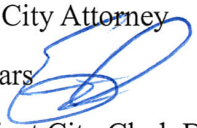


MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 1, 2023

TO: Members of City Council  
Randy Jorgenson, City Manager  
Alex Andrade, City Attorney

FROM: Edward E. Spears 

RE: Complaint against City Clerk Dawn Molinero

I became a candidate for the City Manager of the City of Milton on May 26, 2023, via an email submission of my credentials to City HR Director Dana Barger at 11:11 a.m. Since that time, the City of Milton has become a hostile workplace with one employee seeking retaliation against me due to a disagreement over a City policy. This employee, the City Clerk Mrs. Dawn Molinero, has set out a course of harassment, discrimination and open acts of revenge and sabotage to ensure that I not only do not get the City Manager position, but also lose my position with the City. Prior to her actions being revealed to me, I believed we enjoyed a wonderfully productive, professional working relationship and friendship. Obviously, this was not the case as will be detailed below. The formerly great relationship is completely and permanently destroyed by her actions and there can be no level of trust ever reestablished. I am documenting the information below to protect me from further retaliation from Mrs. Molinero and her friends both inside and outside of the City who conducted a very public attack on my integrity, honor, and reputation for the sole purpose of sabotaging my candidacy, attempting to cost me my position with the City and besmirch my reputation hoping to impact future employment opportunities. Not only that, but the situation has caused a major rift amongst a formerly cohesive staff who know what transpired and are unsure how to proceed.

On June 15, 2023, the Milton City Council held a Special Meeting to narrow the field of candidates for Milton City Manager. That morning, Mrs. Dawn Molinero, Milton City Clerk asked for my help in creating a spreadsheet that could tally the votes. She stated that she did not know how to create a spread sheet with automatic formulas. I was happy to assist her. Computer records show the excel spread sheet was created at 10:25 a.m. that day. I emailed the spreadsheet to Mrs. Molinero at 10:45 a.m. Mrs. Molinero provided the nine names that are seen on the spreadsheet. When I checked with her to show her how the spreadsheet worked, she informed me that the Mayor rejected the spreadsheet. She stated the Mayor was concerned I would embed hidden formulas that could, in some way, give me additional votes or manipulate the results to increase my standing in the competition.

At this meeting and other public meetings, Mayor Lindsay touted our high school friendship but states she did not rank me or think I should advance in the City Manager selection process due to the fact that I have never been a city manager before. She actually scratched through my name on the ranking sheet leaving me unranked when she could have ranked me last. However, she ranked Mr. Chad Morris of Crestview 7th out of 10 ahead of other candidates who were or have been city managers. Mr. Morris has never been a city manager and has only been an assistant city manager since February 2023. He was the IT and Purchasing director prior. He has never led a department that served the public. Only internal customers. Councilwoman Farrow also left me off her ballot all together and she ranked Mr. Morris, who has never been a City Manager as her top choice. I believe that the Mayor and Councilwoman Farrow were trying to mathematically manipulate the ranking results. However, by not ranking me, they actually elevated the value of the other votes by lowering the number

divided into each cumulative total. I ranked first in overall average ranking score and first in # of first place votes. Mr. Collins ranked third in average score and received only one first place vote.

	Cusack	Farrow	Hawthorne	Jarrett	Meiss	Powell	Snow	Vance	Lindsay	Average	# 1st Place Votes
John Barkley			8	8		2	8	2	6	5.6666667	0
Howard Brown			9	9	8		4	6	3	6.5	0
Scott Collins	2	2	1	10	4	7	2	3	2	3.6666667	1
Jim Drumm		4	7	5	2	8	9	1	4	5	1
Mike McGlothlin	8	6	6	7	6		7	8	8	7	0
Chad Morris	9	1	2	2	5	1	5		7	4	2
Ed Spears	7		3	1	1	4	1	5		3.1428571	3
Rober Zienkowski	1	3		6		6	3		1	3.3333333	2

This was the beginning of the overt efforts to ensure that I was not selected as the new City Manager. It should also be noted that Mr. Jorgenson advised me that the City Attorney would be instructing the Mayor that she should not have ranked the candidates and was not a part of the selection process. Eight (8) individuals, including myself, were selected to go forward in the process.

