

LAW OFFICE OF  
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**Investigative Report**  
**City of Providence**  
**Office of the Clerk**

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Dated: September 21, 2021

IN CITY COUNCIL  
**DEC 15 2022**

READ  
WHEREUPON IT IS ORDERED THAT  
THE SAME BE RECEIVED.

*Tina L. Mastrosanni* CLERK  
ACTING

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## I. Introduction.

On or about August 4, 2021, the Law Office of Carly B. Iafrate, P.C., was engaged by the City of Providence (“City”) to investigate complaints made by employees working within the office of the City Clerk about alleged mistreatment by the City Clerk, Shawn Selleck (“Selleck”). The request for investigation came after a series of events during which the City’s Human Resources Department (“HR”) placed Selleck on administrative leave, indicated it had completed an internal investigation related to his employment, and “found no reason to further continue [his] suspension.” Attachment 1, *City Letter to Selleck, 8/2/21* (hereinafter “HR inquiry”).<sup>1</sup>

During this investigation, it became apparent that the HR inquiry was limited to events that occurred only within a certain timeframe and dealt only with the question of whether Selleck subjected certain employees to a hostile work environment or discrimination based upon protected status (for example, based upon gender) or otherwise engaged in inappropriate *sexually* harassing behavior. Attachment 2, *HR Inquiry Memo*. The purpose of this inquiry was more expansive. In this investigation, the undersigned focused on potentially relevant City policies which include basic workplace expectations about how employees must interact and be treated at work. With that in mind, the following are the policies potentially at issue.

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<sup>1</sup> For the most part, documents referred to in this Report are attached. To avoid an even more voluminous document, some were not included. If necessary, those that are not attached can be produced upon request.

## **II. Pertinent Policies.**

### **Relevant Provisions of the City Employee Handbook:**

#### **“WORKPLACE EXPECTATIONS**

##### **Professional Conduct**

The City expects its employees to adhere to a standard of professional conduct and integrity. This ensures that the work environment is safe, comfortable and productive. Employees must be respectful and courteous of others. General cooperation between coworkers and supervisors is expected. Individuals who act in an unprofessional manner may be subject to disciplinary action.” Handbook, p. 6.

##### **“Violence in the Workplace**

Employees cannot engage in conduct that may be dangerous to others. Conduct that threatens, intimidates or coerces another employee, customer, vendor or business associate will not be tolerated. City resources may not be used to threaten, stalk or harass anyone at the workplace or outside the workplace. \* \* \*

Anyone found to be responsible for threats, actual violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. \* \* \*.” Handbook, p. 11.

##### **“Workplace Bullying**

The City defines bullying as repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal or physical or otherwise conducted by one or more persons against another or others at the place of work and/or in the course of employment or through social media. Such behavior violates the City’s Code of Ethics,<sup>2</sup> which clearly states that all employees will be treated with dignity and respect. Employees found in violation of this policy will be disciplined up to and including termination.

Bullying may be intentional or unintentional. However, it must be noted that where an allegation of bullying is made, the intention of the alleged bully is irrelevant and will not be given consideration when meting out discipline. As in sexual harassment, it is the effect of the behavior upon the individual that is important. Some examples of bullying are:

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<sup>2</sup> The City Code of Ethics is contained in § 17-33 of the Charter.

- **Verbal bullying:** Slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or his/her family; persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as the target of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- **Physical bullying:** Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of physical assault; damage to a person's work area or property.
- **Gesture bullying:** Nonverbal, threatening gestures that convey threatening messages." Handbook, p. 11.

### **"Progressive Discipline**

Every employee has the duty and the responsibility to be aware of and abide by existing rules and policies. An employee also has the responsibility to perform his/her duties to the best of his/her ability.

The City supports the use of progressive discipline to address issues such as poor work performance or misconduct. Our progressive discipline policy is designed to provide a corrective action and improve employee performance.

The City reserves the right to determine the appropriate level of discipline for any inappropriate conduct, including oral and written warnings, suspension with or without pay, demotion and discharge. \* \* \*" Handbook, p. 15.

### **"Zero Tolerance for Workplace Violence Policy**

The City of Providence ("City") is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe, productive and harmonious work environment for its employees and citizens. The City has zero tolerance for any and all forms of violence and threats or overtures of violence, express or implied. Accordingly, the City adopts the following guidelines and policies to deal with intimidation, harassment or other threats of actual violence that may occur onsite and offsite and which bear a reasonable nexus to employment with the City and the City's workplace environment.

#### **Applicability**

All full- and part-time, active employees, elected officials and volunteers are covered under this policy.

#### **Prohibited Conduct**

All employees, elected officials, volunteers, customers, visitors, vendors and business associates should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. \* \* \* Conduct that threatens, intimidates or coerces another employee, elected official, volunteer, visitor, customer, vendor, or business associate will not be tolerated. The

City resources may not be used to threaten, stalk or harass anyone at or outside the workplace. \* \* \*

**Definitions of Prohibited Behaviors (\*intended to be general and not exclusive)**

**Workplace Violence** includes, but is not limited to: intimidation, bullying, stalking, explicit and implicit threats, physical attack, property damage, or domestic and family violence. \* \* \*

**Bullying** is unwanted offensive and malicious behavior that undermines an individual or group through persistently negative attacks. The behavior may include an element of vindictiveness, and may be intended or unintended to have the effect to undermine, patronize, humiliate, intimidate or demean the recipient.

**Intimidation** includes but is not limited to unwarranted behavior intended to frighten, coerce, or induce duress in others or having the effect thereof. \* \* \*

**Stalking** involves harassing or pestering an individual in person, in writing, by telephone or by electronic format. Stalking also involves following an individual, spying on them, alarming the recipient, or causing them distress and may involve physical violence or the fear of physical violence. Stalking may also include any elements set forth in the Rhode Island criminal law prohibiting such behavior.

**Threat** is verbal or non-verbal behavior, whether intended or unintended, conveying the infliction of physical or mental harm to an employee or an employee's family, friends or property. A behavior constitutes a threat without regard to whether the party communicating or expressing the threat has the present ability to carry out the threat, and without regard to whether the behavior, communication or expression is contingent, conditional or future. \* \* \*

**Investigations and Enforcement \* \* \***

A violation of this policy shall be considered unacceptable personal conduct as provided in the disciplinary policies applicable to the employee's appointment type.

**III. Procedure of the Investigation.**

The investigation consisted of the interviews of appropriate individuals and reviewing pertinent documents. The following individuals were interviewed, some on more than one occasion:

1. Tina Mastroianni – First Deputy Clerk
2. Sheri Petronio – First Deputy Clerk
3. Angela Harris – First Deputy Clerk
4. Marylee Dixon – Deputy Chief of Staff/Operations
5. Emmanuel Echevarria – Chief Human Resources Officer
6. Olga Coloian – Senior Supervisor, Executive Scheduler
7. Gina Costa – City Internal Auditor
8. Donna Peligian – Stenographic Reporter to the City Council
9. Marsha Cotugno – Secretary to the Director City Clerk
10. Kyle Delgado – Special Projects Manager
11. Councilman Michael Correia

The undersigned sought to interview Selleck.<sup>3</sup> Selleck declined to be interviewed without counsel and instead submitted a written statement that is appended to this report and was considered as part of this investigation. Attachment 3, *Selleck Written Statement, 9/8/21*. The undersigned also invited the other employees in the Clerk's office not referenced above to schedule an interview. A few did not respond and were not interviewed.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Because legal representation is not required in the context of an employment related investigation, no witnesses were offered the opportunity to be represented by counsel. See, e.g., Pollard v. Univ. of Mass. Med. Sch., 2002 WL 31188443, at \*2 (Mass. Super. Ct. 2002) (citing Downing v. LeBritton, 550 F.2d 689, 692 (1st Cir. 1977) and National Labor Relations Board precedent).

<sup>4</sup> The undersigned also sought to interview former Chief of Staff, Erlin Rogel ("Rogel"). Rogel did not respond to the request for an interview.

#### **IV. Information Gathered During the Investigation.**

The following information was gathered concerning the complaints and events at issue.

##### **A. Background.**

Selleck was appointed to the position of City Clerk in February 2019. His appointment is to a four-year term that expires in late January 2023. City Charter § 601. Prior to his appointment by the City Council (“Council”), he had no experience working in the Clerk’s office in any regular position within the hierarchy of the office.<sup>5</sup> Selleck’s only prior City experience was as a consultant in 2013-2014. During that limited engagement he worked on implementing recommendations that arose from the 2012 Open Providence Commission on Transparency and Accountability, most notably improving public access to the operation of City government through installation of the City’s first Open Meetings Portal.<sup>6</sup> Attachment 3.

All staff within the Clerk’s office are women. There are ten (10)<sup>7</sup> positions as follows: three (3) First Deputy Clerk positions held by Tina Mastroianni (“Mastroianni”), Sheri Petronio (“Petronio”) and Angela Harris (“Harris”); (1) Second Deputy Clerk position (vacant); four (4) Stenographer Reporter positions, held by Jesenia Fajardo (“Fajardo”), Jennifer Emidy (“Emidy”), Donna Peligian (“Peligian”)

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<sup>5</sup> A City job description for the position of City Clerk provides that he or she shall have “[a] minimum of seven (7) years’ experience in the City Clerk’s office; \* \* \*.” Attachment 4, *Clerk Job Description*.

<sup>6</sup> Most, if not all, witnesses agreed that Selleck excels in the area of technology.

<sup>7</sup> The Secretary to the Director City Clerk, Stenographic Reporters and Second Deputy Clerk are bargaining unit positions represented by the Laborers’ International Union of North America, Local 1033 (“Local 1033”).

and Lauren Gutierrez (“Gutierrez”), one (1) Bilingual Clerk Yuly Polanco (“Polanco”) and (1) Secretary to the Director City Clerk position, held by Marsha Cotugno (“Cotugno”).<sup>8</sup>

There have been some changes in the clerk’s office within the last couple of years. When Selleck was first appointed, Harris was the Secretary to the Director/City Clerk and Petronio was Second Deputy Clerk. In May 2020, both were promoted – Harris to Second Deputy Clerk and Petronio to First Deputy Clerk. Polanco and Gutierrez were hired to work within the Clerk’s office in December 2020 and accordingly, are relatively new to the office. A second round of promotions occurred in June 2021 at which point Harris became First Deputy Clerk and Cotugno replaced Harris.

The Council Chambers and offices are located on the third floor of City Hall, on the same floor as the Clerk’s office. The Council relies on the personnel within its offices as well as the personnel in the Clerk’s office for the proper functioning of Council business.

#### **B. Incidents in 2019.**

On June 18, 2019, Olga Coloian (“Coloian”)<sup>9</sup> was at work in her office located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of City Hall. Coloian does not report to Selleck or work within the

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<sup>8</sup> Polanco, Gutierrez, Emidy and Fajardo did not schedule interviews as part of this investigation.

<sup>9</sup> Coloian has been employed by the City since April 2015. She had previously been employed by the City for about nine years in the Mayor’s office starting in about July 1995. In April 2015, when she was re-hired, she was handling constituent services in the Council office. Since June 2021, she handles scheduling for the current Council President, John Igliazzi (“Igliazzi”).

Clerk's office; she reports to the Council. According to Coloian, at the time one of her assignments was handling office renovations. These renovations included the Council offices and the Clerk's office. She was directed not to permit many people to be involved in the day-to-day management of the project (for example, with things like the choice of office furniture or paint colors) - she was responsible for the project, and she was told to handle it herself. As Coloian described it, Selleck contacted her on numerous occasions about the project.<sup>10</sup> Her approach was to respond politely and tell him not to worry about it and that she was handling it.

On June 18, it "came to a head." Selleck came into Coloian's office (at which point it was just the two of them) and questioned an invoice related to the project. She told him that she did not have time to talk about it because she was very busy. Selleck did not stop talking and did not leave the office. As Coloian explained he "just wouldn't stop, and his voice got a little bit elevated and at one point it was so uncomfortable I repeated myself several times - to please stop you are making me very uncomfortable, and he wouldn't stop." According to Coloian, Selleck would not stop talking and questioning her, even after she said was uncomfortable with him in her office. He insisted on having the conversation and remaining in her space.

She elaborated during her interview as follows. When you tell him you cannot have the conversation, "he doesn't respond." "It's like he just doesn't want to hear

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<sup>10</sup> Coloian described a meeting between herself, Councilman Correia and Selleck during which the Councilman told Selleck "well you're not in charge of this project, Olga is," and during which Selleck, referring to the Councilman repeatedly only by his last name "Correia," said "Correia, I need to be involved." Coloian described Selleck's behavior as "very disrespectful."

you.” “It’s like *I am doing this, I don’t care how you feel about it and I don’t care if you feel uncomfortable, I’m not stopping – I’m going to have this conversation and you are going to have this conversation with me.*” Coloian said “*and that’s when I kept saying you need to stop, please leave my office you’re making me very uncomfortable.*”

The incident ended when Coloian said that they could have a conversation at a later time when he calmed down. Only then did Selleck leave. Immediately following the incident, she went to Dixon<sup>11</sup> who sat on the other side of the wall and who overheard at least part of the incident. Attachment 5, *Dixon Memo, 6/18/19.*

According to a Memorandum drafted by Dixon:

“At approximately 10:30 Shawn came to Olga’s office apparently to discuss a bill for some furniture. I heard him say to Olga, ‘what, what is wrong with you, I see you’re making a face,’ Olga replied ‘no, nothing is wrong, that bill is not yours,’ he proceeded to confront her, stating something to the effect ‘no somethings wrong, you are angry, I can see it on your face, I can see you are upset.’ Olga said ‘I am not upset you are making me uncomfortable right now, *you need to leave.*’ She inquired as to why are you upset about the invoice it is not yours and he continued questioning her and *she several times asked him to leave.* Shawn said can we speak about this later and Olga said absolutely when you calm down.” Attachment 5 (emphasis added).

For the last two years, Coloian has avoided Selleck. As she explained, to this day: “I would just try to avoid him. I just, I would, I would not go on that side. I just, if I heard him on our side, I would close the door \* \* \* Oh I avoid him, If I see him

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<sup>11</sup> Dixon has worked for the City for about 10 years. Her current role began in February 2019.

coming one way, I will go the opposite.” Coloian described him as a “narcissist” and that “he’s a bully” because “he just doesn’t stop.”

That same day, Selleck also went into Delgado’s<sup>12</sup> office. Delgado manages special projects for the City Council. Delgado does not report to Selleck but interacts with the Clerk’s office staff usually as it relates to an agenda item or his time sheet. Delgado was in the Council office sitting at the front desk when Selleck came into the office in a “confrontational” manner. The incident involved the booking of a room for a meeting. As Delgado explained, Councilman Nicholas Narducci (“Narducci”) asked him to book a room for a particular meeting. The procedure is for Delgado to call the Clerk’s office and see if the room is available and if it is, it goes on the calendar. Delgado followed the procedure and booked the room through the Clerk’s office. Despite the fact that he followed the procedure, Selleck had come in to argue with Delgado about the room.

During this incident, Selleck stood on one side of Delgado’s desk, while Delgado remained seated on the other side. Selleck leaned over toward Delgado and gestured with his hands in an angry manner. As Selleck went on about the room being booked (saying something like “you can’t book that room, I already had it”), Delgado looked back at his female co-worker, Katia Lugo (“Lugo”) and noticed that she was getting “worked up.” Delgado told Selleck that “the Councilman wanted the room, since there

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<sup>12</sup> Delgado has been employed by the City since about April 2017, not including a couple of summers as an intern. He has been in the special projects position since early 2019.

was no other room” “we booked it” so he should take it up with the Councilman.”  
“Somehow that got through to him” and “he just left.”

Delgado stated that it takes a lot to get under his skin and that he was doing his best to mitigate and diffuse the tension during this incident. “Personally, I felt like he invaded my space, my boundaries, I don’t like your body language” “I don’t feel threatened, but I feel like you’re threatening my personal space” and “so I’m doing my best not to react.” Without knowing about what happened with Coloian, Delgado also went to Dixon to report what happened.<sup>13</sup> According to Dixon’s Memorandum, Delgado was “upset.” Delgado told Dixon he had gone to see Rogel, but he was not in his office. “Kyle described Shawn as being imposing over his desk and speaking in a condescending and confrontational manner.” Attachment 5. The Memorandum also reflects that when Delgado explained to Selleck why Narducci needed Room 312, Selleck replied “well then may I use his [referring to Council Narducci’s] office?” Delgado characterized this as “goading” him and did not interpret it as a serious request to use Narducci’s office. According to Dixon, “Kyle, who as you know shows the utmost professionalism was visibly shaken by this encounter.” Attachment 5.

Delgado ran into Selleck soon thereafter. He told Selleck he did not appreciate how he spoke to him and that he did not think it was appropriate. Delgado told him that he was here to be professional and to please not do that again, that it was not the place for “that.” Delgado said Selleck was apologetic, and that Delgado felt he

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<sup>13</sup> Part of the reason why Delgado went to Dixon to report the incident was because he spoke to Lugo afterwards about whether he should do something about it. He felt as though “this is the workplace this isn’t normal here it should not happen.”

had to “nip it in the bud,” and that now Selleck would “button it up a little.” Delgado thinks Selleck learned he is not threatened by him because he stood his ground. He accepted Selleck’s apology, but to this day he has separated himself from Selleck because he thinks something is “off” about him.

In addition to the fact that Dixon transmitted the Memorandum to Rogel, both incidents were also reported to Councilman Michael Correia (“Correia”).<sup>14</sup> Councilman Correia was interviewed and recalled both incidents. Although he was not present for either interaction, he believed Coloian and Delgado because this was not the first time he received complaints about Selleck. He described generally that other employees in City Hall told him that Selleck was too demanding, and that his tone and aggression were not appropriate. As Councilman Correia paraphrased, other employees not only in the Council or Clerk’s Office would say “his tone, his aggression is really, really bad,” and “we don’t want him coming up to our departments.”<sup>15</sup> Correia has told Selleck directly that he does not like his style and that he does not want to deal with him directly.

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<sup>14</sup> Correia has been a member of City Council since about 2010.

<sup>15</sup> Councilman Correia also recalled that Selleck would at times be argumentative with other council members including then-Council President Sabina Matos (“Matos”) (now Lieutenant Governor). He recalled a specific instance when Selleck “lashed out” during a senior staff meeting at Matos and said one time said like “I don’t know if you people understand English or not, but I have said this numerous times,” and “I don’t know how many times I have to tell you,” “this is the way I’m doing it,” “I don’t work for you,” “I don’t work for the Council.” Council President Matos responded to Selleck something like she would speak to him separately afterward.

Councilman Correia also stated that the Council has had an issue with Selleck since “day one since we hired him” and that he had been spoken to numerous times about his style. He said there have been multiple occasions in which women from the

During the budget process for the FY 20 budget (sometime between May and July 2019), Costa, the City Internal Auditor<sup>16</sup> also had an incident with Selleck that involved an argument initiated by him in her office. Costa does not work for Selleck, she reports to the Council. Her contact with the Clerk's office involves things like ensuring the appropriate items on are certain meeting agendas and scheduling. During this incident she was in her office on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor and Selleck came in upset about a payroll grid that came out of committee and was to be transmitted to the Council for its consideration. Selleck wanted Costa to change the grid. As Costa explained, the grid should have been red-lined to reflect the changes that were made in committee, but she had made a mistake and it was not red-lined. The document, however, could not be changed because it was in the form that was transmitted by the committee and thus, based on Costa's experience and knowledge it had to be transmitted to the Council in that form and to alter it would be improper and a bigger problem. As Costa explained, if necessary, the mistake could simply be explained to the Council at the meeting.<sup>17</sup>

Costa described Selleck's insistence and approach in her office as "relentless," and that regardless of how many times she said she was not going to change it, he continued. She explained she said to him: "will you leave it alone, it went in wrong,

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Clerk's office have come to him or to the Council President crying after interactions with Selleck. He also reported that when Rogel was there, some responsibilities were taken away from Selleck but that he does not know if any of this was documented.

<sup>16</sup> Costa has worked for the City for about 20 years. She has been the Internal Auditor for about the last three years.

<sup>17</sup> It seems the red-lining was somewhat immaterial in the end because regardless of the red-line, it reflected the appropriate new numbers.

it has to be carried out wrong, I said you should have brought it to the attention as the Clerk that it should have been red-lined, I made a mistake, tell them publicly.” Costa said “you can’t change it, its record” and that he “doesn’t direct her.” Costa said Selleck was so relentless that she ended up raising her voice at him. Following this incident, he continued to text her about it with regard to his insistence that the document should be changed.

Since that incident, Costa only works through e-mail with him and she “won’t talk to him,” “because I do not want to talk to him” “I limit my conversations” with him. She avoids him because of his “relentless annoying personality.” “His version has to be right, so I’d rather not deal with that” especially because he “pushed me to the point I have never got to.”

Accordingly, as of 2019, there are at least three reports of confrontations initiated by Selleck in the offices of three other employees, at least two of which involved violations of employee personal space and at least one in which the employee had to ask Selleck to leave repeatedly. It is unknown what, if any, action was taken by the Council or by any City official following receipt of these reports in 2019.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> As described further in this Report, Echevarria, who was appointed in May 2019, stated that he has had calls and correspondence regarding concerns about the City Clerk but based on confidentiality concerns, he would not share the details. Thus, it is unknown if HR was aware of any of these 2019 incidents.

## **C. 2020 Complaint by Mastroianni.**

### **i. Background**

Mastroianni has worked for the City for over 25 years. She has worked in the Clerk's office since 2007 when she became a Stenographic Reporter.

As noted above, Selleck worked in the Clerk's office in 2013-2014 as a consultant. At that time, he was tasked with training the clerk's office personnel with regard to technology improvements. During the period when Selleck was a consultant, Mastroianni did not report to him but did interact with him during training. She states, "it was very difficult to learn from him," but she made no formal complaints.<sup>19</sup>

In September 2016, Mastroianni became First Deputy Clerk, the position just below the City Clerk in the hierarchy. When the term of the prior Clerk was set to expire in early 2019, both the prior clerk (Lori Hagen) and Mastroianni "competed" for the position of City Clerk. Selleck was selected instead. Because Selleck had no prior experience performing clerk-related responsibilities, Mastroianni was in the position of having to teach Selleck the job.

As Mastroianni explained, in the beginning, things were "okay." It was "awkward at first," but she is a "team player," and she "acquiesced to the will of the Council" that she should share her knowledge to further the goals of the office, so she did. Her feeling at the time was based on her experience working with him in 2013-

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<sup>19</sup> Petronio also reported that she "wanted to cry" trying to learn from Selleck in 2013-2014.

