I can't keep it third party so there I'll record it you can't discuss a person I believe so your question you have a statutory need a motion to come out of exe I'll make a motion to come out of executive session second roll call please Jacob yes Jason yes Victor yes Jackie yes Aaron yes what's the council's pleasure on the action yeah so we are going to implement a third party investigation through the this is a motion making a motion to do it you're making a motion making a motion to do a third party investigation and also Implement HR training and process and procedures internally I'll second that motion roll call please Jason go yes Victor yes Jackie yes Aaron yes Jacob yes something else all that's on the agenda go ahead oh no you would read that portion that we're going to abide by um sure so from the city of Carter Lake governing body official policies chapter 2 section two section 3B city of Carter Lake governing body of official policies chapter 2 Section 3B says council members should never express concern about the performance of a city employee in public to the employee directly or to the employee supervisor all right is there a motion to adjourn motion to adjourn thanks for coming out guys