At either the City Council meeting on June 13, 2023, or the Agenda Workshop on June 22, 2023, immediately at the conclusion of the meeting, I witnessed Mrs. Pam Mitchell distributing sealed manilla envelopes to each City Council Member and staff on the dais. I am unable to recall which meeting, however it has to be one or the other as Mrs. Mitchell's name is on the sign-in sheets, and I was at both meetings. I would also note that the contents of the envelope do not appear in the published record of either meeting event though a package was provided to the City Clerk. While helping Mrs. Molinaro clean up after the meeting, I asked what was in the envelope. She stated she didn't know. I predicted it was an, "Anyone But Ed" package hit piece attacking my candidacy for City Manager. I was correct. The next day, both Mrs. Molinero and the City Manager Randy Jorgenson were markedly unhappy with what was provided. I requested a copy of the contents of the envelope from Mrs. Molinero to which she replied, "I just threw it away". She then retrieved the materials from a garbage can. I am unsure why she threw away a public record she was provided by a citizen. She may have scanned the document, but she did not indicate that she could email me the document and instead dug it out of the garbage and provided it to me. In a later discussion with the City Manager, he stated that it "wasn't that bad" and was "not much". I advised that I didn't want to read it unless I didn't get the job, as it was irrelevant to me. He asked me to read it and provide rebuttal information. The only item other than a letter from Milton's Concerned Citizens was a blog article written by Mr. Rick Outzen of the InWeekly. It was the first post when I was terminated for convenience from the City of Pensacola. It speculated on several aspects of the situation. I provided printouts to Mr. Jorgenson from later articles from Mr. Outzen that state, unequivocally, that "Mr. Spears did nothing wrong and did not deserve to be fired". Mr. Jorgenson said, "Council needs to see this. That one sentence needs to be highlighted and the first thing they see". I did as instructed and created packets for each council member with the articles that detailed what transpired and highlighted the statement of innocence. I left the packets on Mr. Jorgenson's chair. I do not know what he did with the packets. I cannot provide the packet from Mrs. Mitchell, as it was removed by someone, at some time, from my desk. It is a public record and should be available by request of the City Clerk.

Following the identification of the eight candidates, Mrs. Dawn Molinero, came to my office and asked me to research the 7 other candidates. She provided me with a list of the candidates. I advised her that I was uncomfortable doing that. She stated that "Randy (City Manager Randy Jorgenson) instructed you to do it, so do it". As two of the three Charter Officers of the City were requesting it, I completed the requested research within a couple of hours prior to lunch and turned over a blue folder with the results to Mrs. Molinero. When I provided Mrs. Molinero with the results, I stated that I did not appreciate the assignment and didn't want anything to do with it. Mrs. Molinero took possession of the folder. I do not know what she did with it or the contents. As a public record, she should have the folder and all of the contents. I do know that the folder was

at least shared with Mr. Jorgenson, as he referenced the humorous assessment I wrote of me as a candidate I included as a lark. It stated, "Overweight. Can be an asshole at times." Mr. Jorgenson, in a phone call, stated jokingly that he agreed with my assessment of myself. It is my belief that Mrs. Molinero and Mr. Jorgenson wanted to "level the playing field" and directly counter the actions and accusations of Mrs. Mitchell by providing all or selected councilmembers with information on other candidates.

At some point in time between me leaving work on June 30 and returning on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, someone placed a sign on my desk. It reads, "E Spears Memorial Treatment Plant Dedicated July 1, 2023, East Milton, Florida". The image on the sign depicts what I believe to be a slip latrine and two soldiers. I did not know what this was in reference to or what it meant. I do not know who created the sign or who placed it on my desk. The word "Memorial" is telling, in that a memorial is for the dead. After learning of the events carried out by Mrs. Molinero later that day, the sign took on a new meaning. I would note that Mrs. Molinero was a chief in the United States Navy.