2014 he could be “forceful with how he wants things done,” and that she would have to prepare herself for discussions with him” because they “tend to be very long” and “convoluted,” and it “gets very confusing.”

She described herself as a “pretty patient person,” but that she had to mentally prepare herself for things like that (the long, convoluted conversations). She felt like it would be fine if it occurred once in a while.

After a few months of working with Selleck she noticed that it was very difficult to have conversations with him because when she would explain the role of the charter, the role of past precedent, the council rules and how those things all had to be considered as part of various decisions or tasks it became a “constant battle.” As she explained, it was her job to show him how things were done, but as she would do so, he would constantly argue with her. The conflict, as she described which “fester and grew” and involved “heated discussions, debates, and arguments” was present even when trying to address normal work-related issues.

Mastroianni gave an example involving a hypothetical purple folder. “It’s like telling someone this folder is purple (referring to a purple folder on the table). Then someone wants to take this (the folder) and say, ‘why is it purple?’ ‘what makes it purple?’ ‘what colors do you need to make it purple?’ and it then turns into a long discussion. That type of constant discussion impeded Mastroianni in her own work responsibilities and routine. As she explained, she and Selleck would spend so much time in discussion it would impact her stress level in terms of the Council-related deadlines that needed to be met. In her opinion, this level of conflict and debate was

putting undue stress on her in her daily work environment that became unbearable over time.

Mastroianni felt that Selleck would not let anyone speak long enough for the employee to get his or her point across because he interrupts, interjects, and wants to debate each point before one can get a thought out. In her opinion, this was entirely out of the norm.

Despite the difficulties, prior to February 2020, Mastroianni did not file any written complaints about Selleck.

**ii. The Substance of Mastroianni's Complaint.**

On February 20, 2020, Mastroianni went to Correia's office asking if she could speak to him for a minute. At that point, she "fell apart," was "crying" and "shaking" and said she did not know what to do. When Correia asked what was wrong, Mastroianni told him that she could not deal with Selleck anymore. At that point, Correia brought Mastroianni to Dixon's office who described her as "quite upset." Attachment 6, *Dixon Memo 2/28/20*.<sup>20</sup> According to Dixon's Memorandum, she relayed a series of incidents involving Selleck "relative to the protocols and manner in which the Clerk's office was being run." Dixon asked Mastroianni to put her concerns in writing.

About an hour later, Mastroianni and Dixon were called to the Council President's office. Rogel was present. A conversation took place in which Mastroianni expressed her concerns at that time, and according to Dixon's

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<sup>20</sup> Mastroianni was working with Selleck for about a year at this point.

Memorandum, the then-Council President indicated that it would be “dealt with appropriately.”

Mastroianni drafted a one-page document and gave it to Dixon on February 24. Attachment 7, *List of Incidents 2/24/20*. That document relates incidents on January 31, February 13, February 14 and February 18, 2020, all of which relate to evidence of conflict in the Clerk’s office. For example, on January 31, Mastroianni indicated that she and Selleck got into a “heated debate” because Selleck indicated that the Clerk (and as a result the office staff) does not report to the Council. During this “debate” Selleck offered to write Mastroianni a letter to support his position.

On February 13, the staff had a “huge altercation,” after which Selleck threatened to “pull the plug” on promoting Petronio and Harris, something he contended he had the sole authority to do.<sup>21</sup> On February 14, during a meeting Selleck contended there was no job description for his position and that “the City Clerk only needs 8 votes to become the Clerk.”<sup>22</sup>

As Mastroianni explained, things had just come to a “boiling point,” so she met with Rogel, Correia, Dixon, and the Council President to explain “how this was making me feel and spoke about the many incidents that occurred over the past few months.” Mastroianni’s summary essentially expresses her concern that Selleck does not believe he reports to the Council and that he does not work for them or answer to

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<sup>21</sup> At the time, Petronio was the Second Deputy Clerk and was seeking promotion to First Deputy Clerk. Harris was seeking promotion to Second Deputy Clerk.

<sup>22</sup> As indicated, there is a job description for the position of Clerk a point which Mastroianni made to Selleck on February 14. Attachment 4.

them, which was creating a conflict for her based on her understanding of her obligation to the Council.

It is unknown what was done with this complaint and whether any issues were addressed with Selleck. In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and City employees, including those in the Clerk's office began working from home. Meetings began to be conducted by Zoom.<sup>23</sup>

As Mastroianni explained, even though the office was not physically together, it did not end the time-consuming nature of Selleck's interaction.<sup>24</sup> Instead, Selleck would schedule Zoom meetings that would run extremely long as he engaged in endless discussion. The Zoom meetings were becoming an issue because Selleck would want to conduct multiple Zoom meetings for staff, while at the same time the Council meetings were being held on Zoom. It was becoming an overwhelming amount of time to be on Zoom.<sup>25</sup>

During this time, the conflict continued. One example involved an item that Selleck wanted placed on a special meeting agenda that was still in committee. Mastroianni told him that per applicable rules that could not be done because it was

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<sup>23</sup> More than one person made positive comments about Selleck's job performance with regard to transitioning the Council meetings to Zoom in order that the business of the City could continue. Again, this aspect of his job performance is not at issue, the Zoom meetings that were problematic were lengthy staff meetings, not Council meetings.

<sup>24</sup> In Harris' interview she explained that Selleck would schedule a 15-minute zoom meeting that would turn into an hour and a half "until he gets his point across."

<sup>25</sup> Mastroianni expressed this concern to Selleck in an e-mail dated October 23, 2020, indicating that the "excessive meeting lengths are beginning to wear on me \* \* \*" and that they were impacting her ability to get her "actual" work done.

still in committee. Selleck debated with Mastroianni about the meaning of the word “report,” because the rule indicated that you cannot put any report on committee on the docket absent the committee voting on it or approving it. Selleck argued that meant a written report and that because of that, what he proposed was not a report. Mastroianni tried to explain that it was the act of reporting that was referenced in the rules. The debate went on so long she had to hang up the phone. In sum, nothing was resolved.

Eventually, the staff returned to the office on a rotating basis based on cohorts which meant each staff member worked in the office at least two days per week.

#### **D. 2021 Complaints.**

##### **i. The January 2021 Incident.**

Mastroianni explained that prior to January 2021, she had spoken to several people (such as the Council President and other staff) about the fact that in having a conversation with Selleck it is something “not easily done,” because “he won’t stop speaking long enough to at least let you to get your point across and you end up losing your train of thought or while you’re speaking will want to interject and debate that, that point right then and there and you’re still trying to get your entire thought out. So, this was an occurring thing which came to a huge head this past January.”

On January 20, 2021, Mastroianni was supposed to be working from home because it was not her day to be in the office. However, there were times when she had something to do that could not be done at home, and so she would come to City

Hall but sit in a separate office alone to get the work done. On this day she was in Room 305 under pressure to complete some agendas.

Selleck found Mastroianni in Room 305 because he wanted to discuss clerk and stenographer assignments. Mastroianni knew this was going to take time away from the work she was doing within the limited time period she had.<sup>26</sup> The interruption was adding to her stress level. Mastroianni said okay but told Selleck she did not have much time because she needed to leave by 12-12:30. As they began discussing assignments,<sup>27</sup> Petronio came in with a question about a Zoom meeting she was responsible for that evening. In particular, Petronio did not know how to handle the executive session portion of the meeting on Zoom and needed help from Selleck. This triggered a lengthy discussion by Selleck “non-stop” about how he designed a document that outlined steps for how to do the meeting and told her to go read it. When he was done Petronio said she had the document, but still needed some hands-on instruction she wanted a test meeting. He refused to show her physically. According to Petronio, she became upset as she was worried about not handling the meeting properly absent the hands-on instruction.

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<sup>26</sup> The work at issue was two different agendas for two committee meetings (ordinances/legislative affairs). The agendas needed to be complete and posted within a certain time frame in order to comply with state law.

<sup>27</sup> This was when Selleck informed Mastroianni that he decided he would no longer clerk any committee meetings except the full City Council meeting, taking the position that as City Clerk this was the only meeting he was required to handle himself. Without Selleck in the rotation for other committee meetings, the workload would increase for others.

At the same time, Mastroianni was becoming upset because Selleck would not stop going on about the document he created (relative to Petronio) and she needed to get her work done. During this conversation Mastroianni said several times to Selleck, “I have to work to do” and “I need to get it done.” Mastroianni turned around to continue her work. Selleck said “you may see your work as urgent; I don’t see it as a priority.” This comment upset Mastroianni greatly as she had a deadline and so the work was a “priority and urgent to me,” but because he did not feel the same, her “feelings were insignificant.”

Selleck remained, even after Petronio left and continued on. Mastroianni told him “again,” that she had work to get done she “must have stated it at least three times.” When he was done talking about Petronio and the Zoom executive session (and the assignment conversation had concluded), Selleck began criticizing Mastroianni about an entirely separate topic – an e-mail she sent the day before which she copied to “the leadership team.”<sup>28</sup> According to Mastroianni, he “called [her] out,” because he did not think she should have sent the e-mail to the team. Mastroianni thought it was a valid topic to address with the team (Petronio and Harris). As Mastroianni described it, he still would not stop talking and physically remained in the room with her.

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<sup>28</sup> The leadership team was understood to be Selleck, Mastroianni, Petronio and Harris. Frequently all members of the leadership team were included on e-mail communication amongst the members. The e-mail that triggered Selleck’s criticism of Mastroianni is dated January 19, 2021 and contains a list of concerns related to committee assignments which affected all members of the office.

“He kept disagreeing with me and he wouldn’t stop talking and I at that point I had had enough, and I said Shawn, *I am going to disengage from this conversation, please stop speaking to me*, I need to finish my work.” “He refused to stop speaking to me, to the point that I actually had to get up and leave the room and was so upset that I could barely speak.” At this point, he had been talking for about an hour.

This interaction had a significant impact on Mastroianni – she reported she could barely speak. She felt that he dominated her space and prevented her from doing anything to the point that she felt completely debilitated. She went directly to the HR office to report the incident. No one was in the office. She then called the then-Chief of Staff to the Council President, P.J. Fox (“Fox”), but he did not answer so she texted him. She called Dixon and had difficulty talking so Dixon told her to hang up and go outside.

As Mastroianni explained, she told Dixon “I can’t do this anymore, I am being bullied and harassed, I asked him to stop several times and he refused to stop.” As she explained to the undersigned, “that’s what he does, when he is feels he is right about something, regardless of your feelings, regardless of *you visually becoming upset in front of him, if he wants to talk* about it, he will not stop until he is satisfied regardless of your feelings.”<sup>29</sup>

After she went outside to try to calm down, she called the Clerk’s office and asked Petronio if Selleck had left the building. Once she knew he was not there, she came back in and asked Emidy if she could finish the work so she could go home.

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<sup>29</sup> During this part of the interview, Mastroianni was crying.

Mastroianni had to call the Council person who was expecting the work to be completed and asked for another day to finish (only one of the two agendas were completed that day given the incident).

Mastroianni did not speak to Selleck for the remainder of the week. “When [she] did speak with him the following week he acted as if nothing had happened.”

Attachment 8, *E-mails to HR re: February 2021 Complaint.*

During the interview, I asked Mastroianni if Selleck swore at her or yelled at her. She said he did not. However, based on Mastroianni’s body language, I could sense her physical response as she described what he did, especially at the point when she was asking him to stop and leave. Mastroianni stated that Selleck’s conduct makes her feel: “oppressed, like I can’t have my own opinion, my own thoughts, and I can’t voice those opinions or thoughts without him not interrupting me or allowing me, me to feel the way that I feel about something and not allowing, *not listening to me when I say this is enough, I’ve had enough, you need to stop and him not stopping. It’s its oppressive, its, it is intimidating, and it is almost like saying I can’t speak only he can speak and have his opinion heard and his opinion is right, and my feelings do not matter.* And coming into my space \* \* \* he is dominating the room with his desire to get his point across” “*to the point where either he has to leave, which he refused, so that I had to leave what I found to be a priority and urgent and my job to get away*

from him I had to get away from him Because I did not feel comfortable anymore, I was done.” (emphasis added).<sup>30</sup>

## ii. Mastroianni’s Report to HR.

Initially, Mastroianni felt as if she could not speak about the incident. She continued to work between January 20 and February 16.<sup>31</sup> On February 16, she wrote an e-mail to HR that read, in part:

“I need to file a complaint and I have never done this before. It will be in regard to an incident that took place on January 20<sup>th</sup> (among other issues) but have been so distraught that I haven’t really even been able to articulate the incident. I’m in a bad place with my office situation. I had reached to Jeff last week because I was thinking about taking a leave of absence for my mental health but I have decided to file a complaint instead.”<sup>32</sup> Attachment 8.

Echevarria responded and scheduled a call with Mastroianni the following day. Mastroianni also put her concerns in writing in a detailed e-mail on February 17. Attachment 8. In it, she wrote that “no one, not me or any of my colleagues should be going through something like this, it is awful and inappropriate, and it needs to end.” Attachment 8.

In the February 17 e-mail Mastroianni also included information about a situation from November 2020 involving Selleck’s return to the office from an out-of-

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<sup>30</sup> Mastroianni explained that she has had to leave several meetings when this happens. “He wants to discuss it to the ‘nth’ degree and won’t allow you to say I’m sorry I’ve had enough you need to stop and does not respect that.” His conduct, according to Mastroianni is repetitive to the point of being abusive.

<sup>31</sup> During this period, Mastroianni considered seeking mental health treatment and/or whether she should take a medical leave.

<sup>32</sup> Prior to this report, Mastroianni had never filed a complaint concerning Selleck (or anyone else) to HR.

state trip to North Carolina; an issue with Selleck's handling of requests for time off; and Selleck's decision to stop taking meetings outside of the full Council meeting that he announced to her during the January 20 incident. The details of those issues are included here.

In November 2020, the office understanding was that if a person was to travel out of state, he or she would have to quarantine upon return to Rhode Island or obtain a negative COVID test.<sup>33</sup> Office staff brought concerns to Mastroianni and thereafter, she wrote an e-mail to Selleck including those who had concerns and asked him if he would secure a COVID test before working in the office. Selleck responded with a lengthy e-mail indicating that he would get a test.<sup>34</sup> These e-mails are dated November 20, 2020.

After Mastroianni sent the e-mail, copying the other women in the office, Selleck called her to let her know that he thought it was an inappropriate way to handle the issue.<sup>35</sup> That phone call occurred on November 20 during which Selleck called Mastroianni "immature," and "unsupportive." Mastroianni says he berated her for a significant period during this call and when she was finally given the

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<sup>33</sup> The Mayor issued a series of executive orders in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. At least as of June 2020, the City required mandatory quarantine of 14 days for Rhode Islanders returning from out of state travel. Later executive orders incorporate the Governor's executive orders on travel. The City's COVID policies obtained from Echevarria do not seem to separately address the issue.

<sup>34</sup> The e-mails produced on this topic reveal that the majority of employees (including Peligian, Petronio, Emidy, Cotugno and Fajardo) in the office were in fact concerned about Selleck's compliance with City policy/Department of Health guidelines.

<sup>35</sup> At least one person (Emidy) wrote that she appreciated being included in the e-mail. Selleck told Mastroianni he felt ambushed.

opportunity to talk, she told him explicitly that the way he spoke to her was demeaning and demoralizing. Selleck confirmed she used these words in his follow-up email but noted “there is no reason you should find that demeaning or demoralizing (not did I intend it to have that effect).”

The time off issue related to the procedure for making requests. In September 2019, Selleck sent out an e-mail informing employees that if they wanted to submit a request for time off, it had to be in a particular format. Attachment 9, *Selleck E-mail of 9/18/19*. Selleck wrote in the email the precise sentences he wanted the employee to write to him, word-by-word for each type of request. He went so far as to include in red type the precise words he wanted used in the e-mail.

For example, for a personal day request he informed the staff they needed to write the following words when requesting a personal day on the “day of:” “Hello Shawn, I am taking a personal day today.” Selleck set forth each instance attaching importance to the use of the word “request” (necessary for vacation or float time) and simply “taking” the day (such as sick or personal time). As noted, he told staff “I prefer that you send only the text in red to me for the appropriate request. Feel free to copy and paste it into your e-mail and send it to me. No other information is requested or required.” Attachment 9.

Mastroianni was reporting to HR that she considered this an example of Selleck treating the employees like children.

The additional specific issue identified in the e-mail involved Selleck’s decision not to clerk any meetings outside the full Council meeting as explained above.

Mastroianni identified these incidents but indicated there was more she wanted to share with HR.

At the end of the February 17 e-mail, Mastroianni wrote “I am working in a hostile, harassing and bullying work environment. It is effecting my mental health \* \* \*.” According to Mastroianni, when she spoke with Echevarria and Jeff Almeida (“Almeida”), Human Resources Generalist, they said they would look into the situation and speak with Selleck.

**iii. Events after Mastroianni’s HR Report.**

On Monday, February 22 (six days after Mastroianni went to HR) there was a Zoom meeting which included Selleck, Mastroianni, Petronio, and Harris.

After the meeting, Mastroianni let Echevarria know that Petronio and Harris (and others from the office) would like to speak with HR as well. She told Echevarria that “[w]e had a rough morning with him and we need to have this documented appropriately. I can say on my behalf that I am totally done with Shawn, it was brutal this morning.” Attachment 8. Echevarria wrote back to Mastroianni, Petronio and Harris asking each of them to send him an e-mail summarizing “the incident.” Attachment 8.

Mastroianni responded to HR with a detailed e-mail about the Zoom meeting that took place that morning. As she described it, the meeting initially dealt with committee assignments and the ordinance committee public hearing. However, also during this meeting, Selleck informed Mastroianni that he was taking Harris off Mastroianni’s cohort, which meant she would have no back-up as a supervisor.

Despite the fact that the leadership team had set it up so that each supervisor had a back-up, this would leave Mastroianni without one.<sup>36</sup>

This led to a discussion of Harris' training as Second Deputy (a task that still had not been completed). Mastroianni said that she "felt that [Harris] needs more training as a deputy but has been saddled with way too many 'administrative' duties. I stated that I felt that some of the administrative staff should be doing some of the things that [Harris] is doing, which would allow her more time to train to be a deputy."

According to Mastroianni, this triggered Selleck to

"lay out all his reasons for approximately 20 minutes without stopping and without interruption or debate from us about how he feels he wants things to proceed going forward, even saying that this was a 'directive' and does not feel that how we feel about it is important enough to state. In his 20 minute monologue he stated things like 'maybe people feel it's a waste of time to do air table' and 'even with regard to the Open Meetings Portal, although it was tough in the beginning even the former Clerk Lori Hagen was telling people how great the Open Meetings Portal was' and 'how we don't like to hand some responsibilities off to other people that could handle them' and also moving the responsibility of 'Lobbyist Registration and Reports' to a member of the Admin team. When he was finally finished speaking, after stating at least three times that he would stop talking and still continued to talk, I simply stated that I had a few 'statements' to make that weren't debatable and that I would just be explaining how I felt about what was said and that I would just move on after that." Attachment 8.

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<sup>36</sup> A December 2020 e-mail reflects the cohort/backup system that had been in place. By this system, the four clerks (Selleck, Mastroianni, Petronio and Harris) would rotate their days in the office so that there would be at least one clerk in the office each day. Further, "Tina and Angela will be each other's backup and Shawn and Sheri will be each other's backup."

Mastroianni made her points. Then, Selleck started questioning Mastroianni. Mastroianni told him she did not want to debate these things she just wanted to express how she felt. According to Mastroianni, Selleck “just kept pushing and asking and trying to tell me what I should be saying and feeling and at that point I just had enough so I told him I was disengaging myself from the conversation and I got up and left the zoom meeting.” Attachment 8. She further explained to HR that “I’m seriously considering taking some FMLA as you have suggested, I cannot work in an environment with someone who doesn’t listen to his staff, only sees things his way, doesn’t let you express how you feel about something without debating you about how you feel. It’s bullying and oppressive and my mental well being can no longer handle it. \* \* \*” Attachment 8.

Selleck followed up the meeting with an e-mail reiterating Harris’ would keep the administrative duties in question. The following day, Selleck changed position again and wrote Mastroianni an e-mail and copied it to the team. Attachment 8. He indicated that he was disappointed that she left the meeting early and with respect to Harris’ training, Selleck characterized Mastroianni’s concern as “[y]ou feel that Angela’s training has been hampered by her responsibility for the Lobbyist Report and Air table (I will remove those from her plate).”<sup>37</sup> He then wrote: “I have never tried to stand in the way of Angela’s training. I haven’t received any requests from

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<sup>37</sup> Accordingly, the tasks that the group spent at least 20 minutes discussing on February 22 which Selleck thought should be assigned to Harris, and that he confirmed she would keep after the meeting, he was now indicating they were taken off her plate.

anyone asking if Angela had time to receive training at any specific time (I would have gladly said yes). On the other hand, I have been working with Sheri to create opportunities for her to teach Angela about the docket, the first of which Angela said she was not able to take advantage of *for personal reasons*, unfortunately, but I'm sure Sheri will be happy to work with her this week." (emphasis added). He then asked Mastroianni if *she* was willing to take the lead on developing and implementing a training program for Harris.

It was at this point that both Petronio and Harris also submitted written complaints concerning Selleck. Accordingly, those written complaints as well as other information provided during the interviews of both Petronio, and Harris are included here.<sup>38</sup>

#### **iv. Harris' Complaint.**

Harris' complaint revealed a serious incident similar to the prior instances in which Selleck confronted other employees at work. Attachment 10, *Harris Complaint*. Harris reported that this incident occurred just after she was promoted to Second Deputy Clerk in May 2020. After Harris' promotion, she stated she was supposed to be trained by Selleck, Mastroianni and Petronio but "every time Mastroianni and Petronio tried to train me he still had me doing the work of my previous position, he just stopped it, every time it was time for them to work with me he had me working on my other job" and that this went on from May 2020 to at least February 2021.

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<sup>38</sup> Although Mastroianni had made a complaint to HR, told HR that Petronio and Harris wanted to talk to HR and both submitted something in writing, HR did not interview either of them until June.

Harris objected to this and on one particular day, they were having a conversation when she first got promoted and there was work within the job specification for Second Deputy that Selleck wanted to give to another employee. Harris told him that work belonged to the Second Deputy position and that she should be doing it, and if he gave that work away, she was going to go to Local 1033. And he said “no, no, no we need to continue talking about it.” Harris told him that they could not keep talking about it because it was the end of the day, and her husband was outside waiting to pick her up and so she said, “I have to go.”

