



CITY OF SPOKANE
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October 27, 2015

Theresa Sanders
808 West Spokane Falls Blvd
Spokane, WA 99201

City of Spokane Ethics Commission
808 West Spokane Falls Blvd
Spokane, WA 99201

RE: Response to ethics complaint

Ethics Commission members;

This document contains my response to an ethics complaint filed by Ms. Shar Lichty, a candidate for mayor in the city of Spokane. I take the City's Ethics policy very seriously and I am both disappointed and offended that Ms. Lichty would use the City's policy and process for personal gain.

By Ms. Lichty's own admission, her allegations were politically motivated and the engineered media briefing to announce her intentions was to generate media attention for her campaign¹. Additionally, Ms. Lichty's claim is irresponsible and malicious as it is intended to garner attention for herself while attempting to harm my personal and professional credibility. As such, I ask the Commission as per SMC Section 01.04A.110.D.1.d to dismiss her complaint as malicious, frivolous and having been brought for the purpose of personal and political gain.

As Ms. Lichty's complaint states, her allegations center on the content of Spokesman Review articles about my reassigning a City employee from the Police Division to the Parks department. As the City Administrator I have a responsibility to put the best resources in the most needed areas of our organization. As a manager, I also have both a personal and professional obligation to ensure favorable working conditions for our employees. As has since been revealed, the employee in question was being moved from a difficult working situation into an area that was

¹ Reference The Inlander, October 13, 2015: "Lichty admits that filing the complaint was political....." The Spokesman Review, October 13, 2015: Lichty acknowledged Monday that the timing of the complaint benefited her campaign....." and KXLY-TV interview October 12, 2015 5PM newscast "I'm not sure if I would have been the one filing (if not running for office) but I certainly would have supported filing."

much in need of her superior skills. The pay raise or “enticement” referenced in the move was indeed intended to represent the magnitude of the work expected in the new position and to ensure that the employee benefited by the move rather than being further harmed by it. Both the employee and the Parks department continue to benefit by this move.

As to Ms. Lichty’s claim that I “misrepresented to the public the facts surrounding this transfer” I can only state that under no circumstances would I further victimize an employee, especially a woman, by discussing the circumstances that contributed to the move. I regret that I suggested that no additional circumstances contributed to the move. Mostly I regret ever having discussed the matter with the media as I needn’t have, shouldn’t have, and certainly will not in the future.

Ms. Lichty’s violation of the public trust by submitting frivolous claims for personal and political gain caused harm. Her attack of a City employee who suffered challenging working conditions caused harm. Her misuse of City policy and process caused harm. I ask the Commission to hold her accountable for causing harm and instruct her that frivolous claims will not be tolerated. Please send a message to future political candidates that they cannot use the Commission for potential political gain.

Thank you for your consideration and for your service to the City of Spokane.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Theresa Sanders", with a large, stylized initial "T" and "S".

Theresa M. Sanders