Up to this time, Mrs. Molinero openly and actively supported me for the position of City Manager. To the point of writing me a letter of recommendation that was included with my application package for the job. This all changed on Friday, June 30, 2023. Mrs. Molinero and I engaged in a spirited, but professional disagreement regarding the providing presentation slides prior to actually making the presentations. The issue began with an email from Mrs. Molinero at 7:45 a.m. on June 30. We had a discussion and I asked her to confirm with the City Manager. He sent me a text message at 8:37 a.m. instructing me to provide the presentation to the Clerk. His text seemed lighthearted at the time. It stated, "Get the presentation to Dawn ASAP and try to be nice. It would be really smart of you." I responded at 8:39 a.m., "I'm working it. We've never provided presentations in advance of making them. We can discuss next week sometime. I'm always nice. (smiley face, smiley face)". He responded "Ge'er done. Thanks" at 9:06 a.m. I responded at 9:19 a.m. "it's done". He responded at 9:19 a.m., "Great". Email communication between Mrs. Molinero and I for the remainder of June 30 through the time I was informed of her actions on July 3<sup>rd</sup> show our usual and customary cordial, professional tone, and interactions. I was advised by Mr. Jorgenson that Mrs. Molinero had, in a fit of rage, informed him that I embarrassed her in our disagreement and that I was a liar, and she was going to withdraw her letter of recommendation. He stated that he was able to "get her off the ledge". Apparently after reflection over the weekend, she had a change of heart and sent an email to the Mayor and City Council withdrawing her letter of recommendation at 8:49 a.m. Monday, July 3, 2023.

Subsequent discussions with the City Manager confirmed that my interpretation of the disagreement with the City Clerk correct. In fact, there was a Special Called meeting for Saturday July 22, 2023, in which no purpose of the meeting, agenda or background documentation has been provided. Due to the project in question and the sensitive nature of the information and community opposition, led by Mrs. Mitchell, Mr. Jorgenson and the City Clerk and Mayor have all agreed not to provide any information until the last possible minute. During our disagreement over providing a simple presentation in advance, one of Mrs. Molinero's objections was that I was not being transparent. Yet here we have a prime example of the City Clerk doing exactly what she accused me of doing. This exact project and purpose for the meeting was the prime example I used when discussing this matter with the City Manager and which he agreed with me.

Following the disagreement on June 30, 2023, Mrs. Molinero set out to get her revenge and retaliate against me. Mrs. Molinero, on July 3, 2023, sent an email to the Mayor and City Council accusing me of exhibiting behavior of such a nature that it caused her to withdraw her letter of support. I did not get the promotion. Mrs. Molinero did not have the courage to tell me of her actions. I found out about her email to Council from an outside third party, as news of her cowardly act spread quickly. Her actions have caused a major riff amongst the staff at City Hall, as many have openly expressed disgust at what she did and how she went about it. On either July 12 or 13<sup>th</sup>, I, along with Mrs. Molinero, was called into the City Manager's Office. He started the

meeting by stating that he would be the only one talking and we were to listen and not speak. He stated that the tension in the building was palpable, and that everyone knew what had transpired. The City Manager instructed both of us to work together professionally and try to repair the damage that had been done to a once great working relationship.

The relationship was further damaged on Thursday, July 13, 2023, when I was notified via email that the Mrs. Molinero, knowingly and willfully violated the chain of custody of public records that she was not the custodian of, nor designated by the custodian to assist with providing.

Sometime on July 5, 6 or 7<sup>th</sup>, she did knowingly and willfully enter my office, open a closed file cabinet, and remove an unknown number of the files for the City's Commercial Façade Program. It is assumed she removed more than one, as the email from Mrs. Molinero admitting to this event states, "files". She states that she copied and scanned the files providing them for Mrs. Theresa Messick. She also admits in her email to violating City Policy by not charging Mrs. Messick for her time spent copying said files. I was on approved leave and was out of town, but was reachable by cell phone, text, or email at all times. A delay until I returned on July 10 would not have been an unusual or lengthy delay rising to the level of failing to produce a public record in a timely manner. Also, by contacting me, the custodian of the records, I could have designated someone to copy the files. Given the events of July 3<sup>rd</sup>, detailed above, I would not have chosen Mrs. Molinero.