Selleck said again “no, no, no, we need to continue this conversation.” “And I’m like *we’re not going to continue this conversation Shawn, its 4:30 and its time for me to leave, so I get up to go and he stands and he holds the door and he blocks me from leaving.*” Harris then says “Shawn you need to leave, you need to move away from the door, I need leave and he’s like no we need to finish this conversation.” “I said no, the conversation is over, and you need to move and to move your hand, and he’s still holding the door and I said Shawn we’re not going to do this, I said you need to move your hand so I can leave. And I just stood there and I stared at him. So then he finally moved his hand from the door so I just snatched the doorway and I walked out.”

Harris put this incident in writing and submitted it to HR.<sup>39</sup> Her specific words in the Memorandum she wrote were: “I had nothing further to discuss and he needed

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<sup>39</sup> Harris reported this incident to HR and demonstrated physically how it occurred. As she told me, the incident made her “angry” and “pissed.” She believes HR did not

to move away from the door. He still insisted on us finishing the conversation and would not leave. I repeated to him one more time to move away from the door and I just stared at him, and he finally released his hand off the doorknob and I grabbed the door and walk[ed] out. He's very confrontational when you don't see things his way or agree with him." Attachment 10.

The incident reflects not only a serious issue with the nature of Selleck's actions toward Harris, but also the underlying issue related to training and her qualifications for the position being in question. The Second Deputy position was a Local 1033 position, and according to Harris, this meant that when vacant, it should be filled by the most senior person in the office. Because Harris was the most senior person eligible for the job, she was seeking to be promoted to the position prior to May 2020. According to Harris, Selleck did not want Harris to receive the promotion. At the time, she was on workers' compensation leave. While she was out, she believed Selleck was speaking to other employees in the office and asking if they wanted the job and that he also reached out to HR about whether they could fill the position with someone else since she was on workers' compensation leave.

Harris ultimately got the job, but always felt as if Selleck did not want her there. When no one congratulated her, she went to Rogel to complain because other employees in the office were implying she was not qualified for the job.<sup>40</sup> Harris

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consider it a serious incident because they were only interested if she reported that she felt scared or sexually harassed.

<sup>40</sup> Harris identified Cotugno as one person who questioned her qualifications. Harris is the only black person in the office and Cotugno and Selleck are white.

believed that the other employees treated her differently because of her race. Rogel called a meeting with the staff to discuss the issue and to communicate to everyone that Harris was in fact qualified for the job and that the discussions about her qualifications needed to stop. According to Harris, Selleck did not back up Rogel or say anything to the other employees confirming that Harris was qualified.

Furthermore, when Harris was later promoted to First Deputy, Selleck continued to question her qualifications and the reasons for her promotion. This continued at least as late as August 2021.

One of the related issues is that after her first promotion, Selleck did not ensure that Harris was trained in her new position, and instead, continued to assign her administrative tasks she performed in her old job.<sup>41</sup> The lack of training issue also continued through 2021. In her complaint to HR, Harris outlines that in February 2021, after this long existing dispute about her training Selleck finally said he would clear all her old duties off her plate so that Mastroianni could plan how she could be trained. The problem was Mastroianni was going on medical leave and there

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<sup>41</sup> As noted above, Harris had been complaining about lack of training dating back to May 2020 as it relates to her first promotion. There are e-mails from November 2020 that reveal Selleck is continuing to have Harris handle time sheets/entries for staff (a duty assigned to the Secretary to the Director/Clerk – it is now handled by Cotugno). As the exchange goes on, Harris writes “I am not sure about the confusion but I do not agree with this. I feel the only way I am going to learn my job as a clerk is to take the meeting as I have been doing and that is remotely just as the stenos do. Also, if I can’t learn my job as clerk and take the meeting then I feel that I should not be doing these claim that are the work of a steno either which I have had no problem helping you out doing this past week. But I will be doing upstairs to H.R. to discuss this further.”

was no way she could finally provide all the necessary training in such a short time period.

Harris was upset because in connection with Selleck's decision to finally take the administrative duties off her plate, Selleck explained the reason he had not been able to ensure training in the past was because of Harris' personal issues. Harris wrote to HR that when Selleck said "the reason I was not being trained in the past was because of my personal issues that I had to deal with which was an absolute lie." Attachment 10. As Harris further explained, her mother did pass in June 2020, but she took only two days off. Her young granddaughter died from a serious illness in November 2020, but again, she did not take any significant period of time out of work. Thus, Selleck's contention that she was not available was rejected by Harris.<sup>42</sup> As she summarized it "I had been in this position since May of 2020 but he decided to wait until we kept pushing the issue with him about my training and him holding me back that he finally got upset and decided he was going to allow me to start training and again and *wasn't until he found out that Tina was going out on FMLA and he wanted her to do a quick 2 week for Sheri and I on training for all the work she did before she left.*"<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Harris wrote Selleck an e-mail on February 23 letting him know that she disagreed with his "excuse" for not training her.

<sup>43</sup> As is further explained in this Report, after Mastroianni filed her complaint, she did take medical leave.

Things only got worse when she received another promotion in June 2021. At the time of the interview Harris was still complaining about lack of proper training and how it impacts her ability to do her job.

Harris had complaints similar to Mastroianni regarding Selleck's method of communication. As she explained it, she has told him she has an issue with how he handles conversations and that on one occasion she said he wanted to talk about something and she said "when I'm done with the conversation, then I'm done with the conversation. I'm not going to keep going on and on. I said you have your opinion and that's your opinion. I stated to you how I felt about it. And I'm done with the conversation. I said you like to keep things going and I don't \* \* \* when I feel strong on something, I'm going to tell you how I feel about it, I'm not saying I'm right \* \* \* but I'm not going to keep going back and forth with you on something." "He's very time-consuming, he can just suck the life out of you, because it doesn't matter whether you're right or your wrong, he wants you to see his point and he wants to make you see that whatever he says he's right and he will go with you until you are to that point when he wants you to say ok Shawn you're right, you're right and that's it \* \* \* *He won't let it go until you say ok Shawn you're right.*" "It's always non-stop." Harris described Selleck as "very confrontational" and that when you try to get your point across "he doesn't want to hear it."

Harris complained that Selleck treated her differently than other employees in two other ways. One example occurred when she tried to return to the office following contracting COVID-19. Although she was due to return to work having quarantined

for the necessary number of days pursuant to policy, Selleck told her she needed to stay out for an additional period of time because some of the other employees were still worried. Harris did not believe anyone else was required to do that.

The second example related to the format for time off requests that was also mentioned in Mastroianni's complaint. As noted, Selleck set forth a particular format that needed to be followed word-by-word. Attachment 9. In January 2021, Harris needed to request time off and wrote "Hi Shawn, I am going to need to use float time today from 3:30-4:30. Unfortunately my husband has a doctors appointment and he has no way of getting there." Attachment 11, *Time Off Request E-mails*. Selleck responded that he wanted everyone to get in the habit of "using the proper language in the requests (as I wrote to Donna this morning) so it is clear which time charges don't require a request (e.g., sick) and which do. I approve this request and hope things go well." Attachment 11.

On February 9, 2021, Harris wrote "I'm requesting a half day sick Friday, February 12, 2021 in the afternoon. I am also requesting a half day sick on February 19, 2021 and also on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February in the afternoon." Attachment 11. Selleck responded "Denied in this format." Attachment 11. Harris then re-submitted the e-mail inserting the words into the precise format he required/ In response, Selleck wrote "[t]hanks for letting us know, Angela. *Sick time is yours to take whenever you want without approval.*" (emphasis added).

Harris had an issue with Selleck's denial of her requests based on failure to follow the format word-by-word, because he granted other similarly situated white

employees' requests who also failed to follow the format. For example, Fajardo requested time off on February 11. Her e-mail read: "Hi Shawn, I would like to request Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> & Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> as Half Days (Vacation time) Leaving at 12pm both days." Attachment 11. Selleck responded "This is approved." Attachment 11. On February 16, Gutierrez requested time off as follows: "Hi Shawn, I would like to request to take Tuesday, March 9<sup>th</sup> as a personal day." Attachment 11. Selleck responded "This is approved and updated on the vacation calendar."<sup>44</sup>

In sum, Harris alleges the Clerk's office is a "hostile, hostile environment" that is "very stressful to work in."

#### **v. Petronio's Complaint.**

On February 22, 2021, Petronio wrote a long e-mail to Echevarria which provided as follows:

"I have been a city employee for the past 30 years in the City Clerk's Department. I have worked with four City Clerk's and by fair my boss Shawn is the most incompetent, self-absorbed, arrogant person I have ever worked for. \* \*  
\* All he does is dictate to us how he wants this office to run or should I say managed. It's always what he wants. Our input is never good enough. Angela Harris has been a Second Deputy Clerk for the past year and still does not

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<sup>44</sup> I did not conclude Selleck's conduct was racially motivated as it appears he used the same approach with Petronio (who is white) but that is not dispositive of whether this conduct is part of a hostile work environment or otherwise violates City policy. With respect to Petronio, at one point when she wrote "Hello Shaw" instead of "Hello Shawn," at the beginning of her request for time off, Selleck responded "Hi Sheri (and everyone). It's not fun for me to proofread people's time off requests so I'm done with that." It was at this point that Selleck said he was ending his policy which required the format, and that people should just request it in the simplest form. Selleck noted in his e-mail that his "goal was to raise awareness of when you do and don't need to ask permission, but it just isn't worth it if people don't care and just want their time off." Attachment 11.

know her job because he has been having her do clerical work. We have all asked time and time again to teach her but it has fallen by the waste [sic] side. This if [sic] a very toxic office to work in and I have anxiety every day I have to come to work and be treated like I am in pre-school. We have talked to other people to try to resolve issues but nothing ever gets resolved. Today's meeting any [sic] every meeting is about input on how to make the office better and nothing ever gets done. The meetings always get out of hand and he always has an attitude and talks down to us all the time. As far as I am concerned he is not capable of being the City Clerk and no one should be treated the way he treats us or should have come to work feeling the way we do." Attachment 12, *Petronio Complaint*.

Petronio explained her issues with Selleck during our interview. She was upset by the same things pointed out by Mastroianni and Harris – the fact that Selleck continuously dominated the conversation. She was frustrated by the daily meetings that took many hours. During these meetings Selleck would seek opinions, but then it seemed that he did so without ever intending to consider those opinions because he would just implement something the original way as if the meeting never occurred.

Petronio confirmed the incident in which Selleck was unprofessional about his response to her request when she misspelled his name. She explained it just adds to the anxiety in that you are making a simple request for time off, but you don't know what you are going to get in return. She also confirmed the events of January 20 in that she was extremely upset because he refused to show her hands on how to handle the executive session of the meeting which left her in tears. As she explained, the refusal to assist her prior to the meeting left her stomach in knots and she had to call more than one person to help her through it.

In relation to training, she explained that she has difficulty with the manner in which he has handled both the training of Harris as well as cross-training so that others in the office can learn what Mastroianni or Petronio do. Since he returned from administrative leave, he wants to sit with her and have her show him each step of certain tasks she performs (which can take hours). He will then write down each step so that he can then teach someone else, instead of Petronio teaching that other person.

According to Petronio, Selleck's personality makes it hard for her to come to work.

**vi. Events Leading up to Mastroianni's Medical Leave.**

By February 23, Mastroianni decided she needed to take a medical leave. Accordingly, in response to Selleck's e-mail proposing she take on the responsibility for Harris's training, she informed him that she would be taking medical leave effective March 1. Attachment 13, *Mastroianni Medical Leave E-mails*. The e-mail with her notice was sent on a Tuesday afternoon at about 2 p.m.

About an hour later, Selleck wrote:

*"With Angela's plate cleared, could you take this opportunity (and obvious immediate need in light of your upcoming absence) to train her and transfer as many of your responsibilities to her and Sheri as possible during the rest of this week?"*

Please put together a plan and let me know by tomorrow (Wednesday) at noon what you feel you can and can't be transferred by the end of the day Friday, and then we can figure out how to take care of the rest.

If it helps, you and Angela can both work in 305 the rest of the week, and I'll approve overtime for Angela if necessary." Attachment 13 (emphasis added).

Mastroianni responded that this was an "impossible request for me to fill" as she already was handling the work for committee meetings on Wednesday and Thursday evenings. "Additionally, there is no way that Angela can learn what she would need to know in the little time that I will have left. I'm already overworked and overstressed by the situation as is and I don't have the mental capacity to fulfill the request. I'm using what little brain power I have left to complete what actually needs to be done over the next two days." Attachment 13.

Selleck did not relent in his effort to have Mastroianni train and/or plan for the work of the office in her absence. Instead, he wrote back to her at the end of the day with the following:

"My intent is not to make an impossible request, but to make sure we can manage while you are out.

If Jesenia is dependent upon you to prepare the Board agenda for next Monday, how will it get done in two weeks?

Even if you have no time to train anyone to do anything, could you identify who on our team is capable of filling in for the various roles that responsibility for?

Are you the only person capable of clerking Ordinances tomorrow evening or could someone take your place so that you can plan or train others on different tasks?

You accomplish such a huge volume of work for our office, but right now I am pleading with you for the sake of our leadership team, to take off your production hat for a moment and put on your management hat so that Sheri,

Angela and I are better prepared for what greets us when you leave next week.

Please let me know how we can help reduce your immediate work load over the next three days so you can help us prepare.”<sup>45</sup> Attachment 13.

Mastroianni responded with the information about how Fajardo would prepare the agenda and another staff person can proofread. “Anyone on the team will have to pick up the Board responsibility and proofread what Jesenia has done.” She also responded that there was no one else trained in how to clerk the Ordinances meeting noting that “[i]f we had moved forward from the beginning, when Angela became second deputy with the training the leadership team on various committees rather than overloading her with administrative functions we would not be in this predicament.” Attachment 13. Finally, she noted: I don’t know what I can pull together over the next two days, I will do what I can when I can.” Attachment 13.

On February 28, Selleck wrote to the “leadership team” on the topic of “*Changes in City Clerk Management*” that “[a]fter our series of communications recently, followed by conversations with each of you individually last week, I understand some significant changes in management approach are necessary in our office. We’ve had some challenging times, *but this time is different.*” Attachment 13. One of the changes that Selleck proposed is that he “will avoid, as much as possible, being the person who is speaking in our meetings going forward.” Attachment 13.

Mastroianni began her medical leave on March 1.

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<sup>45</sup> Significantly, Selleck had been the Clerk for about two (2) years at this point.

The following day, Selleck wrote only to Mastroianni. In his e-mail he thanked her “for speaking with me last Thursday and shar[ing] why you were taking time off.”<sup>46</sup> Attachment 13. He then shared additional ideas for change and ended the e-mail with “I hope you don’t mind me sharing these ideas. *The reasons you needed to take time off are on my mind constantly and I want you to know that I’m committed to rebuilding with you.*” (emphasis added).

Mastroianni returned to work two weeks later. When Mastroianni returned, she felt sick to her stomach. She felt anxiety and stress at the prospect of having to see or speak with Selleck.

**vii. HR handling of the February 2021 Complaints.**

Mastroianni, Petronio and Harris were under the impression that HR was going to address the issues outlined with Selleck. Between February 16 and March 16, it is unknown what took place within HR, but it does not appear any formal investigation took place. There is no evidence that HR interviewed any employees within the Clerk’s office at this time or examined, on a formal basis, whether any City policies and/or state or federal laws were violated by Selleck.

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<sup>46</sup> Mastroianni said she told Selleck that she could not function normally because of the stress she was under from his constant talking, not listening, and that she told him “you talk so much I cannot express to you how I feel about something you never stop talking and you never given me an opportunity.” She also told him she was having issues with the constant meetings pulling her away from work and the constant debate with her about how she feels about something.

On March 16, Mastroianni was notified of a meeting with HR that would be held with Echevarria, Almeida and Selleck. She understood this to be a meeting organized by HR at which there would be some discussion of the issues raised by her complaint. Instead, the meeting started with Selleck indicating that *he* had a question *for Mastroianni* to answer – the question was “What do you think a City Clerk is?” Echevarria then asked Selleck whether he had told Mastroianni about the purpose of the meeting. Selleck said he did not. Accordingly, Echevarria ended the meeting.<sup>47</sup>

Following the meeting, HR sent an e-mail to both Mastroianni and Selleck entitled “Takeaways from Today’s Conversation.” Attachment 14, *HR E-mails Post February 2021 Complaints*. In this e-mail, Echevarria “document[ed] some takeaways from today’s conversation:”

- “1. Be respectful of time; set up meetings and stick to time limits. \* \* \*
2. Clearly define roles: \* \* \*
3. Be respectful: be mindful of spoken and written tone, avoid accusations of character. Keep the focus on processes, not people, and don’t take constructive procedural criticism personally.
4. Avoid anger: do [not] engage in shouting matches[.] *If you are feeling frustrated in a meeting, end the meeting* \* \*
- \*
5. Management collaboration is key \* \* \*
6. Address conflict constructively \* \* \*” Attachment 14.

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<sup>47</sup> Mastroianni thinks Echevarria did not know that Selleck planned to use the meeting as an opportunity to question her and that is why the meeting ended abruptly. As she wrote in her follow-up e-mail “I was totally caught off guard by Shawn’s opening statement and was completely unaware of what the meeting was about, I truly thought that it was just a check-in and wasn’t prepared for anything but that.” Attachment 14.

The e-mail from Echevarria did not address any of the specific complaints made by Mastroianni including her allegation that Selleck's conduct toward her and refusal to end the conversation and physically leave her alone on January 20 had caused her to breakdown. The e-mail did not mention any issues raised by Petronio or Harris, including Harris' complaint about Selleck refusing to let her leave the room in May 2020. It is unknown if HR drafted any type of report for the Solicitor or whether Selleck was counseled or disciplined in any way at this point.

In response to Echevarria, Selleck wrote his own e-mail. In it, he noted he would be away for the next three (3) weeks and that this should "provide[] a great opportunity for a visible shift in management because of my absence and I'm happy that Tina and I (along with Sheri and Angela) have been able to craft much of that shift as a team ahead of my leave." Attachment 14. He then noted that Echevarria had asked him to put in writing the plan he envisioned for managing the office better and to write up his main asks of Mastroianni. Attachment 14. His vision was that he "*genuinely wanted to let Tina lead most of the operations of the office in a way that she feels removes me as an obstacle, but includes me as a collaborator and partner going forward.*" (emphasis added). He further asked that "she lay the groundwork for what processes need to be documented and carve out time to do that, either by herself or with other team members that have knowledge about a particular process. This might be tough for her to do while managing the whole office and covering my responsibilities over the next three weeks, but gradually, especially when I return, I know we can do this together." Attachment 14. Selleck ended with "Tina, thank you

. . . for however long you stay (and I hope it is longer than me). . . I appreciate the immeasurable value you provide to the department.” Attachment 14.

The undersigned asked Mastroianni if she felt that Selleck followed HR recommendations in Attachment 14. According to Mastroianni, the suggestions were disregarded because Selleck continued to be disrespectful of her feelings and time, continued to debate her, and she felt he continued to believe that he did nothing wrong, and it would continue whether she liked it or not.

**E. The Council Transition and Period Between April 22 and June 25.**

Mastroianni, Petronio and Harris did not feel as though the issues within the Clerk’s office were resolved by HR. In April 2021, former Council President Matos was appointed Lieutenant Governor. As a result, on or about April 22 Igliazzi became Council President.

Soon thereafter, Mastroianni, Petronio and Harris went to Igliazzi and the new Chief of Staff, Jim Lombardi (“Lombardi”) to discuss the existing problems in the Clerk’s Office. As Mastroianni explained, they reported their concerns about how he spoke to them, how he did not respect their time, and their feelings about the existing hostile and uncomfortable work environment.

Shortly thereafter, the deputy clerks were informed that Selleck was going to work mostly remotely, that he was not going to be in his office, but if he needed to come in, he would access his office by a door that would involve less contact with staff. In addition, Selleck would still handle less committee meetings, but would continue to staff the full Council meetings. From Mastroianni’s view, this change was in

response to the deputies' complaints and the hostile work environment created by Selleck's "management style."

From Selleck's perspective, this was a political move by Igliazzi and not the result of any complaints by employees against him. Yet, he acknowledges in his statement that as soon as Igliazzi assumed Council leadership from Matos, he approached Selleck about the problems between Mastroianni and himself. As Selleck described it, on April 22, Council President Igliazzi:

"suggested that the friction between us was impossible to overcome and that it would be better just to avoid the conflict by separating us. \* \* \* He offered a proposal that would leave Tina managing the day-to-day operations of most City Clerk responsibilities, freeing up time for me to apply my technology consulting skills to assist other 'Councilmatic'<sup>48</sup> departments. \* \* \* I agreed to his proposal and suggested that I first work with the Probate Court, which was drowning in boxes of old paperwork \* \* \*." Attachment 3, p. 2.

Selleck indicates he wrote a draft e-mail with his proposal regarding new duties and sent it to Lombardi. Selleck reported that for the next few weeks, Lombardi asked him to work from home, not go to his office and not interact with his

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<sup>48</sup> Selleck wrote that the term "councilmatic" "is one that Igliazzi appears to have invented to refer to departments that are led by Council Appointees." Selleck indicated that Igliazzi believes he has direct supervisory power over these departments and it appears Selleck disagrees Attachment 3, p. 2. The term (actually *councilmanic*) is not made up. It is actually contained in the Charter. For example, in Art. III entitled "City Clerk," § 2-52, it provides "[t]he city clerk shall when no other provision is made, *act as the clerk of all councilmanic committees*. As said clerk of committees he shall make, or cause to be made by one of his deputies, proper records in books kept for that purpose of the proceedings and transactions of each committee, and shall perform such other duties and services for said committees as they may from time to time require."

staff. Selleck says he assumed “good intentions as we tested out the new arrangement.” Attachment 3.

On May 24, according to Selleck “there was an escalation.” He came to the office to use the City Seal and later received an e-mail from Lombardi that he had been told not to interact with staff. The next day, Selleck met with Lombardi and Igliazzi to discuss the situation.<sup>49</sup>

Selleck summarized the state of affairs after this meeting as follows:

*“At no point in any of these interactions did anyone suggest there was an issue with our office culture or recommend any changes in my management style or behavior. Rather, Igliazzi and Lombardi made it clear that they expected me to execute my role exactly as they directed, even though there had been a complete lack of explanation and no formal communication as to why these changes were taking place. Despite this, I approached the situation as collaboratively as I could and continued to work from home as they had requested.”* Attachment 3, p. 4 (emphasis added).

