

From: [Fournier, John](#)
To: [Nelson, Elizabeth](#)
Subject: The City Administrator Role
Date: Wednesday, July 28, 2021 3:00:00 PM

CM Nelson,

I hope you are well and finding time to enjoy the good weather this summer.

I read recently your comments implying that I participated in the termination of Mr. Crawford by advising the Council that he violated city policies and recommending he be terminated, and implying my alleged ambition to become the City Administrator was a relevant factor in the advice provided to Council. I find your observations on this topic to be deeply disappointing, and I would ask that you retract your statements from your website and issue a public apology to me and to the Human Resources Director.

To be clear, Stephen Postema, Margaret Radabaugh, and Tom Guajardo prepared an agenda response question that was submitted by the Mayor. It was communicated to the Council through the Administrator's Office as all agenda response questions are, and it was done so in this way on the advice of Mr. Postema. I reviewed the answer before it was submitted, but did not edit it. My role was purely ministerial. The provenance of the memo was discussed at the Council Meeting, and so you should have been aware of its origins.

In addition, the Council did not ask staff to opine on whether Mr. Crawford broke any city policies or whether he should be terminated. It asked what policies staff would normally review in a case where there are allegations of protected class inappropriate comments or conduct, and what the normal process would be for investigating and determining a response from the city. At no point did the memo recommend termination for Mr. Crawford, nor did it provide an analysis of Mr. Crawford's specific situation, nor did it mention Mr. Crawford at all. The question was asked what our policies are and what our normal processes are in cases like this, and we are required to answer truthfully and accurately. On your blog, you wrote: "Contradicting the investigation report, the Interim City Administrator and the Human Resources director assert a violation of the City's Non-Discrimination Policy 2.2 (see link above). The Interim City Administrator and Human Resources Director also assert a violation of the City's Anti-Harassment Policy 2.12 (a policy not-identified as relevant by the investigation report)." When you wrote these things, you were making knowingly false statements.

You wrote on your blog that "Justification for this week's decision to terminate (Agenda Response to DC-7) was co-written by a member of City Staff who is likely to apply for the job of City Administrator: the same person currently acting as Interim City Administrator." To state again, I did not co-write the memo and the memo does not mention Mr. Crawford at all. In addition, let me state clearly that I do not intend to apply for the position of City Administrator and came to that conclusion well before your public false statements were made. Finally, as a matter of clarification, I am currently not the Interim City Administrator as this is a position appointed by the Council. I am the Acting City Administrator, and was appointed to this position by Mr. Crawford upon the commencement of his absence from the City.

I would strongly encourage you to retract your statements and issue an apology for falsely portraying my and other staff member's involvement in Mr. Crawford's situation. Additionally, I would like you to consider that when you attack members of staff like this publicly you are doing great harm to the organization's culture and damage to the reputation of the City and the people who work for it. In addition, your comments likely are contributing to fears employees may have in reporting instances of misconduct in the future by demonstrating that people who are involved in these kind of events—even tangentially as I have been—could be punished by our political leadership. That is exactly the wrong message to be sending to this organization right now.

Thank you,
John

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