Mrs. Molinero claims she advised Mr. Randy Jorgenson, City Manager, that she was taking this action. Mr. Jorgenson is also not the custodian nor designee of the custodian of the records. Mr. Jorgenson is also not Mrs. Molinero's supervisor and could not grant her permission. Mrs. Molinero acted unilaterally. Mrs. Molinero was not supervised while she removed the files and copied/scanned the documents.

Mrs. Molinero claims she was fulfilling a public records request that the custodian was aware of and did not provide. I was aware that a public records request had been made and provided a cost estimate and timeline for Mrs. Molinero to communicate to the requestor. The requestor never approved the cost and therefore, the records were not provided. Mrs. Molinero colluded with the requestor to circumvent the City's policy for providing public records and paying the associated costs in direct violation of her duty as City Clerk. The email admitting to this action from Mrs. Molinero also states that Mrs. Messick paid for the costs of copying, "paper only". If the request was for paper copies, why were the folders scanned and who were the scans provided to?

It should also be noted that these files contained social security numbers on W-9 forms and copies of checks that had bank account numbers. This information should have been redacted to protect those individuals against identity theft. It is unknown whether the City Clerk took such action, as is required by law. On either Thursday or Friday, July 20 or 21, 2023 Mr. Tim Milstead, City of Milton Planning Director presented in my office. He advised that he had received a call from Mrs. Martha Allen. She told him that her husband, John C. Allen's social security number was in the City's commercial facade files, and she wanted it to be redacted. It was curious how she came to this conclusion considering it had been 2 years since Mr. Allen received and completed his grant. One would conclude that someone approached her with copies of the files that were provided by the City Clerk in violation of the public records law. I advised Mr. Milstead what had transpired and that there were social security numbers and bank account information in various files and that the Clerk should have redacted that information before releasing the records to anyone. I would note that Ms. Lauren Cooper disclosed at a recent meeting that there were social security numbers in the files. It would seem to point to her, in collusion with the Clerk is touring the files around town and to previous grant recipients in an effort to impugn my reputation, when it is in fact the Clerk who released the information.

As the custodian of the files, I can no longer certify the validity, accuracy, and completeness of the files of which he is the custodian. Mrs. Molinero had a motive to get revenge for being embarrassed by losing a disagreement. The Commercial Façade Program is a controversial program that some of Mrs. Molinero's

friends, including Mrs. Messick, don't like due to some of the grant recipients. It was telling and does explain a comment made on July 3<sup>rd</sup> by another opponent of the program and friend of Mrs. Molinero, Lauren Cooper. Ms. Cooper came to the podium and stated that the files were a mess and items were missing from the files. The comment stuck out to me, in that Ms. Cooper has never requested the files from me. She must have received them from Mrs. Molinero as part of her efforts to exact revenge. It became clear that having denied me a chance at promotion, Mrs. Molinero was now seeking to have me fired.

Having shown by her email of July 3<sup>rd</sup> that she would, in fact, seek revenge against a fellow employee if she felt wronged, I do not find it too far of a stretch to believe that she would alter the files that I am responsible for safeguarding. Then providing them to those she knows wish to see me leave the City.

As the City Clerk for the City of Milton, Mrs. Molinero is expected to be the expert on public records. This blatant violation of the rules for the chain of custody, ignoring City policy regarding charging for public records, as well as the personal vendetta she is carrying out against me must be addressed by the City. Mr. Spears advised Mr. Jorgenson of this situation in a meeting on July 13, 2023, at 12:30 p.m.

Mrs. Molinero has demonstrated a trend of bullying, harassment, and ADA violations against those in the organization with whom she disagrees or dislikes. These behaviors lead to a hostile and toxic work environment. The City Manager has taken little to no action to stop these behaviors.