## **F. The June 25 Complaint.**

### **i. Mastroianni’s Report.**

On June 25, Selleck came to the office. According to Mastroianni, that he came to work and was interacting with staff was inconsistent with her understanding that he was supposed to remain out of the office. She understood the directive to be that if he came to the office, he would enter through the Council side to avoid interaction and on June 25, that did not happen. Accordingly, she went back to HR. This time,

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<sup>49</sup> In addition, Selleck’s parking pass had been deactivated. This issue will be addressed later in this Report.

she reported that when Selleck is coming into the office “when we know he is coming into the building while we are here, we’re told in advance of his coming to the building just so that we can prepare ourselves for the chance that we might see him.” Attachment 15, *June Correspondence with HR*.

She also reported she was upset because Selleck was taking professional development classes at night while she and the other office staff had increased duties based on his absence. His absence, as she characterized it, was due to “the hostile work environment that he had created here \* \* \*.”

**ii. The HR Inquiry.**

As stated at the outset, when the undersigned was tasked with undertaking this investigation Selleck had already been placed on leave by HR and returned, with some indication that an investigation was conducted which did not reveal any issues. Accordingly, Echevarria was interviewed to get some understanding of what had taken place.

Echevarria confirmed that during the time he has served as HR Director (since May 2019) his office has received calls and correspondence related to concerns about Selleck. Echevarria described the nature of the reports to be “interpersonal disagreements around communication style,” but would not reveal who made the reports or the substance of the reports based on confidentiality concerns.

Generally, he stated that these concerns did not inspire any investigation by HR, *but that they did result in communications with the Clerk regarding his behavior.*

Echevarria would not reveal specifically whether Selleck had a history of counseling or discipline for issues with his alleged communication style.

Significantly, Echevarria made clear that when he receives reports of employee interpersonal issues, he may not consider it to rise to the level of an official complaint that requires an investigation. For example, in this specific situation involving the Clerk's office his inquiry was limited only to whether a hostile work environment based upon sex or other illegal discrimination existed and did not deal with Selleck's potential misconduct and/or violation of any other employer policy.

With regard to the Clerk's office situation in general, Echevarria reported that it was an incident stretched out over a period of time. He then offered to share with me only certain information. Significantly, the time period over which Echevarria's information provided to me began with June 2021.

Echevarria explained that he received a call from Lombardi regarding an incident that occurred between the Clerk and office staff. Lombardi explained that he had met with staff and that they were complaining about a hostile work environment.<sup>50</sup> Because HR takes complaints about a hostile work environment very seriously, Selleck was placed on leave and HR began an investigation. When I asked Echevarria if he had any information about the substance of the potential hostile work environment claim being alleged before the inquiry began, he stated that he had some understanding of some interpersonal issues had occurred but that he wanted to

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<sup>50</sup> Selleck alleges that Lombardi told Echevarria that the complaint was based upon alleged sexual harassment and that this was the only reason Echevarria agreed to investigate.

verify if they met the “EEOC” standard such as based on gender, national origin, or other federal protected classes. Echevarria reported that his office conducted an investigation and described his general procedure as follows: “like we would with any investigatory process, we typically remove the employee being investigated while we do our internal review, and our internal review consists of interviewing the staff in the office, reviewing any sort of written materials that are provided to us, and then ensuring that we give the person being investigated their due process, right.”<sup>51</sup> “We called up the front line staff of the city clerks’ office; we interviewed all of them; we had previously interviewed some of the other staff in the clerk’s office the middle management staff or had received testimonials from them regarding what the climate of the office was like \* \* \*.”

When he completed his process (interviewing all the employees in the clerk’s office), he provided a written report to the City Law Department and shared feedback with Iglizzi, Lombardi and Selleck. The HR Inquiry Memo was provided to me as part of this investigation. It confirmed that the focus of the HR Inquiry was possible violations of the EEO policy only (i.e., discrimination and harassment) and although it referred to “City policy,” it did not refer to any specific policy and it examined only whether there were any violations of City policy that contributed to a hostile work environment based on sex (or some other protected category). Furthermore, while it

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<sup>51</sup> In this instance, Echevarria did not interview Selleck, not because Selleck declined but because Echevarria *did not request* that he come in for an interview. Further, Echevarria kept in contact with Selleck to update him and explain what was involved in an investigation into a hostile work environment complaint.

recognized that there was one “serious” incident in which Selleck blocked an employee from leaving a room, it is unclear which incident it involves because the Memo does not name the employee. Significantly, while HR indicated the incident was serious, the Memo reflected only that Selleck was given a “verbal warning” and thus, it is unclear if this constituted formal discipline because the Memo also confirms Selleck had no formal discipline in his file.

With regard to his recommendations, during the interview Echevarria would only share that he recommended reinstatement of Selleck<sup>52</sup> and that Selleck should implement training in his office with middle management regarding *their* collective behavior. When asked if any training had actually taken place, he did not know because it would have been up to Selleck to implement.

As of the date of the interview, Echevarria indicated he had no outstanding complaints or communications regarding the Clerk. Selleck has never been questioned formally by HR about any of the incidents recited above.

### **iii. Additional Information from Interviews of Cotugno and Peligian.**

The undersigned was able to interview two of the other women who worked in the Clerk’s office who had not filed any complaints about Selleck. The following represents what was gathered in those interviews.

Peligian is employed as a Stenographic Reporter. She has been employed by the City for about 20 years, with the last 7 being within the Clerk’s office. She

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<sup>52</sup> Selleck was not separated or on a disciplinary leave such as a suspension, he was placed on paid administrative leave.

expressed concerns about not really knowing what was going on between Mastroianni, Petronio, Harris and Selleck. She noted that just that morning, all three had been walked out of the office accompanied by Costa and a police officer and that the remaining employees were left without knowing exactly what happened.<sup>53</sup> She found it “unsettling.”

Pelagian reported that she had been interviewed by HR. As she explained, “as far as my interview with HR, they asked a lot of questions, one of them was sexual harassment, there was none. Does he harass you? Yes. He is, he can be tough. Um, you know um I think he has had run-ins with everyone from what I understand. I mean I’ve had my own. Everybody has had some sort of a run-in or argument with him or whatever. He’s very head strong. He’s a challenger. He challenges everything.” When I ask her how it impacts her in thinking about coming to work, I asked her is it something where you think he is going to come in and occupy my time and I need to get this done first. She responded, “that’s it.” She says, “sometimes it can be a hold up to what you are trying to accomplish” “He gets long-winded.” “Something that could be said in a sentence is said in an hour.” “It is irritating.” Regardless, Pelagian did not think his behavior justified administrative leave.

She explained she basically told HR was she was telling me. “He wants his way; you can offer, you can offer suggestions, or I can give you an opinion, but I feel like my opinion is wrong. You know what I mean. An opinion is an opinion. You can’t tell me it’s not right or whatever.” “He will tell you while I appreciate what you

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<sup>53</sup> This event will be further explained in this Report.

are telling me, this is the bottom line.” Before he came in, we were always, before he came in working pretty independently, we all knew our jobs and we did our jobs.” “Now he has to come out every morning and do a huddle, and what’s on your plate, what’s on your plate, I don’t need someone hovering over me every day to know what I have to do. If you have a problem with a someone not doing their work, address it with that person. You know, to me that’s what wastes a lot of time too.”

Pelagian was asked whether she had problems with the prior clerk. She responded that it’s a “hostile environment” with a “black cloud that won’t go away” and that there are always arguments, and everyone has different personalities, but Hagen did not hover over you. She then turned back to Selleck noting that “it isn’t humiliation; its um, I don’t even know the word for it. You know, he just, I think that his intentions are good. He does, I think he truly wants to turn the office around and make it a good place to work.” When I asked her if she thinks that is possible, she said “right now, I don’t have a good feeling about it because the deputies and him they always lock horns, its its awful.” Pelagian mentioned that Selleck makes people work that do not want to work and that is part of the problem. However, when I asked her if the deputies work, she said “two of them do.” She did not want to name names in terms of who she thinks does not want to work.

When we discussed conflict between the Clerk and the deputies, I asked her if that was new (again considering the office environment with prior clerks). Pelagian said the conflict existed since Selleck “came in” and that it may be because Mastroianni wanted the job. However, she also indicated that even if that is true, he

is still a difficult personality. She believes Selleck has good intentions and is not “all bad.”

Cotugno has been employed by the City for about 8 years working within the Clerk’s office. She explained her role as general administrative duties and that she reports directly to Selleck. She has not had any issues with Selleck and thinks he is an asset. When asked if she had any issues with his management style said it “might leave something to be desired,” but she viewed it more as an issue with those in the office that did not take direction well. Cotugno characterized the current situation as a “power play” because Mastroianni wants to be City Clerk and that she had problems with the prior two clerks as well as a role in their removal

**iv. Events Following the HR Inquiry and During this Investigation.**

Selleck returned from the administrative leave on August 10. Prior to his return, Dixon was present when Lombardi and Iglizzi informed Mastroianni, Petronio and Harris that Selleck would be returning to work. As she described it, they were in shock because this meant “they weren’t believed.” The morning Selleck returned, he held a staff meeting during which he spent a significant amount of time discussing his personnel situation, including the litigation that was initiated to return him to the workplace and his continued position regarding his independence from the control of the Council or Council leadership.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> After Selleck was placed on administrative leave, litigation was initiated to return him to the workplace. A preliminary order issued by the Rhode Island Supreme Court and the City and Selleck are in the process of litigating the merits of their dispute about the scope of authority of the City as it relates to Selleck’s position. This is a continuation of the theme of the tension between the Council leadership and Selleck

On August 11, Selleck notified Mastroianni that he expected her to continue managing the scheduling and staffing of all committee meetings. Selleck informed her that he would resume staffing of the full Council meeting only.

On August 18, Mastroianni and Selleck had a meeting regarding staff movement. During this meeting, Selleck questioned why Harris had been promoted.

On August 20, Selleck asked Mastroianni to e-mail him with a description of the different types of advertisements (i.e., which types of meetings are advertised and in what publication). Mastroianni sent him the information.

On August 23, Selleck told Petronio to not “complete any tasks related to the [City Council] docket and journal without [him].” According to his e-mail, “[w]e haven’t been able to develop and implement a plan to train other staff on the City Council docket and journal, so I’d like to try something different.” Selleck explained that he decided it would better if he first learned from Petronio and then he could train another person. Accordingly, he told her to “not complete any tasks related to the docket and journal without me. Please let me know when anything related to the docket and journal needs to be done so that I can complete the task with your guidance and understand each aspect.”

On August 24, the Council President held a routine staff meeting. This meeting involved Igliazzi, Costa, Yvonne Graf (“Graf”), Caleb Horton (“Horton”),

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that has existed at least since 2020 when Mastroianni brought her concerns about Selleck’s view of his position to the attention of Council leadership.

Selleck, Sean Bouchard (“Bouchard”), Coloian<sup>55</sup> and Dixon. During the meeting, the issue of staffing came up.<sup>56</sup> A discussion ensued between Selleck and Igliazzi during which Selleck raised his voice and became confrontational and disrespectful. According to Dixon and Costa, Igliazzi did not raise his voice and expressly told Selleck that they could discuss the issue at another time. The events of the meeting are memorialized in two Memoranda, one written by Dixon and one written by Costa. As Selleck continued to confront Igliazzi, both Dixon and Costa left the meeting. Dixon’s Memorandum indicates that she left the meeting because toward the end, Selleck had his phone placed on the desk and was moving it around as if he was recording the meeting. When Igliazzi asked Selleck if he was recording, his response was “so what if I am?” Igliazzi informed Selleck that the attendees should know if they are being recorded.

Harris was on vacation on August 23 and 24. On the evening of August 24, Harris sent a group text to the leadership team indicating she would need August 26 off as well for a vacation day. On the August 25 (Wednesday) Selleck responded that

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<sup>55</sup> Coloian described Selleck’s behavior in this meeting as “bulldozing” and “dominating” the whole meeting. As she explained, he took an hour and no one else had a chance to talk about anything else that was going on and that everyone was in disbelief how “this man” conducted himself in that office.

<sup>56</sup> The substance of the dispute related to the Council President’s suggestion that some staffing/workload issues in the Clerk’s office could potentially be resolved if some of the smaller boards and commission meetings were staffed by outside vendors. This led to Selleck become upset with the Council President regarding who had the authority to make the staffing decision and/or whether the Charter required the Clerk to handle certain responsibilities. As this report makes clear, it is apparent that staffing and assignments have been an issue at various times since Selleck was appointed. In this situation, Dixon stated she did not necessarily care who was right the point was that Selleck’s behavior was unprofessional.

he could not approve Harris' day off because there was no one in office to prepare Board memos for the Board of Contract and Supply meeting the next Monday. Harris had an issue with this because this work is more properly assigned to a Stenographer and thus, it should not be the basis for denying a vacation day to her since the work is not associated with her position. Selleck told Harris that if she cannot come in then she needs to use a sick day.

On August 26, Igliazzi wrote to members of the Council concerning the status of Selleck's employment. The letter provides as follows:

"Shortly after I was elected Council President, it came to my attention that there was a long-standing personnel matter within the Office of the City Clerk that preceded my presidency. Subsequently, three female staff members, who are subordinates to Mr. Selleck, requested a meeting to discuss the work environment of that office. During the meeting, they presented allegations against Mr. Selleck, including but not limited to alleged toxic work environment (condescending and dismissive behavior), and alleged inappropriate management style.

Per the City Solicitor's office, the Supreme Court has issued a temporary back-to-work order for Mr. Selleck until future hearings are held. The services of Carly Iafrate, Esq., have been retained to conduct an independent investigation into the allegations. Upon completion of her review, Ms. Iafrate will issue a report on her findings.

Upon conclusion of the findings, any and all disciplinary action may be taken, including, but not limited to, additional training, suspension, termination and/or a Section 403 hearing.

Whenever these types of allegations are presented, it is imperative that we take them seriously, and take all the appropriate actions to protect the worker and maintain a professional work environment." Attachment 16, *Igliazzi Letter to the Council, 8/26/21.*

On or about August 26, Mastroianni, Petronio and Harris requested to be transferred out of the Clerk's office. Mastroianni's e-mail provided as follows:

"I am writing this e-mail to you under much distress and concern for my wellbeing. I am respectfully requesting to be transferred out of the Department of City Clerk immediately. I can no longer work under the direction of the current City Clerk, Shawn Selleck. His lack of leadership, knowledge and management skills have caused me to become both physically and mentally ill. I am constantly under so much stress that I cannot sleep at night, I'm sick to my stomach every morning going to work and I've recently started to get nose bleeds. The conditions under which I am currently working, being under his supervision are intolerable and abusive.

I again, respectfully request an immediate transfer out of the Department until the current situation with the Clerk has some resolution. Please, for the sake of my wellbeing and mental health grant this request."  
*Attachment 17, Mastroianni Request for Transfer.*

The requests were granted by Igliozzi. On August 30, Costa accompanied Mastroianni, Petronio and Harris to the office early so that they could remove their belongings and be re-located.<sup>57</sup>

That day, Igliozzi informed members of the Council of the requests for transfer and that "[b]eginning today, August 30, 2021, the above-referenced staff members will begin reporting to alternate work assignments. I have informed Mr. Selleck of these transfers and let him know that funds will be available to him to hire outside

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<sup>57</sup> Costa said she asked for a police officer to accompany the process for everyone's benefit and that Selleck offered to leave the office to make the process go more smoothly.

stenographers or other temporary support he may need during this interim period.”

Attachment 18, *Igliozi Letters re: Transfer*.

From the time the transfers have been granted, the deputy clerks have worked within other offices in City Hall and have not been performing their clerk-related duties.

On September 13, 2021, Brenda Aquilante (“Aquilante”), City Payroll Supervisor e-mailed Selleck about the fact that “NPAY” was listed for time entries associated with Mastroianni, Petronio and Harris. Selleck confirmed the correct entry was “NPAY,” meaning those employees would receive no pay in the next payroll. According to Mastroianni, all three employees time entries were entered (i.e., so they would receive normal payroll) but those entries were then changed by Selleck. Lombardi had to revise the entries so the women would be paid.

## **V. Findings.**

### **A. Preliminary Issues.**

A few preliminary issues should be mentioned. First, it is apparent that there is a current dispute between the City and Selleck that is the subject of litigation concerning the relationship between the Officer of the Clerk and the City Council or City government in general. In terms of litigation related materials, this writer reviewed only the Petition for Quo Warranto filed by Selleck with attachments and has not reviewed the City filings or any filings which may have come after the Petition.

Between that Petition, some correspondence between the City and Selleck's counsel post-Petition (to which I was copied) and Selleck's statement, it is at least implied that Selleck, as the office holder of the position of City Clerk, cannot be disciplined outside of the confines of § 403 of the Charter, and that § 403 only provides for a removal process which has not been pursued. In other words, it appears that Selleck takes the position he cannot be disciplined short of removal pursuant to § 403. Resolving that legal question is not the basis for this investigation and so the authority of City to render discipline short of removal (either within or outside the confines of § 403) is left for someone else to resolve.

This writer assumed, without making a legal determination on the question, that City policies governing the conduct of City employees apply to Selleck's employment with the City. This assumption was made based on common sense – all City employees, whether appointed by the Council or the Mayor are still employees of the City and accordingly their conduct must comply with City policy. They are not free to behave in whatever manner they deem acceptable. Thus, I examined the complaints at issue for such possible policy violations. As in any case involving employee misconduct, once policy violations are identified, it is up to the employer to determine if the policy violations rise to the level of disciplinable events, and if so, what is the appropriate measure of discipline.

## **B. Policy Violations.**

Selleck's behavior as outlined in this report violates the City code of conduct, which includes the City's anti-bullying and anti-harassment policies, and with respect to some behaviors, the workplace violence policy. My specific findings are as follows.

Selleck has engaged in dominance, bullying and/or confrontational behavior which has the effect of harassing and/or intimidating employees and otherwise making them uncomfortable and unduly stressed in their working environments. This includes the incidents from 2019 involving Coloian, Costa and Delgado, as well as the May 2020 incident involving Harris and the January 2021 incident involving Mastroianni.<sup>58</sup> Each of these incidents involved a situation where Selleck engaged in confrontational behavior, invading the personal space of the employee involved, and dominated the situation with the verbal message he wanted to communicate in complete disregard of the employee's comfort level, and/or visible reaction of distress.<sup>59</sup> In each of these instances, Selleck *ignored* the employee's request to either stop the conversation, or more significantly, to leave the employee's personal workspace.

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<sup>58</sup> The undersigned appreciates that some of these incidents are more than two years old. However, it is clear they have contributed to the negative work environment and each of these employees' continued avoidance of Selleck which is simply not an acceptable state of affairs for any workplace.

<sup>59</sup> In other words, even if the employee became visibly upset, like Mastroianni, Selleck continued.

For example, despite repeated requests by Coloian to leave her office and to stop, he refused. As she explained his approach to her: “It’s like *I am doing this, I don’t care how you feel about it and I don’t care if you feel uncomfortable, I’m not stopping – I’m going to have this conversation and you are going to have this conversation with me.*” Coloian said “*and that’s when I kept saying you need to stop, please leave my office you’re making me very uncomfortable.*”

As Delgado described it, he “felt [Selleck] invaded my space and boundaries, threatening my personal space and I was doing my best not to react.” Costa described his approach as “relentless.” In the January 2021 incident, Selleck’s invasion of Mastroianni’s workspace and dominance preventing her from doing her job and caused her an emotional breakdown at work. As she described it, he refused to leave, he refused to stop, and she got to the point where she had to leave her space to get away from him.

In perhaps the most extreme example, Selleck *prevented Harris from leaving the office by keeping his hand on the doorknob* until the point where she had to tell him to get his hand off the doorknob so she could leave. Preventing an employee from leaving their physical space is not just unprofessional or a problem with management style and it is not an “interpersonal” issue. Refusing to leave an employee’s personal space and ignoring requests to do so or preventing an employee from leaving himself

or herself is hostile and intimidating conduct,<sup>60</sup> an act of harassment, and an act of bullying. It is simply not permissible in any instance within the workplace.

Behavior that requires an employee to remain within Selleck's control until he sees fit to leave or to allow the employee to leave is totally unacceptable in any workplace. As noted above, the City has policies that require all employees to adhere to a standard of professional conduct to "ensure[] that the work environment is safe, comfortable and productive. Employees must be respectful and courteous of others.

\* \* \*"

Importantly, the behavior described not only violates general workplace expectations, but it violates the City's workplace violence policy which incorporates one City anti-bullying provision. At first glance, the term "workplace violence" may invoke thoughts of a more serious incident at work such as one that involves actual physical violence. But like most workplace violence policies, the City policy prohibits "all forms of violence and threats or overtures of violence, express or implied." In terms of prohibited conduct, the policy prohibits any conduct that threatens or intimidates other employees. The part that prevents bullying includes behavior that "undermines, patronizes, humiliates, intimidates or demeans the recipient. The policy prevents intimidation which includes "behavior intended to frighten, coerce, or induce duress in others *or having the effect thereof.* \* \* \*"

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<sup>60</sup> Significantly, it does not matter whether Harris was "pissed," or "angry" by Selleck's' actions, as opposed to scared or intimidated. The conduct violates City policy, period.

The City Handbook (separate from the Workplace Violence Policy) defines bullying as *repeated inappropriate behavior, either direct or indirect, whether verbal or physical or otherwise conducted by one or more persons against another or others at the place of work and/or in the course of employment or through social media.* Such behavior violates the City's Code of Ethics, which clearly states that all employees will be treated with *dignity and respect.* Furthermore, "bullying may be intentional or unintentional. However, it must be noted that where an allegation of bullying is made, the intention of the alleged bully is irrelevant and will not be given consideration when meting out discipline. As in sexual harassment, it is the effect of the behavior upon the individual that is important."

In other words, whether or not Selleck intended to intimidate or harass the employees involved is irrelevant. The point is that the behavior violates the policy based on its effect on the employee involved. As Mastroianni described, she felt "oppressed, like I can't have my own opinion, my own thoughts, and I can't voice those opinions or thoughts without him not interrupting me or allowing me, me to feel the way that I feel about something and not allowing, not listening to me when I say this is enough, I've had enough, you need to stop and him not stopping. It's its oppressive, its, it is intimidating, and it is almost like saying *I can't speak, only he can speak and have his opinion heard and his opinion is right, and my feelings do not matter.* And coming into my space \* \* \* he is dominating the room with his desire to get his point across" "to the point where either he has to leave, which he refused, so that I had to leave what I found to be a priority and urgent and my job to get away from him I had

*to get away from him because I did not feel comfortable anymore, I was done.”*  
(emphasis added).

