

March 27, 2023

Kemah City Administrator, Walter Gant  
Kemah HR Director, Kirstie Harris  
Kemah City Secretary Rachel Lewis  
1401 Highway 146  
Kemah, Texas 77565

RE: Response to Chief Holland Jones Allegations January 31, 2023

Walter Gant:

I am responding to the outrageous accusations that Chief Holland Jones has directed at me accusing me of having an “investigation in an attempt to diminish his integrity and credibility”. Wow! Needless to say, I am shocked at his viciousness and accusations leveled at me.

For the record, I have always respected Chief Jones on his reduction of crime in Kemah and his professional accomplishments. I have always supported him. He was very hurt and disturbed when 15 officer’s filed complaints against him. I was happy for him when the City Council investigation through Lewis and Brisbois determined that these complaints resulted in a report stating that he should not be relieved of duty. They did however recommend that he take steps to tone down his language and behavior. Well, now I am the victim of this unfortunate side of Chief Jones.

I received a phone message at City Hall that asked me to call a phone number that I did not recognize. I have the document to prove this. As Mayor, it is my job to respond to all calls and emails. I returned the call and a woman Angela McClain was on the line was crying and telling me that she was about to lose her home because of something that Chief Jones had done to her husband. She told me that her husband Billy Lander’s had resigned from Kemah PD because he was offered a position with the Harris County Constables office at an increase of salary of \$20,000.00, which they really needed. She said that former Kemah Police Lieutenant Meek now works there and had “vetted” her husband for the Constables office before he was offered the job. He had come to Kemah and reviewed Lander’s file. Then the Harris County Constables office rescinded the job offer. I was told Chief Jones had made a phone call.

Lander’s wife then informed me that her husband Billy Lander’s went back to Chief Jones and tried to rescind his resignation and get his Kemah PD job back. Chief Jones refused, I was told. Crying, she informed me that he could not get a job anywhere now because of this. She told me that she had documents to prove it. I instructed her to drop off her documents to City Hall to my attention. She did that.

I received a manilla envelope marked "Mayor Joiner" in my in and out box at City Hall. Next, I set up a meeting with the City Administrator Walter Gant and the City HR Director

Olivia Briley. I told them about the phone call and they made copies of the documents that I received. These are the steps that I am expected to take according to the City Policy and Procedures Manual. This is also my job as Mayor. I followed the procedures.

City Administrator Walter Gant sent these documents to the City Attorney Dick Gregg III. This was proper Policy and Procedures.

I was told that Constable Meek had returned to Kemah to recheck on Billy Lander's file after the job rejection was made. I was told that there were now some complaints about him added to the file. HR Director Olivia Briley verified that he had come to her office to review Billy Lander's file for the second time and said he did not want to review the file at Kemah PD.

I contacted Constable Meek to verify the story I was being told. He was not able to talk when I called and asked me to call back the next day. I called the next day and he stated that he "did not want to get involved, but the City needed to get right with Billy Lander's".

Lander's wife contacted me again and told me that her husband had been turned down by 3 other police departments because things had been added to his file. She also said that she had more documents to prove what she was telling me. I once again asked her to drop them off at Kemah City Hall to my attention. I once again received a manilla envelope addressed to Mayor Joiner in my in an out box outside my office at Kemah City Hall.

I once again met with the City Administrator Walter Gant and the new HR Director Walter Gant once again made copies of the documents that I had received. We decided to send these additional documents again to City Council and request an executive session to decide how this should be handled. Dick Gregg III did not add this to the agenda properly.

I would like to state for the record that Chief Jones has lately been included in our City Administration executive session. In my opinion, he is not part of City Administration. When I served as Mayor from 2015 through 2019 the Chief of Police was not included in the City Administration Executive Sessions. I requested that the Chief leave the room when Lander's items about him were discussed. That is normal procedure. I was shocked to learn that the City Attorney and City Council insisted that he stay. They wanted him to be able to respond to any accusation. Chief Jones remained. Chief Jones cussed at me and was very disrespectful during the meeting. The City Council decided the case was closed.

I called Billy Lander's the next day and told him that Kemah City Council had decided not to proceed any further. He was very respectful and thanked me. His wife called a few hours later

and was yelling at me. She was very upset and accused me of not proceeding on because I was being investigated by City Council. I assured her that was not the case. I did everything I could and followed all of the Procedures allowed to me as Mayor.

I did not know Billy Lander's, his family or his difficult situation before the phone message from Kemah City Hall.

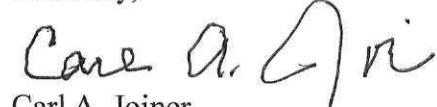
The City Attorney and Chief of Police have accused me of "retaliation". The City Attorney, City Council and the Chief were not interested in Officer Billy Lander's accusations. They have just leveled serious accusations against me.

The City Attorney stated that Billy Lander's is a former employee and that is why they are not interested in his complaint. He also stated that I, as Mayor had no authority to authorize an investigation. I believe this is odd since most of the 15 complaints investigated before were from former employees. In addition, the Texas Local Government Code 22.042 Powers and Duties of Mayor item b states "The mayor shall inspect the conduct of each subordinate municipal officer and shall cause any negligence, carelessness, or other violation of duty to be prosecuted and punished".

Chief Jones email was very disturbing that he sent on January 31, 2023. He is using his attorney credentials to give authority to his accusations. He has stated that he filed a criminal complaint against me with the Galveston County DA. He is over reacting in a very disrespectful and serious way.

I welcome the Galveston County DA to look in this and the whole situation at Kemah. I do not think the Chief will be happy to have some of his actions investigated by the Galveston County DA. I feel it is very inappropriate for our Chief of Police to have secret meetings and meals with a City Councilman. I feel it is very inappropriate for our Chief of Police to give legal advice to this City Councilman on how to hurt the Mayor. Chief Holland Jones has been recorded at the City Councilman's place of business and obviously they have some incriminating recordings of him. It appears that this Councilman also sent recordings to a media outlet trying to hurt him, the City Administrator and the Mayor. This Councilman also intimidated Chief Jones and the City Administrator by putting their Employment Contracts on the City Council Executive Session agenda January 4, 2023. Chief Jones contract was not up until 2024. Chief Jones was very emotional at that session about his job. He has told me "they can have me fired".

Sincerely,

  
Carl A. Joiner  
Mayor, City of Kemah