On many occasions, before Mrs. Molinero's opinion of me changed, she confided in me her dislike and disapproval of the City's new Public Information Officer (PIO). The new PIO experienced some major medical issues shortly after starting her employment. The illness was so severe it required hospitalization and has caused frequent absenteeism. This greatly angered Mrs. Molinero, to the point of her stating on multiple occasions to me and others that she felt the PIO was "stealing" from the City. I encouraged the Clerk to have this discussion with the City Manager who is the PIO's supervisor. Mrs. Molinero fabricated and spread a false rumor that the PIO was actually undergoing elective plastic surgery and could not come back to work until her face healed. All of this was patently untrue. She has accused the PIO of spending her time out of the office during office hours at the beach. Her bullying and harassment of the PIO got to the point where the PIO came to my office crying and confided in me her experiences with the City Clerk. The hatred of the PIO by the Clerk seems to be rooted in the fact that the PIO is much younger and attractive. The Clerk stated to me that she believes the City Manager gives the PIO special treatment because she is "so pretty".

Meanwhile, the Clerk spends most of her days in her office with the door closed and lights off watching and listening to podcasts on rightwing topics, conspiracy theories and medical expose's that she claims show the truth about America's medical lies. She truly believes COVID was a hoax fabricated by the government and belittles anyone who had it or believes it to be a real issue. She puts down anyone who acted to protect themselves and others by getting vaccinated or wearing a mask. It is believed that she and her husband were forced to end their military careers due to refusal to be vaccinated against COVID. There is a poster taped to my door that the City produced during COVID encouraging people to wear protective masks. She has stated on multiple occasions she would "love to rip that poster off my door".

She frequently called me and others "blind", "asleep", "sheep", or "woke" because of her extreme beliefs. I personally take offense to being called blind, as I am actually completely blind in my left eye and wear a prosthetic fake eye. She often ridicules and attempts to bully me due to my more moderate social and political beliefs. I would characterize hers as radical.

The Clerk often complains how she has little to nothing to do most days and frequently leaves early to "work from home". What work is being done remotely that couldn't be done in the office, especially when the Clerk states she has nothing to do. Within the last month, the Clerk was assigned work from the Risk Management

Department due to their heavy workload. She was assigned to handle all insurance claims for the City. It is unknown whether the Clerk has any training or experience in insurance or risk management. This work is not in her job description and, as a City Council Employee, was not approved by City Council.

At approximately 12:45 p.m. on July 21, 2023, Ms. Ashley Johnson, Systems Analyst for the City, returned to the Information Technology office adjacent to mine. As she passed, we struck up a conversation about a computer glitch that we had discovered that morning. She was working on the issue. We began discussing my situation. She closed my office door for privacy and advised that early the previous week, when the public record requests began pouring into City Hall re: Mr. Collins, the City Clerk presented in the IT office and advised her that she was not to work on any of the requests because she was loyal to me. Ms. Johnson advised her department director of that directive. Ms. Johnson advised the IT Director went to the City Clerk and advised her to never instruct her staff ever again. Ms. Johnson stated that the IT Director advised the City Manager if this breach of protocol and that it was unacceptable (later corroborated by the IT Director, Mrs. Krystle Nowlin). She stated that she still is not working on the requests which alludes to the intervention of the City Manager with the IT Director preventing Ms. Johnson's involvement.

On July 21, 2023, I sent a status inquiry to HR inquiring about my status as a candidate, as I had received no official notice from the City regarding the selection process. The response from the HR director stated that she has a few questions for Mayor Lindsay and the City Manager before she send anything out to the candidates. I was unaware that the Mayor and City Manager were in charge of the process. I was advised that it was solely a council issue.

Previous email stated she had to get instructions from City Manager and Mayor:

Fri 7/21/2023 10:59 AM

Good Morning, Yes, I was listening to her (Mayor Lindsay) last night as well. I have not addressed it yet today and before I do anything or send any communications out, I have a couple questions for Mayor Lindsey and Randy. I will be talking to her in the morning regarding her comments.

Thank you for your patience.

Best Regards,

Dana Barger

On July 27, 2023, I received the official notice that I am no longer a candidate for the City Manager position, even though the letter says, "a decision on an appropriate appointee has not been made and leadership is determining our future direction." No vote to end the current process and excuse all previous candidates has ever been held. So the HR Director, who is in allegiance with the City Clerk, dismissed me as a candidate unilaterally or at the instruction of City Manager and/or Mayor.