Clearly, Selleck’s conduct has had an intimidating, upsetting and/or uncomfortable effect on each of the persons involved. Accordingly, each incident involving an in-office confrontation in which Selleck was confrontational, refused to leave when asked and/or prevented the employee from leaving the physical space violates the City policies mentioned above. I have reached this conclusion for several reasons – the witnesses involved in the incidents were credible and several witnesses described similar conduct even when they were not aware of or involved in each other’s situation. In addition, there is no testimony from Selleck disputing the events as described for this writer to consider.

Separate from the in-office confrontations described above, several witnesses (including, but not limited to, Mastroianni, Petronio, Harris, and Peligian) described Selleck’s general approach to his dealings with employees that include common thread. He does not listen to anyone; he is condescending and dismissive of anyone’s input or opinion regardless of what he says. In other words, he may indicate he is open to suggestions, but in reality, he does not process or receive any. This approach (and other events noted below) has resulted in a hostile and/or toxic work environment.

The phrase hostile work environment is commonly thought of in connection with a sexual harassment complaint. But the common usage of the term does not mean a hostile work environment cannot exist that is not premised on a

discriminatory motive. In fact, many workplaces have policies that prohibit any type of harassment. This makes sense because otherwise employees could treat co-workers or subordinates in any fashion as long as it did not rise to the level of illegal treatment. In fact, the City policy prohibits harassment in its Handbook when it provides that: “[a]ll employees, elected officials, volunteers, customers, visitors, vendors and business associates should be treated with *courtesy and respect* at all times. \* \* \* Conduct that threatens, intimidates or coerces another employee, elected official, volunteer, visitor, customer, vendor, or business associate will not be tolerated. *The City resources may not be used to threaten, stalk or harass anyone at or outside the workplace.*” Accordingly, it is clear that the City policy prohibits harassment of any kind.

Nearly every employee interviewed reported that Selleck dominates every conversation, regardless of the forum. He interrupts, argues, consumes all the time allotted for a meeting (and more) and is “relentless” in his approach to typical office meetings or conversations. As Harris explained, he will go “at you” until you agree with him. This is not only unprofessional, but it is a form of harassment to argue until he obtains agreement or to the point where an employee has to leave the meeting.

In this investigation, the phrase “management style” has been used and at times it seems that the idea is that if the situation is just about a difference in “management styles,” or a preference for a different management style then employees simply need to get over it and follow the boss’s orders or instructions. But

this situation, is not that simple. When employees repeatedly describe this type of “oppressive” conduct such as “bullying” and “bulldozing” in meetings and interactions and that conduct results in stress, anxiety and discomfort for employees, it cannot be dismissed as simply an undesirable management style.

Accordingly, the dominating and dismissive approach that Selleck commonly employees as a manager has resulted in a toxic and hostile work environment that is uncomfortable for at least some of the employees in the office. The City has an obligation to maintain a workplace free of harassing and intimidating behavior, and thus, the behavior cannot be permitted.

Selleck’s unusual level of control is also demonstrated in his approach to managing the office in terms of decisions on various office procedures and training. Consider something like the time off request example. Although it seems like something that should not be problematic, the manner in which he administered this system is somewhat abusive. Selleck implemented a system which required employees to use certain words – word by word – and if not, he would deny requests. He would deny requests even in situations where the employee did not even need to submit a “request” at all (such as sick time). For example, with Harris once she got the words right, he then told her she never needed to make the request that he denied in the first place. This is an example of an unnecessary mind game.

Selleck’s decision to stop working committee meetings outside of the full Council meeting, failing to train Harris, constant changing of assignments and decisions regarding training, taking Harris off Mastroianni’s cohort, have

additionally all contributed to the hostile work environment.<sup>61</sup> With respect to Harris in particular, the fact that she was promoted in May 2020 and still had not been properly trained as of February 2021 when Mastroianni notified Selleck she needed to take medical leave is the type of situation that cannot exist in an office with a full plate of responsibilities without negatively affecting employees. It further calls into question why Selleck would continue to assign administrative duties to Harris when those duties could have been performed by other employees in the office who had not been promoted to the Deputy level. One final example is how Selleck responded to Mastroianni's request to take medical leave based on her mental health. He immediately began repeated attempts to require her to spend the final 2-3 days she had in the office training and cross-training Petronio and Harris, a task that he could not get completed in the last two years.

In sum, Selleck's manner of treatment of employees (including, but not limited to Mastroianni, Petronio and Harris) is so persistent it permeates almost every interaction and has undermined the entire working relationship of the office such that certain employees no longer feel safe or comfortable working for him. Having personally interviewed these employees, their feelings about working for Selleck are real and not manufactured. Again, because I have not interviewed Selleck I have only the interviews and documents to consider as part of this evaluation. This conduct has continued (at least since 2019) even though on at least one occasion HR gave him

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<sup>61</sup> There are numerous other instances of harassing behavior listed in the section describing the events at issue. They speak for themselves without re-listing them here.

a list of expectations to follow which included the requirement that he treat employees with respect and to respect their time.

It should be noted that the failure to address these incidents on a deeper level at an earlier point in time has left the office in a state of complete dysfunction. Even if no policy violations were found, it is clear that the relationship between Selleck and certain employees is beyond repair and not sustainable. At this point, when several employees are experience work-related anxiety and are essentially afraid to return to the office and report to Selleck action must be taken to resolve the situation. In short, his inability to manage the office properly and his behavior has resulted in an office that is not presently functioning as it is not a healthy working environment for all employees. This is despite the fact that Selleck has been the Clerk for almost three years. Many of the e-mails and documents and testimony provided demonstrated that he is still scrambling to learn many of the functions of the office and that this is the source of many of the initial debates and discussions. It is clear the office cannot continue like this, and changes need to be made. That task is left up to the relevant decision-makers, but given the information gathered in this process it is clear it is a necessary task.

One final point is worth addressing. As noted above, as early as January 2020 Mastroianni informed Council leadership that one of the things undermining her comfort level at work was Selleck's belief that he did not report to the Council and/or has no duty to the Council or City outside of specific duties outlined in the Charter. Selleck's position on this issue unnecessarily has created a conflict in the office and

tension between the office and the Council leadership. In line with this, there are certain duties Selleck has refused to perform (such as staffing certain meetings) and others he has insisted are his responsibility and not the Council's. This area was not the focus of this investigation (whether Selleck has Charter-based duties he has refused to perform) but is an issue that may be taken up by the Law Department in connection with the pending litigation or otherwise.

### **C. Addressing Counterpoints.**

Selleck submitted a written statement to be considered in this investigation. Because he declined an interview, I did not have an opportunity to ask specific questions about specific decisions or incidents. The primary issue raised by Selleck in his written response is the idea that "this" entire process is being motivated by Mastroianni, the Council President and his leadership so that Igliazzi can put Mastroianni in his position. In other words, it is alleged that this is all about Mastroianni wanting Selleck's job and Igliazzi wanting someone more loyal to him as Clerk.<sup>62</sup> It has been pointed out that Mastroianni wanted the job when Selleck was initially appointed, and it has been alleged that she caused two prior clerks to leave their positions.

I did not find that Mastroianni was motivated by self-interest in the sense that she is pursuing complaints against Selleck because she wants his job for several reasons. First, there is evidence of Selleck's misconduct in the workplace dating back to at least June 2019 that has nothing to do with Mastroianni and involves employees

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<sup>62</sup> This theme was reiterated by Cotugno and Peligian.

entirely outside of the Clerk's office. If one considers the pattern of interactions with Coloian, Delgado and Costa, all of which occurred in 2019, it is clear that Selleck has a habit of confronting co-workers in a physical way, arguing with them (to the point where he has to be asked to leave co-workers physical spaces or they have to leave the space), all of which occurred before Mastroianni complained.

Second, I personally interviewed Mastroianni and I observed her demeanor. She was a credible witness insofar as she was believable when she described the behavior of Selleck and its effect on her and her work environment. It was relayed to me by more than one person that Mastroianni is the most experienced, knowledgeable and capable employee in the office with the most institutional knowledge. She is the person that almost everyone (it seems) goes to in order to resolve issues. She cares deeply about her job. Because of that, it makes sense that she would have a desire to advance. Because of her deep commitment to the office and her job, I do not believe that she would take any steps or actions that could potentially harm the office, which includes making exaggerated or false complaints in order to secure Selleck's position. It should be noted that even if Mastroianni wanted to be Clerk in 2019 or wants to be the Clerk in the future, that would not justify permitting Selleck to engage in the behavior cited in this Report.

With regard to the contention that she has a pattern of causing other clerks to leave their jobs, the facts did not support that claim. More than one person explained that former clerk Anna Stetson ("Stetson") and Hagen did not get along and Stetson finished her term and did not seek reappointment (she retired). Hagen served two

terms, but in February 2019 (at least according to Correia) she was not going to be appointed by the Council for reasons that had nothing to do with Mastroianni. Furthermore, if the claim about Mastroianni successfully ousting Hagen were true, then it would seem Mastroianni would have got the job.

Selleck also implies that there is an agenda based on politics because he was not informed that any employees in the Clerk's office had issues with him and/or were made upset or uncomfortable by his behavior. In his statement, Selleck wrote chronologically about relevant events. He related a meeting between himself, Igliazzi and Lombardi that occurred on May 25. In the next paragraph, he wrote "[a]t no point in any of these interactions did anyone suggest there was an issue with our office culture or recommend any changes in my management style or behavior." Attachment 3, p. 4. If this means that Selleck was unaware of any issues with the office culture or his management style or behavior as of May 2021, the evidence would tend to show the opposite. First, it was apparent that the 2019 and 2020 issues were brought to the attention of Rogel and/or Fox and former Council President Matos and it is unlikely that none of them addressed those issues with Selleck and on at least one occasion, he was verbally warned. Delgado addressed his issue directly with Selleck, and thus, Selleck knew that Delgado thought his behavior was inappropriate.

Echevarria stated that during the time he has served as HR Director (since May 2019) his office has received calls and correspondence related to concerns about Selleck. Generally, he stated that these concerns did not inspire any investigation by HR, *but that they did result in communications with the Clerk regarding his behavior.*

In fact, Echevarria outlined expectations for behavior following the March 16 meeting with Mastroianni and Selleck.

Information provided by Mastroianni revealed her February 2021 formal complaint and HR contact with Selleck, which also indicates he knew of that formal complaint and that it involved his management style and his behavior. This includes the February 28 e-mail Selleck wrote about “Changes in City Clerk Management” that “[a]fter our series of communications recently, followed by conversations with each of you individually last week, *I understand some significant changes in management approach are necessary in our office. We’ve had some challenging times, but this time is different.*” Attachment 13. One of the changes that Selleck proposed is that *he* “will avoid, as much as possible, being the person who is speaking in our meetings going forward.” Attachment 13. This appears to be recognition of a complaint about how he dominated conversations and did not let others have input on professional matters.

This also includes the March 1 e-mail that Selleck wrote to Mastroianni in which he indicated “*[t]he reasons you needed to take time off are on my mind constantly and I want you to know that I’m committed to rebuilding with you.*” (emphasis added). Attachment 13. These complaints and incidents all pre-dated Igliazzi’s term as Council President.

The point is, Selleck’s statement that he was unaware of any issues with his management style or behavior prior to April 2021 as a basis to explain the political motivation of Igliazzi or Mastroianni is not credible.

Selleck provided some specific examples of incidents which he claims also supports his contention that the present situation is politically motivated and/or driven by Mastroianni. These included: (1) that his parking pass was deactivated; (2) his Zoom account was disabled; and (3) Mastroianni withheld a flash drive from him relative to a pre-recorded address necessary for a Council meeting.

I followed up with Mastroianni regarding each of these allegations. She provided me with an e-mail from Selleck to Cotugno that reflects Selleck unknowingly initiated changes to the parking passes when he reached out to Cotugno and told her he was not using his pass. On May 24, Cotugno informed Selleck that “[w]e will be budgeting for 3 parking passes going forward as you mentioned you would not be using your parking pass every day.” Selleck then responded that it was not his intention to change the budgeting, that he was simply telling her he was not using it. The next day Lombardi told Cotugno to allow Selleck access to the garage. Accordingly, the record does not support the idea that Mastroianni shut off Selleck’s access to the parking garage for political reasons and the event does not undermine her credibility regarding Selleck’s behavior.

Selleck also alleged that his Zoom account was cancelled in May. I also asked Mastroianni about this. She explained that the Clerk’s office had two Zoom accounts, one for her and one for Selleck. In May, she asked the administrator to change Selleck’s to Petronio because Petronio was running the Zoom meeting (not Selleck) and Selleck was out. The account was not cancelled, nor was it assumed by Mastroianni. The administrator changed Selleck’s account, which had a capacity of

500 participants to Petronio and that left Mastroianni with her account which had a capacity of 100 participants. Selleck still had a standard account which allows meetings with more than one person, up to 40 minutes. Again, this change does not appear to be politically motivated by Mastroianni (if so, it is not clear what it would achieve) but rather seems to be a decision in connection with office administration. Perhaps she should have asked Selleck or notified him first, but again it is not the type of incident that undermines her credibility as to the complaints about Selleck's behavior or conduct.

Selleck also contended that in June there was a Special City Council meeting that involved a pre-recorded address by the Mayor. Selleck claimed he was waiting for the zip drive all day and that when he came to the office just prior to the meeting, he found out Mastroianni had the zip drive for hours and had not told him. When I asked Mastroianni about it, she told me that Selleck was not in the office that day. She acknowledged receiving the flash drive for the meeting and not informing Selleck. When I asked her why, she explained she had no way of knowing he was looking for it and assumed that when he came in for the meeting, he would retrieve it.

In other words, she did not recall being copied on any correspondence indicating he was looking for it and has asked to be notified when it arrived. When he came in and asked for it, she gave it to him. She also noted she did not control the time he would report, and that he did not come to the office until about 5:30 which was his choice and did not leave him much time to run a test meeting. She recalled there was a glitch during the meeting, and she did comment it would have been nice

to have more time to practice. Based on the information I have, there is no evidence Mastroianni knew that Selleck wanted to be notified when the flash drive arrived at the Clerk's office or that this would have changed his reporting time. In all events, I do not think Mastroianni would risk her own reputation and sabotage a Council meeting to make Selleck look bad. This makes sense because even according to Selleck, Mastroianni had always been professional, responsible and respectful in her duties. Attachment 3.

Accordingly, on an overall basis, I did not find the complaints listed in this Report were politically motivated or manufactured so that Mastroianni could be promoted to Clerk.

## **VI. Conclusion.**

In summary, the evidence reflects that Selleck has violated the City Code of Conduct (which includes an anti-bullying and anti-harassment policy) and the Workplace Violence Policy for the reasons set forth above. A toxic work environment presently exists<sup>63</sup> in the Clerk's Office and the issues recited herein need to be properly addressed by the City in order to avoid further harm to the employees who are currently experiencing anxiety and discomfort over reporting to or interacting with Selleck.

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<sup>63</sup> This writer understands the deputies have been temporarily transferred out of the Clerk's office. The statements herein presume the temporary nature of that arrangement must end at some point.

**List of Attachments to Report**

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Attachment 1  | City Letter to Selleck 8/2/21             |
| Attachment 2  | HR Inquiry Memo                           |
| Attachment 3  | Selleck Written Statement 9/8/21          |
| Attachment 4  | City Clerk Job Description                |
| Attachment 5  | Dixon Memorandum 6/18/19                  |
| Attachment 6  | Dixon Memorandum 2/28/20                  |
| Attachment 7  | List of Incidents 2/24/20                 |
| Attachment 8  | E-mails to HR re: February 2021 Complaint |
| Attachment 9  | Selleck Time Off Format E-Mail 9/19       |
| Attachment 10 | Harris Complaint                          |
| Attachment 11 | Time Off Request E-mails                  |
| Attachment 12 | Petronio Complaint                        |
| Attachment 13 | Mastroianni Medical Leave E-mails         |
| Attachment 14 | HR E-mails Post February 2021 Complaints  |
| Attachment 15 | June 2021 HR Correspondence               |
| Attachment 16 | Igliazzi Letter to Council                |
| Attachment 17 | Mastroianni Request for Transfer          |
| Attachment 18 | Igliazzi Letters re: Transfers            |



# ATTACHMENT 1

## CITY OF PROVIDENCE

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

August 2, 2021

Shawn Selleck  
138 Messer Street  
Providence, RI 02909

Sent via First Class Mail

Dear Mr. Selleck:

The purpose of this letter is to confirm that that your paid administrative leave from your position with the City of Providence, which became effective Monday, June 28, 2021, and remained in effect pending the results of an ongoing internal investigation, is being rescinded.

This decision is advised by the completion of this office's internal investigation, which found no reason to further continue your suspension. Accordingly, you are being reinstated to your position, and may return to City Hall on Monday, August 2, 2021.

Please contact me with any questions about this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emmanuel R. Echevarria".

Emmanuel R. Echevarria  
Chief Human Resources Officer

Cc: Jim Lombardi  
File

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## ATTACHMENT 2

### CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM

To: Jeffery Dana, City Solicitor; Kenneth Chiavarini, Deputy City Solicitor  
From: Emmanuel R. Echevarria, Director of Human Resources  
Subject: City Clerk Investigation  
Date Prepared: July 7, 2021

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#### Accusation

City Clerk Shawn Selleck, hereafter referred to as "Selleck", was placed on administrative paid leave by the Director of Human Resources and the Chief of Staff to the City Council after allegations of inappropriate conduct resulting in a hostile work environment were presented to the President of the City Council by an employee in the Office of the City Clerk. Said accusations were unspecified but stemmed from "several incidents and interactions" between Selleck and his staff that made employees reportedly feel "uncomfortable" and that they were subject to a hostile work environment.

The Department of Human Resources had been previously involved on resolving interpersonal issues between the City Clerk and his subordinate staff with the Council Administration as well as the management team in the Office of the City Clerk.

There was no single incident that was the basis of the decision to have the City Clerk be placed on leave with pay. However, the accusation of the hostile work environment was concerning enough to Council Administration, that an investigation was necessary.

#### Key Definition

**Hostile Work Environment:** An environment in the workplace in which the conduct of supervisors or coworkers has created a discriminatory environment that a reasonable person would find so abusive or intimidating that it impacts the ability of the employee to conduct their work.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission's website further details that "petty slights, annoyances, and isolated incidents (unless extremely serious) will not rise to the level of illegality. To be unlawful, the conduct must create a work environment that would be intimidating, hostile, or offensive to reasonable people."

The Department of Human Resources reviews claims of discrimination, harassment, and hostile work environment based on state and federal legal standards.

#### Methodology

The Department of Human Resources reviewed written narratives, complaints, and submitted e-mails as part of this review. Additionally, the department met with and interviewed six employees in the City Clerk's Office, who consisted of front line and middle management staff.

During these in-person interviews, employees were advised their responses were going to be kept confidential and asked them to speak freely. The interviewers were:

- Emmanuel R. Echevarria, Director of Human Resources
- Ashley Fioravanti, Human Resources Manager
- Jeff Almeida, Human Resources Generalist

The questions that were asked were both specific to the City Clerk in nature, as well as broad and general questions on the office and its climate. Questions relevant to whether or not the allegations against Selleck met a threshold included questions like “how would you characterize your interactions with the City Clerk?” and “has there ever been a situation that has made you feel uncomfortable when interacting with senior department management?” The most relevant question to the hostile work environment claim was “can you recall any comments related to age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, or any other inappropriate workplace topic from management or staff?”

No interviewed employee refused to answer any questions. They were advised that they could decline to answer questions if they felt uncomfortable with the line of questioning. In some instances, specific follow up questions were asked to ascertain whether or not their answers met threshold for a hostile work environment.

Additionally, the Department of Human Resources reviewed documents submitted by two members of management, both detailing a situation that occurred on June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 involving Tina Mastroianni, First Deputy City Clerk and hereafter referred to as Mastroianni, as well as a compilation of e-mails received by the Department of Human Resources from Selleck, Mastroianni, and other employees of the Office of the City Clerk.

#### **Statements from Clerk Selleck**

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, the writer met with Selleck in the office of the Human Resources Director at 2:00pm, where Selleck requested a copy of his personnel file. The personnel file did not include any formal discipline issued to Selleck. Selleck asked the writer why his working conditions were altered, and the writer reminded him of a previous meeting with the City Council President, the Chief of Staff, and a City Solicitor (Kenneth Chiavarini) where the Council President advised Selleck he was expanding his role as City Clerk to provide process improvement and innovation-based supports to all Council Departments (these include the Council Administration, City Clerk, Courts, Archives, Auditor, and Treasury).

Selleck was asked to work remotely by the Council President and allow Mastroianni to manage the “day to day operations” of the Office of the City Clerk, something that Selleck had proposed to Mastroianni in writing months prior to this meeting or the investigation. Selleck would remain involved in strategic planning and would Clerk meetings of the City Council as well as certify any documents under the purview of the City Clerk.

Selleck expressed to the writer he felt he was being ostracized by the Council Chief of Staff, Jim Lombardi, whom he alleges has a friendly relationship with Mastroianni, and whom has heard complaints from Mastroianni. Selleck alleged that Mastroianni’s complaints, alone, resulted in the determination to change his job duties. Selleck stated in his meeting with the writer he felt his recent interactions with Mastroianni (an incident where he noticed his zoom account had been reassigned and he asked Mastroianni why his account was changed – Mastroianni referred him to speak with the Chief of Staff), and having his parking pass deactivated were precursors to having him removed or disciplined. The writer kept notes on this meeting, which were also considered as part of this review.

#### **Findings**

The investigation led by the Director of Human Resources found the allegations that Selleck’s actions and behavior produced a hostile work environment to be unsubstantiated based on the materials and testimonials gathered. The information gathered by the Department of Human Resources found that the information provided and the testimony of the interviewees raised some concerning points regarding the culture and

climate of the Office of the City Clerk, but did not find that Selleck acted in repetitive behaviors or an individual incident of an egregious enough manner that would achieve the threshold of a hostile work environment as defined above.

