

Councilmember Christine Cleland-McGrath Statement

The Mayor's Memo (April 26, 2024) makes an accusation that is despicable against a former employee. I was introduced to the employee once she was hired at the city. This employee was educated, accomplished, professional, and well respected by her colleagues. She contacted me after resigning from the city to convey her concerns regarding the Mayor's behavior towards her. While the investigation determined that the allegations do not rise to the level of legal liability for the city, the reported behavior is inappropriate. As a woman, I believe her account is credible. As a community member, I have received anecdotal accounts of similar experiences. And as a council member, I have been exposed to this improper behavior by our Mayor. The difference is, in his words, "he can't fire me."

Councilmember Ryan Walters Statement

I wanted to follow up regarding the mayor's memorandum now that I've had a chance to read it carefully. First, I completely reject the mayor's narrative that this is a mayor/council dispute. We didn't ask for this mess—it came to us. We reported the complaint to outside legal counsel as we were obligated to, and the city conducted an investigation as it was obligated to. The mayor's suggestions that we initiated the investigation are false. His attempt to spin this as a mayor/council dispute is wrong and a distraction from the actual dispute, which is between the mayor and a former employee.

Second, I don't know any basis for any of the claims in his second paragraph. Councilmembers received the complaint in writing, and I've seen no efforts to "exaggerate" it. I believe his allegation that a councilmember "took advantage of"

the complaining employee to be completely spurious. The employee was hardly “inexperienced.” And finally, I have not seen any evidence that the investigation cost \$25,000. It could be accurate, but I’d ask to see that data before I believe it. But whatever the cost, that expense was incurred as soon as the complaint was filed— because the city is legally obligated to investigate complaints of illegal discrimination.

Finally, in paragraph 3 the mayor reports that the investigation found all claims of discrimination to be false. The report makes findings of fact, not conclusions of law. Those facts found “more likely than not” that the mayor said what the complaint said he said in several instances, and notably the report does NOT find that the mayor’s comments were motivated by sex or pregnancy discrimination. But whether those facts legally give rise to a cause of action for discrimination is technically not addressed in the report.

I hope this helps provide some clarity.