July 27, 2023

Ed Spears  
1515 Cypress Bend Trail  
Gulf Breeze FL 32563

RE: City of Milton, City Manager

Dear Mr. Spears,

The city is thankful for your participation in the process of selecting a City Manager.

The decision on an appropriate appointee has not been made and leadership is determining our future direction. It is anticipated a firm will be engaged to lead another recruitment effort and we would like to invite you to re-apply, once that is completed if you still have an interest.

Again, thank you for your application and we look forward to potentially hearing from you again.

Sincerely, I am.

Dana Barger

HR, City of Milton

At some point in time the week of July 20, 2023, the City Clerk sent a timeline of events to Mr. Ken Garner of the Santa Rosa Press Gazette. This timeline led to an article posted to the Press Gazette's Facebook Page (later removed). The article headline stated, "Clerk alleged conspiracy against hiring Scott Collins". Within that timeline, the following sentence appears,

"My thought process at this point...the public has heard the contract negotiation was going to be undermined, Snow and Calkins possibly confronted or threatened Mr. Collins in the parking lot, Ed Spears wife possibly said to a general group of people at a prior meeting (the meeting that Ed was passed over) that interference was forthcoming, Cusack was not being allowed on the phone calls, I had been asked twice not to notify the council of Cusack's concern and Alex could not give me a sound reason that Cusack wasn't being included with the phone call conversations."

Alleging my wife "possibly said to a general group of people at a prior meeting" is complete and utter nonsense. My wife is a highly respected woman in her field and in the community and has no time for the politics that occur in Milton. I requested a statement for the record from my wife:

July 24, 2023 - I just read the timeline you emailed to me written by the Milton City Clerk. I am writing you to document this matter:

I was in attendance at the July 3, 2023, Milton City Council meeting. I did not have any verbal responses to the proceedings as it's my personal policy not to speak about issues in these meetings. I sat in a crowded room and did not know many of the people I sat nearby. I was physically present in support of my husband, Ed Spears, as were many others.

On July 19, 2023, at 1:59pm I received an email from Ken Garner of Sandpaper Publishing requesting a phone interview to discuss my thoughts on the addition of middle school sports in Santa Rosa County as I have been vocal on the subject in the past few months. I called Mr. Garner at 8:51am on Friday July 21, 2023. Mr. Garner asked my thoughts on the addition of select sports for middle schools in Santa Rosa County. I expressed my excitement and my support as the school district moves forward with the plan. He then made the comment that he was not aware that I was related to Ed Spears. I confirmed that I am married to Ed Spears. Mr. Garner made me aware that he covers the Milton City Council meetings and has had many interactions with Ed during Ed's time with the city. He also mentioned that he appreciated how Ed handled the press and his work with the city. Mr. Garner paused before mentioning he had an additional question to ask me but would wait for another time. I assumed it was regarding what was going on with the hiring process for the city manager position for the City of Milton. I told Mr. Garner I only followed the City of Milton from afar. Mr. Garner thanked me for my time and the conversation ended.

My wife and upwards of 30 of my friends and family were upset at the July 3, 2023, meeting because Mayor Lindsay failed to allow public comment prior to a final vote on the matter. They were there to speak in support of me. Mayor Lindsay prides herself on allowing public comment before votes. She insists the public has a right to be heard. She also chides people for interrupting speakers she is aligned with when they express their viewpoints. However, at the June 3 meeting wherein Scott Collins was selected as the sole final candidate, no public input was allowed prior to the vote. Following the unanimous vote, the Mayor then called for public input after the matter was decided. Having been asked to leave the room, I was returning to the Council Chambers as a recess had been called. My friends and family were all in stunned belief at what had transpired. I did not have time to discuss the matter, as I was next on the agenda to make a lengthy, detailed presentation on a new Request for Proposals for property the City owns. Unlike her stated desire to show Christian grace and compassion, the Mayor only had two questions as I prepared to present to the group that just passed me over for promotion – “how long will this take” and “are you ready”. A true leader, given the circumstances, would have recognized what had transpired and delayed my presentation to a future meeting. I have been applauded for my display of professionalism in making that presentation that night. Not allowing public comment before a vote is not only out of her usual and customary practice, but a violation of the law. For reference, the recent special meeting to determine the fate of the City Attorney on July 25, 2023, the Mayor allowed substantial public input before a vote on the motion to terminate the Attorney’s Contract and again on July 31, 2023 at the special meeting to determine the fate of the City Clerk. It should be noted that the Mayor cast the deciding tie-breaking vote to allow the Clerk to keep her job. It is also unusual that none of the 30-40 people in the council chamber who were either supporting another candidate or were against me, attempted to speak. Traditionally, these frequent speakers invite themselves to the podium anytime they see fit. I was not privy to the happenings in the Council Chambers, as Councilwoman Farrow requested that “any candidate present” in the audience step out of the Chambers. As I was the only candidate who would conceivably be present, I exited the room.