Although Selleck's actions did not meet the threshold to be considered hostile or harassment on the basis of sex, race, gender identity/expression, age, national origin, religion, or any other protected status, there was one incident that the Department of Human Resources identified as troubling and serious: a subordinate employee reported that Selleck, in a dispute, raised his voice at an employee. The employee became upset by the circumstances of the dispute and attempted to leave the room in which their interaction took place. Selleck reportedly grabbed the handle to the door and kept it shut, putting part of his body in front of the door, and allegedly attempted to block the employee from leaving. Selleck reportedly told the employee "I'm not done speaking to you", the employee stated she became angry and proceeded to open the door. Selleck made no further attempt to stop her from leaving the room.

The incident above was alluded to in a prior complaint made by Mastroianni to the writer, which prompted the writer to verbally warn Selleck to cease this type of behavior at an in-person meeting between Selleck, the writer, and former City Council President Sabina Matos on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2021. To the knowledge of the writer, and based on our interviews, this behavior has not happened since it was brought to Selleck's attention.

The interviews primarily did present findings that should be of interest to the Council Administration leadership, as it intends to have a well-functioning Office of the City Clerk that is free of unnecessary disharmony and disruption:

1. There is a toxic climate in the office:
  - a. Employees of varying levels of seniority report that the Office of the City Clerk has been a chronically toxic workplace for decades, and that this stems from years of gossiping and in-fighting for positions of authority.
  - b. Middle management has been perceived by front-line employees as producing a workplace culture that ignores best practice and rewards hoarding information for job security and promotional opportunity.
  - c. Employees perceive that those closest in proximity to the authority of the City Clerk have conspired to oust incumbent City Clerks for years, and it has become a tradition in the office for the First and Second Deputies to undermine the City Clerk.
  - d. Members of management freely and openly discuss private disagreements between themselves and the City Clerk with subordinate and support staff.
  - e. The issues outlined above have been present for at least a decade according to employees, and have not been alleviated by Selleck being appointed City Clerk, yet have not been alleviated by his temporary removal in the last two weeks either.
2. Selleck's process improvements are valued:
  - a. Employees credit Selleck with the technological advancement of the office.
  - b. Employees perceive that Selleck is invested in their professional development and that in his capacity he acts in the best interests of the City and the department.
  - c. Selleck's efforts to document, standardize, and digitize processes are welcomed by frontline staff and are met with their approval.
  - d. Selleck's investments in innovation within the office have reduced the cycle time of processes and the workload of staff.
3. Selleck is described as a "difficult" manager:

- a. While employees value the outputs and outcomes of Selleck's tenure as City Clerk, they describe him as "difficult" and "obsessive", elaborating that often they feel he asks for their opinion, but only to challenge and ignore their opinions in favor of his own, creating consternation amongst the staff.
  - b. Universally, employees report Selleck is a micromanager who gets "too involved" in processes that are granular, and takes frequent opportunities to observe and critique how the work is done by the employees.
  - c. Employees report Selleck seems easily bothered and frustrated, especially when confronted by employees who present suggestions on how to improve the execution of a process. They report feeling this deters them from active participation in the workplace.
4. The relationship between Selleck and middle management is overwhelmingly negative:
- a. Employees seem well aware Mastroianni takes personal issue with Selleck.
  - b. Employees have reported Mastroianni has cried in front of them on occasion regarding tensions with the City Clerk.
  - c. Employees report a member of middle management has referred to Shawn as a "Fucking Asshole".
  - d. All three members of middle management have written to the Department of Human Resources documenting their grievances against Selleck.
  - e. Some members of middle management report being "sick" whenever they learn Selleck will be present in the building, or feeling anxiety at the thought of meeting with Selleck. When asked to provide further details, it is clear the problem is the interpersonal aspects of working together with Selleck.
5. Mastroianni's approach is viewed negatively as well:
- a. While employees refer to Mastroianni using fewer negative adjectives than they do regarding Selleck, employees voiced concerns that Mastroianni contributes to the problems of the office by participating in workplace gossip.
  - b. Employees perceive Mastroianni is attempting to oust Selleck from his position for her own gain, as it is widely believed among staff that she would be appointed City Clerk should Selleck resign or be removed from his position.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The Department of Human Resources has not found any substantive reason for conventional disciplinary action or removal of the City Clerk. While Selleck has clear deficits as a manager, he has not violated any City policy or engaged in any behavior that could be reasonably interpreted to contributing to a hostile work environment. The one troubling action attributed to Selleck, blocking an employee from departing the office, was addressed by the Director of Human Resources and the former City Council President when they became aware of the issue, and has not since occurred or been reported. With the conclusion of this investigation, the Department of Human Resources recommends the City Clerk be fully reinstated and carry on his duties and responsibilities as prescribed by the City Charter.

Further, the Department of Human Resources recommends that the management team be provided extensive training on how to develop productive interpersonal relationships in the workplace. Selleck individually should undergo sensitivity and communication training and should consider management classes in order to be more effective at managing and leading the department.

# ATTACHMENT 3

Tuesday, September 7, 2021

When I moved to Providence in the fall of 2012, I hoped to find an opportunity to combine my professional background in technology with my personal passion for good government. I will explain in detail below how this led me to the role of City Clerk. In this position, it has been my goal to modernize the record-keeping processes of the City Council to support greater transparency, constituent access, and continuity between City Councils. I have endeavored to do so not only by bringing in new technology, but also by creating an office culture that is supportive of innovation and in which employees of the Department of the City Clerk feel empowered to grow personally and professionally so that they better serve our city.

I began attending public meetings in Providence within weeks of becoming a resident to understand how local government worked here. I had just moved from a city where I could watch local government meetings online and download minutes. When I asked if Providence recorded its meetings, I was told that audio of committee meetings was on cassette tapes, video of full Council meetings was on DVDs and copies could be made for me at my request. When I asked for minutes of some meetings, I was told to submit a public records request, and when I did so, the law department responded asking for clarification because of how "broad" my request was and that it would take "many hours" to respond. Finally, after clarifying my request, I received an invoice for \$105. I was in disbelief, but paid it and received the files. The attorney from the City Solicitor office and the City Clerk also recommended I read a report recently issued by the Open Providence Commission on Transparency and Accountability that had met in 2012. After reading the report, I knew that I had found an opportunity to use my skills to better my new home. I offered to work as a consultant at a highly discounted rate to implement many of the recommendations, including the city's first Open Meetings Portal. In the fall of 2013, less than a year after I had moved to Providence, the files I had paid for were available for anyone to download free from the internet. Soon after the launch, Mayor Angel Taveras, City Council President Michael Solomon and City Clerk Anna Stetson all pointed to the Open Meetings Portal as proof that they were champions of transparent government. I was happy with the online portal, but I was prouder of my professionalization efforts. I personally trained staff to use sophisticated meetings management software that digitized information and made it accessible to the public. By the end of 2014, I had trained staff across the city who were responsible for posting meeting information for over 90% of the city's public bodies. Digital audio recordings were often uploaded to accompany minutes. Since then, tens of thousands of agenda items and hundreds of thousands of votes have been recorded publicly, significantly elevating the accessibility of public records in the city.

From 2015 to 2018, I worked at the Office of Digital Excellence for the State of Rhode Island, implementing large technology platforms in a role similar to that I had held in the private sector. During my absence from the city, little (if anything) was accomplished in the Department of City Clerk to build upon the work I had done. In January 2019, the current City Council was sworn in. With an awareness that the first term limits in Providence history would take effect at the end of their terms, they realized documentation of processes in various Council Departments would be important to the success of future Councils. I was elected City Clerk in February 2019, with a mandate to focus on improving and documenting as much of the operations in the department as possible. I was excited to serve in a role that I believed would give me the discretion and decision-making power to transform and modernize the office, and which, according to my interpretation of the City Charter, was protected from political influence. Recent City Clerks had no professional management training or experience prior to assuming the roles, did not invest in professional development and often became defensive when junior staff

challenged their ideas (according to stories that both staff and Councilors have told me). I believed that by creating a supportive work environment founded on mutual respect for one another, I could help our office to grow out of the poor and inefficient culture that had existed for decades.

It is ironic and almost inconceivable that I now find myself writing testimony for an investigation alleging that my behavior created a toxic work environment, given how purposefully I have striven to create a supportive, collaborative office culture. But looking back, it is only too clear how political interests interfered. Things began to shift dramatically as soon as John Iglizzi was elected Council President and hired Jim Lombardi as his Acting Chief of Staff.

On Thursday, April 22, 2021, Iglizzi attended his last Finance Committee meeting as Chairman (he resigned this leadership role after being elected President). After the meeting, he began voicing concerns about some disagreements I had with Tina Mastroianni, First Deputy Clerk. He suggested we needed a “cooling off” period and even used the word “armistice.” I expressed that I would personally prefer to understand what specific behavior was behind the conflict so that I could correct it if necessary, and work towards a resolution. Tina had always been professional, responsible and respectful in her duties. I understood any conflict in our approaches to be simply a disagreement about management style and her resistance to change. For example, Tina has not taught other staff how to perform certain tasks important to the operations of our office and has not documented those processes, which goes against our office’s mandate to improve and document processes for the benefit of future Councils/continuity of processes. She also believes training should only be delivered by the City Clerk or a Deputy to junior staff, while I encouraged cross-training between colleagues at all levels. I understood her perspective: She already knew her way around office processes, so any innovations would disrupt her existing routines, even if they might improve overall efficiency for the office. She seemed to feel process improvements weren’t worth the hassle.

When Tina didn’t agree with what I asked of her, or grew tired of avoiding my requests, she would vent to Councilors who she was close to — and in turn, those Councilors would complain to the President. Iglizzi likely heard Tina’s complaints both first- and second-hand. I believe that Iglizzi saw an opportunity to exploit the tension between us and place someone who was politically loyal to him at the head of the City Clerk’s office (they have both been in City Hall for over two decades and know each other well). He suggested that the friction between us was impossible to overcome and that it would be better to just avoid the conflict by separating us. I did not think this was a productive solution, but I told him that I understood he had decided not to expend the energy to understand the underlying problems. He offered a proposal that would leave Tina managing the day-to-day operations of most City Clerk responsibilities, freeing up time for me to apply my technology consulting skills to assist other “Councilmatic” departments. This term “Councilmatic” is one that Iglizzi appears to have invented to refer to departments that are led by Council Appointees; he believes he has direct supervisory power over these departments. I agreed to consider his proposal and suggested that I first work with the Probate Court, which was drowning in boxes of old paperwork and was months behind on its caseload. He seemed genuinely interested in taking advantage of my experience and even mentioned my being part of his “leadership” advisory team going forward.

The next day, Friday, April 23, I met with Jim Lombardi (who also serves as the City Treasurer). He described some splitting of responsibilities between Tina and me and also expressed his personal

interest in my assistance to modernize the Treasury. I wrote up a draft email proposing some delineation of duties and sent it to Lombardi, requesting he consider it.

The following Tuesday, April 27, was Mayor Elorza's annual budget address, which I was to clerk at a Special City Council meeting being held remotely. I was asked to play a pre-recorded video message from the Mayor. I was in touch with the Mayor's staff all morning and asked them to give me the recording as soon as possible so that we could prepare. Early that morning, I sent a game plan for the meeting to Lombardi and the three Deputy Clerks. They all knew I was waiting for the recording, but I still had not received it by 5pm, one hour before the meeting. Concerned, I emailed the Mayor's staff and asked if the link was available to download the video yet and they responded that it had been dropped off at my office hours earlier. When I went into the office and asked Tina if she had received it, she took it from her desk and handed it to me without a word, less than half an hour before the meeting. I was shocked at her willingness to disrupt office operations but recognized that she was becoming less and less interested in a collaborative working relationship, or even in reporting to me, after Iglizzi's suggestion that we "separate" our duties.

Because we had no time to prepare, there were glitches during the meeting, which upset Iglizzi. He scolded us afterward for not preparing and then later Tina scoffed that "we should have prepared" when she was the only one who knew we had the video in time to prepare. I expressed frustration to Iglizzi about this and about details of the new arrangement with Tina. He told me that he had talked to all of the Councilors about it and they were supportive. When speaking to other Councilors later, it became clear that this was a misrepresentation; they were not clear on what was happening.

For the next couple of weeks, Lombardi asked me to work from home. He recommended that I not go into my office or interact with my staff. I was surprised that the Council President's Chief of Staff would suggest that the City Clerk be removed from the Clerk's office, but I assumed good intentions as we tested out the new arrangement. However, as the weeks progressed, I realized that Iglizzi, Lombardi and Tina were working together and not communicating important information to me. I arrived at the first Council meeting in May, and everyone had the Zoom link for a preparatory meeting except for me. No one offered to share it with me, a strange and awkward experience for the Clerk (who is supposed to run the meeting).

On Monday, May 24, there was an escalation. As I mentioned, Lombardi had recommended that I not go into my office or interact with my staff. I didn't believe he had the authority or good reason to ban me from my own office, but I avoided going in until I needed to use the city seal (held in our vault) to certify municipal bonds. Within minutes of arriving, I received a text message from Lombardi that said, "Shawn, I thought I asked you to enter your office through the Council office and have limited interaction with the Clerk's office . . . I'm recommending you do not interact with people in the Clerk's office." I responded that I looked forward to discussing it in person the next day with the Council President (at a previously scheduled meeting). I did not agree with this "recommendation." The promptness with which I received Lombardi's text leads me to believe that he must have told Tina that I would not be permitted to enter the office and to alert him if I ever did.

The next day when I went to City Hall to meet with Iglizzi and Lombardi, my parking pass had been deactivated. Lombardi first acted as if he didn't know or didn't think it had been deactivated, and then he defended the action by stating that I was not coming to City Hall as often. Iglizzi agreed that it was

an unnecessary action and told Lombardi to have it reactivated, which was done immediately. I found out later that Tina had ordered our administrative assistant to turn it off.

At no point in any of these interactions did anyone suggest that there was an issue with our office culture or recommend any changes in my management style or behavior. Rather, Iglizzi and Lombardi made it clear that they expected me to execute my role exactly as they directed, even though there had been a complete lack of explanation and no formal communication as to why these changes were taking place. Despite this, I approached the situation as collaboratively as I could and continued to work from home as they had requested.

As I was preparing to clerk the June 2<sup>nd</sup> City Council meeting, I logged into my Zoom account and discovered it had been deactivated. I turned to Iglizzi and told him that there might be a delay starting the meeting. Tina spoke up and stated that a new account had been created. When I asked why and when someone was going to let me know, Tina and the other First Deputies became upset and complained about all of the work they were doing in the office in my absence, and then Tina exclaimed, "I'm just doing as I was told," which I could only interpret as being a reference to her being directed by Lombardi to shut off my Zoom account. Later, this incident was referred to by Lombardi as an example of a negative interaction that I had had with the deputies that had informed his opinion about my poor management skills.

I also began to see that little was being done to uphold Iglizzi and Lombardi's agreement to provide alternative opportunities for me to support the Council. Email and text requests to meet with Lombardi or Iglizzi to discuss my new role were met with silence. Then I discovered that Lombardi was assigning other city staff to assist Probate Court and that Iglizzi was having "leadership" meetings. They operated as if they believed I'd be happy with a "no-show" job. After experiencing the two incidents of unprofessional and petty behavior and seeing no support for my supposedly new role, I grew skeptical that they were acting in good faith and requested a meeting with HR.

On Wednesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, I met with Emmanuel Echevarria and Ashley Fioravanti in Human Resources. I was concerned that a complaint may have been put into my file without my knowledge, so I requested a review. I was told that there were no complaints against me in any HR files. Then I shared my recent experiences with them and expressed concern about the behavior of Lombardi and Iglizzi. I asked Emmanuel (the HR Director) how he viewed my role within the City's organizational chart. After referencing the City Charter, he admitted that the Council President's level of involvement in directing the City Clerk was not consistent with what one might expect. However, Lombardi had made it clear that he saw himself as the direct supervisor of all Council Appointees — and Emmanuel did not appear interested in challenging that practice. Emmanuel asked if I would feel comfortable if he met with Lombardi and Iglizzi to share my concerns and I gave him my full support, eager to find a resolution.

On Monday, June 21<sup>st</sup>, it became clear that Iglizzi and Lombardi had also misled me about the work with the Probate Court. Probate Court Judge Martinelli told me that he had indeed wanted to work with me when nobody else seemed interested in doing so, but that Iglizzi and Lombardi had recently asked Probate Court Clerk Paul Jabour and interns from Archives to help, and that he no longer needed my assistance.

That Friday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, I required use of the city seal again. I went in an hour before the office opened to prepare the papers I needed to sign and seal. I was in the presence of my staff for a total of less than 30

minutes that morning, but Lombardi still must have felt that I had disobeyed his direct order while I was performing my Charter-prescribed duties. At 4:15 p.m. Emmanuel Echevarria called me from Lombardi's cell phone and left a voicemail stating that I was immediately on administrative leave, directing me not to discharge duties of the City Clerk and informing me that I'd receive more information Monday morning.

The next Monday, I was told that an investigation was being conducted by the HR Department (separate from the investigation for which I am providing this testimony) into allegations that I had created a hostile work environment. The HR investigation concluded on August 2, finding no reason to continue my administrative leave. Emmanuel later told me that he would not have placed me on administrative leave if I had not been accused of discrimination or harassment of a "protected class" and that when Emmanuel had specifically asked Lombardi if that behavior was among those that was alleged, Lombardi confirmed that it was. Yet on Tuesday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, when I met with Lombardi (each of us accompanied by our own legal counsel) to hear the conditions under which I would be allowed to return to City Hall, my attorney asked him directly if such allegations were being made and Lombardi profusely denied that I was being accused of anything of the sort ("no sexual or racial harassment or anything like that"). It appears that Lombardi either lied to the HR Director or he lied to me in front of our respective counsel. When my attorney stated that we would be pursuing legal action, Lombardi cautioned us, first insinuating that they wanted to protect me in some way, then suggesting we wait until a new independent investigation had concluded (this was the first my attorney and I had heard of this investigation, for which this testimony is being provided). We filed suit that day, arguing that the Council President and Chief of Staff had no unilateral supervisory role and thus no right to place conditions on the ability of Council Appointees to perform their duties (basically that the Council President's idea of "Councilmatic" oversight violated the charter). A preliminary decision by a Supreme Court Justice ordered me back to work without conditions on Tuesday August 10<sup>th</sup>.

I discovered that, in my absence, the deputy clerks had received raises between 7-20%, exceeding those of all other employees except for one new permanent employee (all other employees, including myself, received raises of between 3-5%). Iglizzo facilitated this compensation increase, which was a continuation of previous actions since I became City Clerk. In 2019, he presided over an amendment to the salary for the First Deputy Clerk role, increasing the maximum from \$85k to \$105k. Tina Mastroianni's salary was \$77,919 in January 2019. Today it is \$105,600. Then Iglizzo presided over the expansion of the number of First Deputies. This role had never been held by multiple people simultaneously, but last year he created a second First Deputy and this year he created a third First Deputy, without any advance notice to me. Sheri Petronio and Angela Harris were promoted to these roles. Under Iglizzo's direction, Tina, Sheri and Angela have received effective raises of 26%, 41% and 63%, respectively, since I became City Clerk. Their combined salaries on the city's payroll have increased from about \$190,000 to \$275,000 in the span of 30 months, while other roles have seen minimal increases in compensation. For comparison, my salary has gone from \$103,461 to \$114,192 (a 10% increase).

In exchange for this payout, Iglizzo has gained loyalty and lessened scrutiny of the legislative process from the City Clerk department. To further secure a consolidation of power, he attempted to remove the City Clerk, an appointed public official, without following the process prescribed in the City Charter. For someone who has significant influence over budget ordinances, this situation enables behavior that is not in the best interests of the public. He had successfully built alliances with all three Council

Appointees involved in the production of the budget ordinances (Treasurer, Internal Auditor and City Clerk). When I returned to the office the week of August 10<sup>th</sup>, City Clerk staff asked to meet with me privately to share stories of the uncomfortable and unethical positions they had been placed in while I was out. For example, when Internal Auditor Gina Costa failed to provide a redlined version of amendments to the budget ordinance so that those changes could be highlighted on a future agenda, Tina neglected to demand the modified format (this is contrary to standard practice). I was told that when Tina was questioned about allowing the changes to be hidden, she became defensive and responded, "Sometimes we just have to do what we're told." This was a deliberate and clear failure of the Acting City Clerk to behave in the best interests of both the City Council and the taxpayers of the City of Providence that she serves, even after having been challenged by her direct reports.

City Clerk staff were frustrated by the lack of information they received while I was out. I apologized, explained that it had not been my choice and asked for patience as I got caught up. Overall, my first couple of weeks back in the office went smoothly. I returned my focus to training and documentation. The third week, I worked with Sheri (the "second" First Deputy Clerk) on the first council docket (agenda) for September. At one point, she was struggling to format a document. As we worked on it together, I showed her how she could use Microsoft Word and Excel to quickly accomplish what she wanted. She listened appreciatively, as I likely saved her from a few hours of frustration, in less than 15 minutes. There were other staff in the room observing our interaction. It was thoughtful, collaborative and positive, as are virtually all of my interactions with my staff. She thanked me for my help and I thanked her for her hard work. The mood was positive.

But the very next business day (Monday, August 30<sup>th</sup>), I received a letter from the Council President stating that he had granted the First Deputies' request to temporarily be reassigned from our department. They are sitting in a separate office in City Hall, not far from City Council and City Clerk staff. While it is understood that the First Deputies are under his control, the Council President continues to allow other staff in his office to send requests to our office (including for tasks as simple as printing or emailing a City Council resolution) that would typically be handled by the First Deputy Clerks. In a nutshell, with the blessing, encouragement and direct financial support of the Council President, the First Deputies are harming the City Council and the City of Providence by deliberately refusing to participate in office work, or to share specialized knowledge that is needed for the day-to-day functioning of the City Clerk office. This is actively hindering our ability to serve the People of Providence. The language utilized in Iglizzi's letter last Monday communicating the "temporary staff transfer" purports to support my office with "any additional resources (i.e., funds to hire private stenographers)," but it clearly omits any offer to replace First Deputy Clerks. Furthermore, although an official "confidential" letter was sent to me and all City Council members announcing the staff transfer, no paperwork has been sent to the Department of Human Resources. At this point it appears they expect the former First Deputy Clerks to stay on the payroll of the Department of City Clerk, costing taxpayers to the tune of over a quarter of a million dollars in salaries, while failing to allow our government to function properly. I can only guess that their expectation is that I will not be able to manage the office without them, and (without the ability to hire anybody to help fulfill the duties they are no longer performing) will become frustrated and leave my role.