Ms. Molinero’s statement regarding my wife is complete and total hearsay and is an attempt by the City Clerk to cast aspersion on my wife, and thereby me.

This entire experience has caused a mental and physical toll on myself and my family. Due to the stress caused by this process and the resulting events, making me fear for my job, I was prescribed a sleep aid for the first time in my life on July 18, 2023. Lack of sleep over this matter has affected my mental and physical health.

The events that have transpired have also damaged my previously outstanding relationship with my direct supervisor, Randy Jorgenson. Since the text conversation instructing me to provide the presentation to the City Clerk on Friday, June 30, 2023, I was ghosted by the City Manager. The only emails I received from him since that date was the one question regarding the facade grants files (the email where the Clerk admitted she stole the files from my office). Our in-person conversations have been limited to pleasantries only - "good morning", "Doing good?" "Excuse me" (when passing in the hall). This is especially out of character considering I had substantial agenda items and major presentations on the City Council agenda (July 3, July 11, July 20 and presented 4 budgets at the recent budget workshop (July 22). Traditionally, we would meet before such presentations to review the agenda items and what I would be presenting and what we would ask Council to approve. Our working relationship was very strong and positive. We spoke regularly about our families and non-work events in our lives. We had daily drop-ins either in his office or mine to touch base on ongoing projects and issues of the day. Randy on most days sought my input and opinion on various issues both inside and outside my area of responsibility. I felt free to offer my opinion to him on any City subject and frequently did so. From July 5th to July 12, I received no communication of any type (email, text, phone call or in person discussion) from Mr. Jorgenson. This abrupt change in behavior was distinctly out of character and a direct result of Mrs. Molinero’s actions.



On July 24, 2023, at approximately 1245 pm, Mr. Jorgenson came into my office. He asked me to remind him about the saga of the Main Street Milton (MSM) commercial facade files. We briefly rehashed that series of events from 2019. I advised that those files were still in the possession of MSM. He agreed. He said there were several requests to review those files. I advised him, as I advised the City Clerk in the last week of June and again on July 13, via email, that I was not the custodian of those files and any request to see them needed to be made directly to MSM. He said we need to notify MSM that there were requests to see the files. I advised that I had received no such requests and I'm not responsible for notifying MSM. He said, "you are responsible if instructed to do so." So, I crafted an email to Ms. Cassandra Sharp, the registered agent and president of MSM and copied Randy. The email is date stamped 7/24/23 @ 12:54 pm. This marks the first business-related discussion of any substance with Mr. Jorgenson since 6/30/23.

It should be noted that this is a repeat of the email discussion of 7/13/23 in which the City Clerk admitted taking the commercial facade files from my office breaking the chain of custody in violation of the custodian of record laws.

On Wednesday July 19, 2023, Councilwoman Farrow came to our weekly Senior Staff Meeting. The Clerk welcomed her and invited her to sit down. She seemed to be expecting her. She arrived 10-15 minutes late and the meeting was underway and the usual humor and banter while taking care of the business at hand was as it always had been. The City Manager was not in attendance, and it was being conducted by Chief Tindell, who, along with all the other staff, was surprised at her presence. The tone and demeanor of the meeting immediately changed to a formal, structured meeting, except for the Clerk, who seemed to chime in and make comments on every department director's report. She was clearly showing off for the Councilwoman or asserting her perceived heightened role in the organization. I have been told she went around City Hall telling the staff she was in charge now. If true, this was a display of that newfound position. Councilwoman Farrow stated that she would be attending the staff meetings in the future. In the past, when Councilmembers attempted to attend, Randy advised them that these meetings are for staff only and councilmembers presence changes the meetings and makes staff uncomfortable.