For the staff left in the office, however, it seems there was a collective sigh of relief. The pall of conflict had been lifted and there was an immediate sense of teamwork to fulfill our responsibilities in the absence of the deputies. There was more frequent interaction among staff, both socially and

professionally. Ideas were exchanged and a number of process improvements were proposed and implemented in the span of a few days. I expressed my appreciation for everyone's energy and commitment to the success of the office throughout the week and the mood of the office felt lighter and more positive. I left the office a little early on Friday, and glanced at my email later in the afternoon. The most junior staff member had written an instructive email to the entire team. It is rare for her to do so, and I felt it was a display of confidence and comfort for her to interact in a way that has not been common. Most touching was her salutation. The email started out, "Hi Beautiful Team." Those three words have never been used to address the staff as a whole by anyone that I know of, but they are encouraging and gratifying. I look forward to working with the existing City Clerk Team to make it more beautiful every day and to tapping their positive attitude and enthusiasm.

I hope that this testimony provides important perspective, not only on my own work but more broadly on the functioning of our city government. I am as passionate as ever about continuing to manage, lead, and support the office of the City Clerk as we serve the People and Councilors of Providence. Over the next year, I look forward to continuing to build our team's capabilities and culture, and have some exciting projects in mind to improve the transparency and accessibility of the work of the City Council.

I am grateful to Carly Iafra for the time that she has invested in reaching out to hear the perspectives of all of the City Clerk staff, including myself, and I will gladly answer any follow-up questions that may be helpful to the investigation.

With sincere appreciation,



Shawn Selleck, City Clerk

# ATTACHMENT 4

## City of Providence

### JOB DESCRIPTION

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Title of Position</b>             | <b>City Clerk</b>  |
| <b>Salary</b>                        | A-25   |
| <b>Summary</b>                       | The City Clerk reports to the City Council and is responsible for direct management of the department that serves as the official repository for all Ordinances, Resolutions, and official documents related to the government of the City of Providence; responsible for the authenticity of all legal documents.   |
| <b>Duties &amp; Responsibilities</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Responsible for maintaining and recording all votes, orders, resolutions, and ordinances made and passed by the City Council, subcommittees of the City Council, and meetings of the Retirement Board.</li><li>2. Furnishes the heads of departments and the chairpersons of all committees of the City Council with certified copies of such votes or resolutions as relate to their respective departments or committees, using the Accela Software in MinuteTraq.</li><li>3. Collects and presents to the City Council all petitions concerning zoning changes, abandonments and easements, personal injury and automobile or property damage, and certificates of Assumed Business Name or Going Out of Business.</li><li>4. Coordinates, assigns tasks, and supervises the work of Deputy City Clerk First and Second.</li><li>5. Performs other related duties as assigned.</li></ol> |
| <b>Minimum Qualifications</b>        | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. High school graduate or equivalent.</li><li>2. A minimum of seven (7) years experience in the City Clerk's Office; clerical experience in an office environment.</li></ol>  |

3. Knowledge and experience with Department computer system and applicable software.
4. Ability to communicate effectively and courteously.
5. Ability to understand and carry out complex written and oral instructions.
6. Ability to coordinate, assign tasks, and supervise the work of subordinates.
7. Knowledge of office procedures, practices, and equipment.
8. Ability to work independently with a high degree of accuracy.
9. Must be able to perform all essential functions of the job.

**TO:** Erlin Rogel  
**FROM:** Marylee Dixon  
**RE:** Incidents with the City Clerk  
**DATE:** June 18, 2019

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## ATTACHMENT 5

Erlin, two different incidents occurred today with the City Clerk, Shawn Selleck and members of the staff. One of them I overheard some of myself and the other that was brought to my attention by a member of our staff, Kyle Delgado. They are as follows:

At approximately 10:30 a.m. Shawn came to Olga's office apparently to discuss a bill for some furniture. I heard him say to Olga, "what, what is wrong with you, I see you are making a face", Olga replied "no, nothing is wrong, that bill is not yours", he proceeded to confront her about her demeanor that something was wrong, it escalated pretty quickly and Olga said "you are making me very uncomfortable, you need to stop. He continued to confront her, stating something to the effect "no somethings wrong, you are angry, I can see it on your face, I can see you are upset". Olga said, "I am not upset you are making me uncomfortable right now, you need to leave". She inquired as to why are you upset about the invoice it is not yours and he continued questioning her and she several times asked him to leave. Shawn said can we speak about this later and Olga said absolutely when you calm down.

(Olga spoke to the Pro Tem about it, and I am not sure where it was left).

I would have left it at that point feeling it was dealt with, but then Kyle Delgado came into my office and closed the door and asked if I had a minute. He was upset, he said he went to your office but you were not there and he needed to discuss something that happened. At around the same time as the other incident Shawn went to Kyle's desk to speak with him, Kyle described Shawn as being imposing over his desk and speaking in a condescending and confrontational manner. He asked Kyle about the use of the 312 Conference Room for meetings for Councilman Narducci (I believe they are on tomorrow's schedule). He asked Kyle why Councilman Narducci needed the conference room as he has his own office, Kyle replied that the Councilman was expecting a group of attendees that would not fit in his office. Shawn replied well then may I use his office (Kyle felt that he was goading him more than actually inquiring to use Councilman Narducci's office). Kyle, who as you know shows the utmost professionalism was visibly shaken by this encounter.

If you have any questions please let me know.

## ATTACHMENT 6

### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** FILE

**FROM:** Marylee S. Dixon 

**RE:** Memorializing Conversation with Tina Mastroianni

**DATE:** February 28, 2020

---

This memorandum is to memorialize for the file a conversation between Council Pro Tem Correia, Tina Mastroianni and myself and is attached to a document "Documented Incidents With City Clerk" that was provided to me by Tina.

On Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup> at approximately 2:30 p.m. Council Pro Tem Correia and Tina Mastroianni came into my office with Tina appearing to be quite upset. I had noticed for two days that Tina was not her usual self so I was not surprised to hear that something was upsetting her.

Tina then relayed a series of incidents that had taken place between her and the City Clerk Shawn Selleck relative to the protocols and manner in which the Clerk's office was being run. As stated she was visibly upset and became more so upon addressing the issues.

From all that I observed from our conversation Tina's passion and caring surrounding her duties and the reputation of the Clerk's office was impressive. She takes her job very seriously and it is important to her that others do as well.

I advised Tina to provide me with documentation of what was going on and I would document our conversation.

About an hour later Tina and the Pro Tem and I were called to the Council President's office. The Council President and Erlin Rogel, Chief of Staff were there and Tina relayed our conversation. The Council President made a few inquiries into policy and protocol items involving the Clerk's office which Tina responded to. The Council President thanked Tina and advised her she would look into these concerns and would deal with this appropriately.

Tina then followed up with the information I requested on Monday, February 24<sup>th</sup> the document which is attached.

## ATTACHMENT 7

received and dated  
2/24/2020

Marylee Dixon

### DOCUMENTED INCIDENTS WITH THE CITY CLERK

JANUARY 31, 2020

I got into a heated debate with Shawn relative to our department, and he stated once again (he has said this several times in the past), the City Clerk and this department are "independent" from the City Council and we don't answer to them. I told him I did not share that view, to which he replied that I was not an independent thinker and could be influenced by members of the City Council for political favors. I once again stated that I did not agree with his philosophy and he stated that he would write me a letter to convince me that his statement was true, to which I replied not to bother because I would never agree with it.

FEBRUARY 13, 2020

The staff had a huge altercation in the office so we assembled to discuss things that were going on. In the meeting he basically threatened to pull the plug on promoting Sheri and Angela and said that he had sole authority to do so without speaking to Council President on the matter/issues. Later that evening over the telephone we discussed what happened earlier and he stated to me that the City Clerk was just a figurehead.

FEBRUARY 14, 2020

During a morning office "huddle" the office got onto the subject of job descriptions and I stated that the City Clerk position did have a job description, which he didn't believe me until I pulled them up to which he replied "the City Clerk only needs 8 votes to become the Clerk".

FEBRUARY 18, 2020

Things just came to a boiling point with me and the whole situation so I met with Council President Matos, Council President Pro Tempore Correia, Erlin Rogel and Marylee Dixon and explained how this was making me feel and spoke about the many incidents that occurred over the past few months.

#### SUMMARY (in my opinion and feelings):

- 1.) Shawn feels that he and this department are independent of the Council and that we do not work for them or answer to them. He has stated this on several occasions and in front of many people.
- 2.) Shawn claims that you don't need qualifications to be the City Clerk, just eight votes.
- 3.) Shawn claims that the City Clerk is just a figurehead.
- 4.) Shawn has gone to the Mayor's office on two occasions that I'm aware of and has asked their communications department to represent this office and has also told Mayor's staff that he does not work for the City Council.
- 5.) Shawn has also claimed that he can go find another job at any time and make a lot more money than he's making here.

## ATTACHMENT 8

**Mastroianni, Tina**

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**From:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 4:50 PM  
**To:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Subject:** Re: Need help - have to file a complaint

Yes that works for me. I'll await your call at noon. Thank you so very much.

---

**From:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 4:41:28 PM  
**To:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Subject:** Re: Need help - have to file a complaint

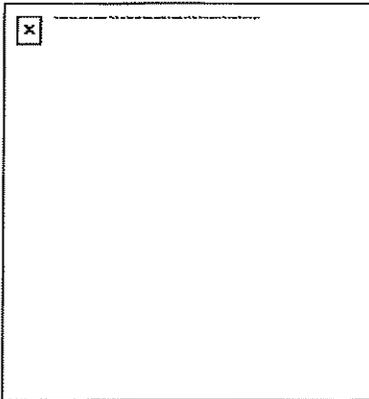
Tina,

I would be happy to talk. Can I call you tomorrow around noon? I want to make sure that I give you the time you deserve to fill me in on relevant details, and so I can see how best I can address/help.

Let me know if that works.

Best,

Emmanuel



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---

**From:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 4:26:00 PM  
**To:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Subject:** Need help - have to file a complaint

Emmanuel,

I hope that all is well with you. I need to file a complaint and I have never done this before. It will be in regard to an incident that took place on January 20<sup>th</sup> (among other issues) but have been so distraught that I haven't really even been able to articulate the incident. I'm in a bad place with my office situation. I had reached out to Jeff last week because I was thinking about taking a leave of absence for my mental health but have decided to file a complaint instead.

I'm working remotely the rest of the week and am taking float time tomorrow morning for an appointment but I would like to talk to you and start the process of the complaint. As I said I'm unsure of how to begin or even how to articulate the situation without becoming more upset.

My cell phone number is 401-474-6125. Could we set something up so that I can at least attempt to talk about the situation and get something started? Any assistance that can be provided would be greatly appreciated.

Best,

*Tina L. Mastroianni*  
*First Deputy City Clerk*  
*City of Providence*  
*25 Dorrance Street*  
*Providence, RI 02903*  
*[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)*  
*(401) 680-5392*

## Mastroianni, Tina

---

**From:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 17, 2021 11:12 AM  
**To:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Subject:** Some information

**Importance:** High

|                  |                      |                               |
|------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Tracking:</b> | <b>Recipient</b>     | <b>Delivery</b>               |
|                  | Echevarria, Emmanuel | Delivered: 2/17/2021 11:12 AM |

Emmanuel,

I'm doing my best to get my thoughts together in order for us to have a productive conversation. I can't promise that I won't breakdown or have a hard time talking about the situation so I've written something for you to read (see below) prior to our meeting that I'm hoping will help you to guide me with the conversation so that I'm able to speak appropriately.

I hope that I'm making sense because I'm so distraught and overwhelmed about this. I really need some guidance about how to go about this properly so that I can explain the situation thoroughly. What I will also do is print out the emails and any notes that I have and scan them into one document so that I can provide as much information as I can. I can try to do that over the next few days and get that to you when I can.

Again, I apologize in advance if I'm unable to properly articulate my feelings without breaking down.

I can't thank you enough and I also want to let you know that even just knowing that I'll be filing this complaint is helping me so much. No one, not me or any of my colleagues should be going through something like this, it is awful and inappropriate and it needs to end. Additionally, I am not the only one that feels this way, there are other members of the staff that do not like the work environment. Every day I come to work I'm sick to my stomach and so broken, I cannot do this anymore. And I have heard my colleagues say the same thing many times.

Best,

*Tina L. Mastroianni*  
*First Deputy City Clerk*  
*City of Providence*  
*25 Dorrance Street*  
*Providence, RI 02903*  
*[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)*  
*(401) 680-5392*

Incident that occurred on January 20, 2021 at approximately 11:30 am (and a few other situations of note)

I was working in Room 305 on the third floor as it was my day to work remotely but I had some things I needed to do in the office and because we have a split team I couldn't enter the office that morning.

I was working on some agendas when Shawn Selleck, the City Clerk, came over and wanted to work on some Clerk/Steno assignment spreadsheets. I said okay but that I didn't have much time as I was only going to be there until around 12/12:30. So, we were working on that when Sheri Petronio, the other First Deputy, came over to ask Shawn for assistance with a zoom meeting that required executive session, which she had never done before. The clerk asked her to read a document that he created about how to do that, she then explained that she was more of a visual learner and that reading how to do something wasn't a good way for her to learn. He pretty much refused to show her how to do it hands on, it was a 20 minute conversation with just him speaking and not letting her explain that she doesn't learn that way very well by reading. And during that time I kept telling him that I was very busy and had to get my work done, to which he ignored and told me that although my work was "urgent" it wasn't a "priority" to him. He totally disregarded my feelings and point of view on what I felt was a priority to me. I was getting frustrated at this point because I had a lot of work to get done and my time was running out. She ended up leaving very unhappy with his response. When she left he happened to bring up an email that I sent him and what we call the "leadership" team in our office, which consists of myself, Shawn, Sheri and Angela Harris, the Second Deputy, where I outlined that some employees in the office were upset with not being notified appropriately if they were taking a meeting or not. He called me out for including Sheri and Angela (part of the leadership) in the email and was basically telling me that I didn't do the right thing (this has also happened in the past – I will explain that later on). His tone and attitude made me very upset so I told him I no longer wanted to speak because I was getting very upset with the conversation and I asked a few times to disengage from the conversation so that I could get my work done and then leave to come home and finish my work day there. He refused to stop speaking to me and I became so upset and distraught that I actually had to get up and leave the room in order for him to stop speaking to me. I immediately went upstairs to the HR office but no one was in that day so I then called the Chief of Staff for the Council, PJ Fox, and he did not answer so I texted him and said that I needed to speak with him ASAP and that I was going out on medical leave because I was having a nervous breakdown. I then called the Deputy Chief of Staff for the Council, Marylee Dixon, and I was so upset that I couldn't even speak and had to hang up the phone and go outside to calm down before I could even tell her about the situation. In the meantime, I waited for Shawn to leave the building before I even went back inside because if I ran into him they would've had to call an ambulance that's how broken down I was. Once I knew he left I then went back in and had to complete the work that I came in to do originally. I had to call one of my employees so that she could work on two agendas that had to go out that day but could barely speak to her because I was in such a state of awfulness. The employee that I spoke to was Jennifer Emidy and you may reach out to her so that she can attest to my state at that time. I didn't speak with Shawn for the rest of the week. When I did have to speak with him the following week he acted as if nothing had happened. And to be honest I don't really want to talk to him about anything other than work, which is hard enough as it is to do that.

With regard to the other email that he called me out on, it was in regard to the staff being upset that he went out of town to a COVID hotspot and how they were upset that he didn't feel the need to be tested even though that's what the guidelines are (according to him he doesn't agree with the state/city guidelines). When other employees have gone to a COVID hotspot we required them to quarantine and get tested before they were allowed to return to the office. So, they asked me to write him an email and include them in the email so that they could hear from him firsthand why he didn't feel the need to follow the guidelines and quarantine and get tested. Well, he called me on the phone and went on for about 20 or so minutes about how I ambushed him, that I was immature and unsupportive and that I didn't handle the situation appropriately. Once he seemed to be finished I asked him point blank "are you finished talking" and when he said yes I laid into him about the reasons why I included staff in the email and the fact that they were upset with potentially being exposed to COVID and that the way that he was speaking to me was demeaning and demoralizing. He, of course, didn't agree. Additionally, he didn't even tell us that he was leaving town and we didn't find out until he mentioned it in an email.

Another situation that the office is dealing with is requests for time off. If an employee doesn't follow a "guide" that he wrote up requesting for sick, float, vacation or personal days that he would deny it. He has denied people's request for time until they put it in the proper format that he has laid out. This is absurd. We are grownups not two year old's being taught how to act properly.

There is so much more to say but I will end it with this for now, **I am working in a hostile, harassing and bullying work environment.** It is effecting my mental health and I even thought at one point to commit myself to a mental institution because I have had thoughts of suicide because of this man.

I have some emails and texts that I can provide and some written notes that I'm trying to remember the passwords for that I can also provide. This is an ongoing situation that has been going on for more than a year with many more incidents that I can speak about but I'm so upset and overwhelmed that I just don't know how to compile and articulate each situation that has occurred. I know that some of my colleagues would be willing to stand up on my behalf and speak of my situations as well as their own.

## Mastroianni, Tina

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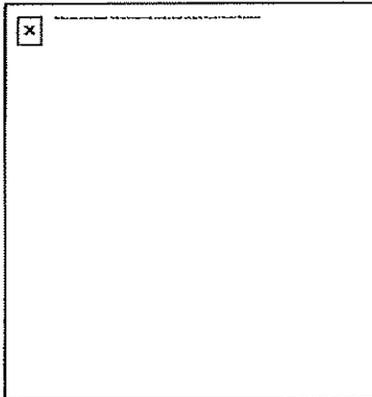
**From:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 12:34 PM  
**To:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Cc:** Petronio, Sheri; Harris, Angela  
**Subject:** Re: NEED YOU

Tina, Sheri, and Angela.

It would be helpful if you could all send me a separate summary of the incident. Please do not include each other in the e-mail as I want to make sure we're giving it individual attention as warranted.

Thank you,

Emmanuel



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**From:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 11:06:55 AM  
**To:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Cc:** Petronio, Sheri; Harris, Angela  
**Subject:** RE: NEED YOU

Hi Emmanuel,

I can wait to talk to you if you can call me between those times that would be great.

Additionally, I know that Sheri and Angela (and others from the office) would like to speak with you as well (I've cc'd them on this email). So if you could set something up with them as well that would be great.

We had a rough morning with him and we need to have this documented appropriately. I can say on my behalf that I am totally done with Shawn, it was brutal this morning.

Best,

*Tina L. Mastroianni*  
*First Deputy City Clerk*  
*City of Providence*  
*25 Dorrance Street*  
*Providence, RI 02903*  
[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)  
*(401) 680-5392*

**From:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 10:58 AM  
**To:** Mastroianni, Tina <tmastroianni@providenceri.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: NEED YOU

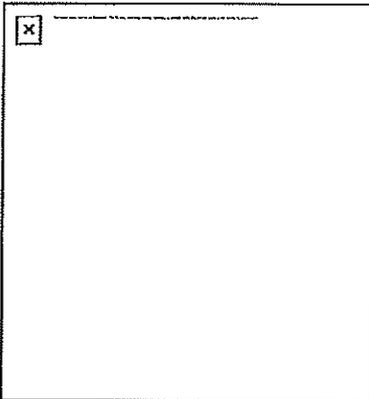
Hi Tina,

I can have Jeff call you? I can briefly make him aware of the situation, but I am tied up on a couple of matters until well into the afternoon and want to be able to give you the proper attention.

Otherwise, I can talk from 3-3:30.

Please let me know.

Emmanuel



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**From:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 10:12:49 AM  
**To:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Subject:** NEED YOU

Emmanuel,

There are those of us that must speak with you immediately regarding another incident that took place this morning during a leadership zoom meeting between myself, Sheri Petronio, Angela Harris and Shawn. I walked out of the zoom meeting, we are all very upset and need to speak with you as soon as possible. I'm in the office for now but my husband from the hospital at some point today so the sooner the better.

Can we have a conference call ASAP?

Best,

*Tina L. Mastroianni*  
*First Deputy City Clerk*  
*City of Providence*  
*25 Dorrance Street*  
*Providence, RI 02903*  
*[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)*  
*(401) 680-5392*

## **Mastroianni, Tina**

---

**From:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 2:31 PM  
**To:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Subject:** Incident of February 22, 2021 with Shawn Selleck - City Clerk

**Importance:** High

Emmanuel,

Here is my incident report of what occurred at today's zoom "Leadership" meeting – Monday, February 22, 2021 beginning at 8:45 am.

We began the meeting by discussion everything that was occurring this week with meetings and who was taking what meetings. That was fine. We then moved into a discussion about people who were signing up to speak at the ordinances public hearing scheduled for Wednesday. Again, that was fine.

We then moved to a discussion about how and who was doing the indexing of final papers, and Shawn stated that he would like Sheri to show Angela how that gets done but then he asked her to switch from her normal cohort of Monday and Tuesday to Sheri's cohort of Wednesday and Thursday. I then raised the issue that if Angela moved to those days I would have no supervisor other than myself in the office on Monday and Tuesday and didn't feel that was right, especially if I was busy or had to attend any meetings then the office would be left without a supervisor. He pushed back and said he didn't feel that would be issue. I 100% disagree with that statement. Each of the cohorts backs each other up, so if I don't have my back up then that is going to take up way too much of my day and keep me from getting done the work that I need to get done. He didn't seem to feel that would be an issue.

We then began discussing how we were going to start training Angela to be a deputy, which is what she is, and helping her to be able to learn her role so that she can start taking committee meetings on her own in the very near future which would relieve myself, Sheri and Shawn from having to be there two to three nights a week. I stated that I felt that Angela needs more training as a deputy but has been saddled with way too many "administrative" duties. I stated that I felt that some of the administrative staff could be doing some of the things that Angela is doing, which would allow her more time to train to be a deputy. Shawn then proceeded to lay out all his reasons for approximately 20 minutes without stopping and without interruption or debate from us about how he wants things to proceed going forward, even saying that this was a "directive" and does not feel that how we feel about it is important enough to state. In his 20 minute monologue he stated things like "maybe people feel it's a waste of time to do air table" and "even with regard to the Open Meetings Portal, although it was tough in the beginning even the former Clerk Lori Hagen was telling people how great the Open Meetings Portal was" and "how we don't like to hand some of our responsibilities off to other people that could handle them" and also moving the responsibility of "Lobbyist Registrations and Reports" to a member of the Admin team. When he was finally finished speaking, after stating at least three times that he would stop talking and still continued to talk, I simply stated that I had a few "statements" to make that weren't debatable and that I would just be explaining how I felt about what was said and that I would just move on after that.