On Wednesday, July 26, 2023, Councilwoman Farrow was in attendance again. Mr. Jorgenson was surprised at her presence but allowed her to stay. I read an apology to the staff for everything that had happened and how it has impacted me, my family and our team. I advised all that I truly regretted applying for the City Manager Position and that I would not be a candidate in any new selection process. Seven senior staff members came to me after the meeting and advised that I did not owe them an apology, and that I had done nothing wrong, and that they knew the City Clerk was to blame. I documented each person as they visited and can provide their names if necessary.

Thursday, July 27, 2023, Mr. Jorgenson requested I join him outside for a discussion. He advised that he had 5 members of council agree to call a special meeting regarding the City Clerk's role in the Scott Collins issue and other actions against other employees since that time. A majority of Council can call a special meeting at any time. He advised that he knew he had four votes to terminate her and would know after the LEAP meeting if he had five. Councilman Vance is the liaison to the LEAP committee and would be at City Hall. He advised if he knew he had the votes, the meeting would be advertised as late as possible on Friday, July 28 with as little information as possible. Due to HIPPA restrictions, the complaint by the City's PIO cannot be made public. FYI – she voluntarily provided a copy of her complaint to me. I wrote her a statement as to the various harassment, bullying and general mistreatment which I had observed from the City Clerk. My statement was included with her complaint. I was given the complaint only and not any statements from others or other attachments.

On Thursday, July 27, 2023, I received an email from Ms. Romi White. It contained several attachments that were email records of communication from the City Clerk primarily to Mr. Ken Garner, reporter for the Santa

Rosa Press Gazette. One of the attachments had an email from Ms. Molinero to Mayor Lindsay and Randy Jorgenson. It contains several statements that could be taken as intent to do harm. She speaks of herself as "David" in a battle with Goliath, how she is the hands and feet of God and how she will "do EVERYTHING IN MY POWER" to take care of her fellow employees. (emphasis original) She states she is, "losing it a bit".

At a brief meeting with Randy Jorgenson that day in his office I showed him the email with these statements highlighted. I told him I would rather be totally and completely wrong and safe, than right and dead. I expressed that I feel endangered and that should include the City's PIO. Mrs. Molinero refers to the PIO and me in the email as, "the two whose names need not be mentioned again". This fear was furthered by the fact that the City Clerk was at work on Thursday when the Senior Staff Calendar showed her as on leave. He stated he believed I had nothing to fear. I said he wasn't the one being shot at if something happens. Since this meeting, I have learned of other staff who have expressed fear of violence from Mrs. Molinero and the lack of safety measures to protect staff at City Hall.

On Monday, July 17, 2023, in the City Manager's Office, I lodged a verbal complaint against the City Clerk for violating the public records law and breaking the chain of custody of official records and sabotage of the files to cast aspersion on me in an attempt to get me fired. When I asked the City Manager what he was going to do about it, he said he was going to take time and review the matter and not rush to judgement. I requested him to please let me know when he reaches a conclusion. As of the date of this written complaint, I am still waiting.

Given the events that have transpired and the increasing hostility in City Hall, I am formally requesting the City Council to take all actions necessary to eradicate the hostile work environment that is endured by myself and many others at the hands of the City Clerk. I am requesting the City act swiftly to ensure the preservation of all public records pertaining to this matter, particularly those that may be present on the City Clerk's private cell phone (360-443-0757) which she provided as the main way to contract her in email communications, and her private email(s), if any. I am also requesting the City advise me of the steps I need to take to protect myself and take immediate action to enhance the safety of other City staff fearful of Mrs. Molinero.

I am prepared to provide sworn testimony to the above complaint and will act vociferously to ensure my rights.