1<sup>st</sup> – I stated that none of us had ever stated that air table was a waste of time and that it wasn't a "good" tool – I said it sounds like an exceptional tool that would be great to have once it is completed and a great resource and that I was just stating that I felt it should be done by the administrative staff so that Angela could have more time to learn her "actual" duties.

2<sup>nd</sup> – I stated that I agreed the Open Meetings Portal is an excellent resource and that even though we went through a lot learning the system many years ago that I always stated to anyone who called or to new people in our office or the building how great and easy and wonderful the Open Meetings Portal is and what an asset it has been to our office.

Lastly – I stated that there are many things I would love to “hand off” to the administrative staff but how difficult that is to do since we’re not together on a daily basis but that would be an excellent goal for each of the leadership team members to be able to hand those “administrative” duties off to other people in the office so we can have more time to handle the day to day functions of our own duties.

He started to say things like “what do I mean when I say administrative duties”, like it was beneath me or something to do those things. And then asking why I felt that certain things were administrative duties and not “clerk” duties. I stated that Angela needs to learn how to be a deputy and if she is bogged down doing these administrative tasks she is never going to learn how to be a clerk successfully. I then stated that I wasn’t looking to debate these statements that it was how I felt about things and how I see things and it wasn’t debatable but he just kept pushing and asking and trying to tell me what I should be saying and feeling and at that point I just had enough so I told him I was disengaging myself from the conversation and I got up and left the zoom meeting.

Additionally, I’m seriously considering taking some FMLA as you have suggested, I cannot work in an environment with someone who doesn’t listen to his staff, only sees things his way, doesn’t let you express how you feel about something without debating you about how you feel. It’s bullying and oppressive and my mental well being can no longer handle it. I have a huge public hearing that I must work on so I’ll know more by the end of the week if I will be taking FMLA and I will reach out to my doctor for that back up.

One more thing – he obviously didn’t care about anything we stated at the meeting because he just sent an email to the entire staff that totally disregarded everything we said, I will forward that to you so you are aware that nothing we said was taken into consideration. It’s his way and his way only.

Looking forward to speaking with you at 3:00 for our confidential zoom meeting.

Thank you for your time.

Best,

*Tina L. Mastroianni*  
*First Deputy City Clerk*  
*City of Providence*  
*25 Dorrance Street*  
*Providence, RI 02903*  
[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)  
*(401) 680-5392*

## **Mastroianni, Tina**

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**From:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 2:33 PM  
**To:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Subject:** FW: Follow up from last week's team meeting  
  
**Importance:** High

This is the email he just sent, the second portion is what was discussed at the meeting about being "administrative" duties that should be given to someone on the "admin" staff so Angela can have more time to learn her "actual" duties.

*Tina L. Mastroianni*  
*First Deputy City Clerk*  
*City of Providence*  
*25 Dorrance Street*  
*Providence, RI 02903*  
*[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)*  
*(401) 680-5392*

**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 1:50 PM  
**To:** Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>; Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>; Cotugno, Marsha <[Mcotugno@providenceri.gov](mailto:Mcotugno@providenceri.gov)>; Polanco, Yuly <[Ypolanco@providenceri.gov](mailto:Ypolanco@providenceri.gov)>; Gutierrez, Lauren <[Lgutierrez@providenceri.gov](mailto:Lgutierrez@providenceri.gov)>; Fajardo, Jesenia <[Jfajardo@providenceri.gov](mailto:Jfajardo@providenceri.gov)>; Harris, Angela <[Aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:Aharris@providenceri.gov)>; Peligian, Donna <[Dpeligian@providenceri.gov](mailto:Dpeligian@providenceri.gov)>; Emidy, Jennifer <[Jemidy@providenceri.gov](mailto:Jemidy@providenceri.gov)>  
**Subject:** Follow up from last week's team meeting

Good afternoon, City Clerk team.

Thanks for your during the staff meeting last Tuesday. I just wanted to summarize the topics we discussed.

### **Printer Toner Management**

When someone notices that a printer/copier is running low on toner:

1. If you are in the office and know how to replace the cartridge, please do so and email Tina with copy to me, clarifying which copier you replaced the toner for and what cartridge you replaced.
2. If you are not in the office or don't know how to replace the cartridge, please ask someone who is able to replace the cartridge and the person replacing the cartridge should email Tina with copy to me describing which copier you replaced the toner for and what cartridge you replaced.

### **Appointment Letters Process for Tracking and Updating Roll Call and Contact Info for Stenos**

1. When Sheri receives or creates an appointment letter of any type, she will immediately make a paper copy of that appointment letter for Angela and place it on Angela's desk.
2. Angela will contact the appointing body (Mayor, City Council Chief of Staff, etc.) to request any personal appointee information (phone, email, etc.) not on the appointment letter

3. Angela will enter the details of the appointment (both from the letter and from her request) into Airtable (a tool we are using to manage Boards and Commissions).
4. When the appointment letter becomes a Final Paper, Sheri will let Angela know and Angela will do the following:
  - a. Update Airtable with Final Paper
  - b. Notify the lead clerk for the committee that they should reach out to the appointee and chair to ensure swearing in
5. Once the member is sworn in, the lead clerk should notify Angela and then, if necessary, Angela will:
  - a. Enter swearing-in details in Airtable
  - b. Add the member to the Zoom upload CSV
  - c. Notify Shawn or Tina to update MinuteTraq
  - d. Email the name and contact info for the member to the steno for the committee to request that they:
    - i. Archive the old Roll Call and create a new Roll Call
    - ii. Archive the old Contact List and create a new Contact List

I look forward to feedback and suggestions for improvement on the above, but hope this works well for the team.

I'm hoping to have another team meeting this Friday and will send out the calendar invite when I know my schedule better.

Talk to you all soon,

**Shawn Selleck** (*he/him/él*) | *City Clerk* | City of Providence  
[sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:sselleck@providenceri.gov) | 401-680-5256  
25 Dorrance Street, Room 311; Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
<http://openmeetings.providenceri.gov/>

# ATTACHMENT 9

**Petronio, Sheri**

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**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 18, 2019 2:36 PM  
**To:** Perdomo, Melissa; Cotugno, Marsha; Harris, Angela; Peligian, Donna; Emidy, Jennifer; Ostiguy, Dawn; Mastroianni, Tina; Petronio, Sheri  
**Subject:** Paid Time Off in the Office of City Clerk

Good afternoon, everyone.

I'm sending out a note of clarification so that everyone can be on the same page with respect to time off.

To make things easy, I am including templates for the types of e-mail that you should be sending me below. The text in red is required. The text in blue and anything else you may write is optional.

**Sick Time:** I can only think of two types of e-mails that you should be sending related to sick time. Day Of or Advance.

**Day Of:** Hello Shawn, I am taking a sick day today. I am not feeling well and hope to be in tomorrow, etc.

**In Advance:** Hello Shawn, I have a <doctor's appointment/health-related matter> on <insert date> and will be taking a <half day/full day> sick time off <in the morning/afternoon>.

**Personal Time:** Can also be Day Of or in Advance.

**Day Of:** Hello Shawn, I am taking a personal day today.

**In Advance:** Hello Shawn, I am taking a personal day on <insert date> and will be taking a <half day/full day> sick time off <in the morning/afternoon/from 2:30-4:30 p.m.>.

**Vacation Time:**

**In Advance:** Hello Shawn, I would like to request a <half day/full day> of vacation time off <in the morning/afternoon> on <insert date>.

**Float Time:**

**In Advance or Day Of:** Hello Shawn, I would like to request <number of hours> of float time off from <insert time> on <insert date>.

I prefer that you send only the text in red to me for the appropriate request. Feel free to copy and paste it into your e-mail and send it to me. No other information is requested or required.

Thanks in advance,

Shawn Selleck (he/him) | City Clerk | City of Providence  
[sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:sselleck@providenceri.gov) | 401-680-5256  
25 Dorrance Street; Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
<http://openmeetings.providenceri.gov/>

## ATTACHMENT 10

Back in January of 2021 when I came back to work from after COVID. I was told by Shawn that a couple of my co-worker felt uneasy about me returning back to work so he made me work remotely the Monday and Tuesday that I was supposed to return back to the office. I found it interesting because after reading all the emails he had been in North Carolina and never quarantined at all.

I also had a problem with him because I would request time off and if it was not in the right format he would deny it yet my co-workers would request time off the same exact way and he would approve it.

Most of our interactions were one on one because he likes to type everything on his laptop and I told him that I didn't trust him typing anything I said and if he was going to type anything I would walk out of the meeting so he stopped typing. I remember one meeting we were having about a co-worker that he wanted to give some of my work to and I did not agree with, we just kept going back and forth with it for like 45 minutes and it was time for me to leave so I told him it was 4:30 and I was leaving. He jumped up and grabbed the door knob and would not let me leave. I told him my husband was outside waiting and I had to go. He then stated that we needed to finish this conversation. I told him I had nothing further to discuss and he needed to move away from the door. He still insisted on us finishing the conversation and would not leave. I repeated to him one more time to move away from the door and I just stared at him and he finally released his hand off the door knob and I grab the door and walk out.

He's very confrontational when you don't see things his way or agree with him.

I lost my Granddaughter back in November of 2020 and we had a leadership meeting one day to discuss my training. He stated that he would be clearing all of my old duties off my plate and that Tina could plan as to how I should be trained as he would leave it all up to her. He also said the reason I was not being trained in the past was because of my personal issues that I had to deal with which was an absolute lie. My Past away in June of last year but I came right back to work 3 days later and still was never able to get trained in my new position because Shawn kept make continue to the same duties as my old position (secretary to the city clerk). In November of 2020 my granddaughter passed away and on top of that we all came down covid. So he used that as an excuse for me not being trained in my position as 2<sup>nd</sup> deputy. He actually sent out an email on this. I had been in this position since May of 2020 but he decided to wait until we kept pushing the issue with him about my training and him holding me back that he finally got upset and decided that he was going to allow me to start training and again and wasn't until he found out that Tina was going out on FMLA and he wanted her to do a quick 2 week for Sheri and I on training for all the work she did before she left.

## **Petronio, Sheri**

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**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 18, 2019 2:36 PM  
**To:** Perdomo, Melissa; Cotugno, Marsha; Harris, Angela; Peligian, Donna; Emidy, Jennifer; Ostiguy, Dawn; Mastroianni, Tina; Petronio, Sheri  
**Subject:** Paid Time Off in the Office of City Clerk

Good afternoon, everyone.

I'm sending out a note of clarification so that everyone can be on the same page with respect to time off.

To make things easy, I am including templates for the types of e-mail that you should be sending me below. The text in red is required. The text in blue and anything else you may write is optional.

**Sick Time:** I can only think of two types of e-mails that you should be sending related to sick time. Day Of or Advance.

**Day Of:** Hello Shawn, I am taking a sick day today. I am not feeling well and hope to be in tomorrow, etc.

**In Advance:** Hello Shawn, I have a <doctor's appointment/health-related matter> on <insert date> and will be taking a <half day/full day> sick time off <in the morning/afternoon>.

**Personal Time:** Can also be Day Of or in Advance.

**Day Of:** Hello Shawn, I am taking a personal day today.

**In Advance:** Hello Shawn, I am taking a personal day on <insert date> and will be taking a <half day/full day> sick time off <in the morning/afternoon/from 2:30-4:30 p.m.>.

**Vacation Time:**

**In Advance:** Hello Shawn, I would like to request a <half day/full day> of vacation time off <in the morning/afternoon> on <insert date>.

**Float Time:**

**In Advance or Day Of:** Hello Shawn, I would like to request <number of hours> of float time off from <insert time> on <insert date>.

I prefer that you send only the text in red to me for the appropriate request. Feel free to copy and paste it into your e-mail and send it to me. No other information is requested or required.

Thanks in advance,

**Shawn Selleck (he/him) | City Clerk | City of Providence**  
[sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:sselleck@providenceri.gov) | 401-680-5256  
25 Dorrance Street; Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
<http://openmeetings.providenceri.gov/>

# ATTACHMENT 11

**Mastroianni, Tina**

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**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 10, 2021 8:53 AM  
**To:** Harris, Angela  
**Cc:** Mastroianni, Tina; Petronio, Sheri  
**Subject:** RE: Sick Time.

Thanks for letting us know, Angela. Sick time is yours to take whenever you want without approval.

This is updated on the calendar.

Shawn Selleck (he/him/él) | City Clerk | City of Providence  
[sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:sselleck@providenceri.gov) | 401-680-5256  
25 Dorrance Street, Room 311; Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
<http://openmeetings.providenceri.gov/>

**From:** Harris, Angela  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 10, 2021 8:50 AM  
**To:** Selleck, Shawn <[Sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:Sselleck@providenceri.gov)>  
**Cc:** Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>; Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>  
**Subject:** Sick Time.

Hello Shawn, I have a <doctor's appointment <February 12, 2021> and will be taking a <half day > sick time off <in the afternoon>.

I have a <doctor's appointment on <February 19, 2021> and will be taking a <half day sick time off <in the afternoon>.

I have a <doctor's appointment on <February 25, 2021> and will be taking a <half day sick time off <in the afternoon>.

**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 10, 2021 8:35 AM  
**To:** Harris, Angela <[Aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:Aharris@providenceri.gov)>  
**Cc:** Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>; Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Time Off

Denied in this format.

Shawn Selleck (he/him/él) | City Clerk | City of Providence  
[sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:sselleck@providenceri.gov) | 401-680-5256  
25 Dorrance Street, Room 311; Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
<http://openmeetings.providenceri.gov/>

**From:** Harris, Angela

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 9, 2021 3:58 PM

**To:** Selleck, Shawn <[Sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:Sselleck@providenceri.gov)>

**Cc:** Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>; Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>

**Subject:** Time Off

I'm requesting a half day sick on Friday, February 12, 2021 in the afternoon.

I am also requesting a half day sick on February 19, 2021 in the afternoon and also on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February in the afternoon.

Thank you,

Angela J. Harris  
Second Deputy City Clerk  
Providence City Hall  
25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903  
[aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:aharris@providenceri.gov)  
401-680-5249

## Mastroianni, Tina

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**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 11, 2021 1:46 PM  
**To:** Fajardo, Jesenia  
**Cc:** Mastroianni, Tina; Harris, Angela; Petronio, Sheri  
**Subject:** RE: Vacation Time Request

Hello Jesenia,

This is approved.

Shawn Selleck (he/him/él) | City Clerk | City of Providence [sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:sselleck@providenceri.gov) | 401-680-5256  
25 Dorrance Street, Room 311; Providence, Rhode Island 02903 <http://openmeetings.providenceri.gov/>

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Fajardo, Jesenia  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 11, 2021 12:26 PM  
**To:** Selleck, Shawn <[Sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:Sselleck@providenceri.gov)>  
**Cc:** Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>; Harris, Angela <[Aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:Aharris@providenceri.gov)>; Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>  
**Subject:** Vacation Time Request

Hi Shawn,

I would like to request to take Monday 22nd & Tuesday 23rd as Half Days (Vacation time) Leaving at 12pm both days.

Thanks 🙏  
Jesenia

## Mastroianni, Tina

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**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 1:36 PM  
**To:** Gutierrez, Lauren  
**Cc:** Mastroianni, Tina; Petronio, Sheri; Harris, Angela  
**Subject:** RE: Personal Time Request

Thank you for your request, Lauren.

This is approved and updated on the vacation calendar.

Shawn Selleck (*he/him/él*) | *City Clerk* | City of Providence  
[sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:sselleck@providenceri.gov) | 401-680-5256  
25 Dorrance Street, Room 311; Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
<http://openmeetings.providenceri.gov/>

**From:** Gutierrez, Lauren  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 16, 2021 10:27 AM  
**To:** Selleck, Shawn <[Sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:Sselleck@providenceri.gov)>  
**Cc:** Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>; Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>; Harris, Angela <[Aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:Aharris@providenceri.gov)>  
**Subject:** Personal Time Request

Hi Shawn,

I would like to request to take Tuesday, March 9<sup>th</sup> as a personal day.

Thank you,  
Lauren Gutierrez

## Mastroianni, Tina

---

**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 23, 2021 12:51 PM  
**To:** Harris, Angela; Petronio, Sheri  
**Cc:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Subject:** RE: Float and Sick Day

Thanks for letting me know you felt that way.

Was what I wrote afterward more professional and clear?

Shawn Selleck (*he/him/él*) | City Clerk | City of Providence  
[sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:sselleck@providenceri.gov) | 401-680-5256  
25 Dorrance Street, Room 311; Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
<http://openmeetings.providenceri.gov/>

**From:** Harris, Angela  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 23, 2021 12:49 PM  
**To:** Selleck, Shawn <[Selleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:Selleck@providenceri.gov)>; Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>  
**Cc:** Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Float and Sick Day

It was very unprofessional and a bad choice of words.

**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 23, 2021 12:47 PM  
**To:** Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>  
**Cc:** Harris, Angela <[Aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:Aharris@providenceri.gov)>; Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Float and Sick Day

Hi Sheri,

I'm sorry if my word choice was poor below. I had no intent to be sarcastic. I was being sincere that I did not enjoy nitpicking people's language when approving time off and that, while I had good intentions of clarifying when people did and did not need to request time off, it instead resulted in frustration, so I'm stopping that policy going forward.

People can send their requests however they want. It should be as simple as possible.

I hope that is agreeable to everyone and makes you feel better.

Shawn Selleck (*he/him/él*) | City Clerk | City of Providence  
[sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:sselleck@providenceri.gov) | 401-680-5256  
25 Dorrance Street, Room 311; Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
<http://openmeetings.providenceri.gov/>

**From:** Petronio, Sheri  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 23, 2021 12:35 PM  
**To:** Selleck, Shawn <[Selleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:Selleck@providenceri.gov)>

Cc: Harris, Angela <[Aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:Aharris@providenceri.gov)>; Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>  
Subject: RE: Float and Sick Day

Sorry if that's the way you feel I don't need the sarcasm.

From: Selleck, Shawn  
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 12:26 PM  
To: Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>  
Cc: Harris, Angela <[Aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:Aharris@providenceri.gov)>; Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>  
Subject: RE: Float and Sick Day

Hi Sheri (and everyone).

It's not fun for me to proofread people's time off requests so I'm done with that.

It doesn't feel good. My goal was to raise awareness of when you do and don't need to ask permission, but it just isn't worth it if people don't care and just want their time off. Maybe you had to request sick days in the past (which would be a violation of policy), but I will just continue to remind people that asking permission for sick time is not necessary.

Sheri, I put your sick day on the calendar (you don't need approval for that), but you did not tell me what time you want your float hour, so I can't add that yet. Please let me know.

Shawn Selleck (*he/him/él*) | City Clerk | City of Providence  
[sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:sselleck@providenceri.gov) | 401-680-5256  
25 Dorrance Street, Room 311; Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
<http://openmeetings.providenceri.gov/>

From: Petronio, Sheri  
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 12:03 PM  
To: Selleck, Shawn <[Sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:Sselleck@providenceri.gov)>  
Subject: Float and Sick Day

**In Advance: Hello Shaw, I would like to request <one hour float> on , Wednesday March 17, 2021 and also would like to request a <sick day> on March 22, 2021.**

*Sheri A. Petronio  
First Deputy City Clerk  
25 Dorrance Street, Room 311  
Providence, RI 02903  
[spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:spetronio@providenceri.gov)  
(401) 680-5570*

## ATTACHMENT 12

~~Petronio, Sheri~~

**From:** Petronio, Sheri  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 3:14 PM  
**To:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Subject:** RE: NEED YOU

Good afternoon Emmanuel,

I have been a city employee for the past 30 years in the City Clerk's Department. I have worked with four City Clerk's and by far my boss Shawn Selleck is the most incompetent, self-absorbed, arrogant person I ever worked for. He came into this position as an IT person having no knowledge of how to be a City Clerk or what it involves. This office has a lot of institutional knowledge which when he came into this office he did not have any experience. The Charter requires that to be the City Clerk you must have seven year's experience which he never had. Tina Mastroianni who is the First Deputy City Clerk has had to teach him everything for the past two years and has the audacity to tell her that she undermines everything he does which is a lie. She has been nothing but helpful to him and has taught him everything he knows which he still doesn't know everything. Tina is the one that runs this office. If it wasn't for her we wouldn't be where we are today. All he does on a daily basis is dictate to us how he wants this office run or should I say managed. It's always what he wants. Our input is never good enough. Angela Harris has been a Second Deputy City Clerk for the past year and still does not know her job because he has been having her do clerical work. We have all asked time and time again to teach her but it has fallen by the waste side. This is a very toxic office to work in and I have anxiety every day I have to come to work and be treated like I am in pre-school. We have talked to other people to try to resolve issues but nothing ever gets resolved. Today's meeting any every meeting is about input on how to make the office better and nothing ever gets done. The meetings always get out of hand and he always has an attitude and talks down to us all the time. As far as I am concerned he is not capable of being the City Clerk and no one should be treated the way he treats us or should have to come to work feeling the way we do. Thank you for your time.

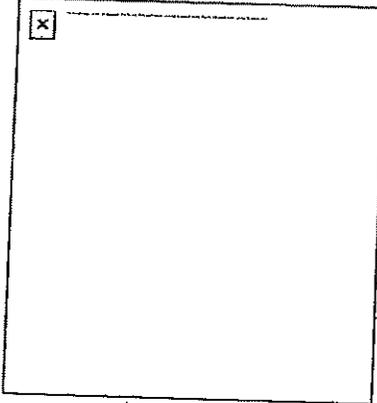
**From:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 12:34 PM  
**To:** Mastroianni, Tina <tmastroianni@providenceri.gov>  
**Cc:** Petronio, Sheri <Spetronio@providenceri.gov>; Harris, Angela <Aharris@providenceri.gov>  
**Subject:** Re: NEED YOU

Tina, Sheri, and Angela.

It would be helpful if you could all send me a separate summary of the incident. Please do not include each other in the e-mail as I want to make sure we're giving it individual attention as warranted.

Thank you,

Emmanuel



**EMMANUEL R. ECHEVARRIA**  
**DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES**  
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**From:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 11:06:55 AM  
**To:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Cc:** Petronio, Sheri; Harris, Angela  
**Subject:** RE: NEED YOU

Hi Emmanuel,

I can wait to talk to you if you can call me between those times that would be great.

Additionally, I know that Sheri and Angela (and others from the office) would like to speak with you as well (I've cc'd them on this email). So if you could set something up with them as well that would be great.

We had a rough morning with him and we need to have this documented appropriately. I can say on my behalf that I am totally done with Shawn, it was brutal this morning.

# ATTACHMENT 13

**Mastroianni, Tina**

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**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Monday, February 22, 2021 1:50 PM  
**To:** Mastroianni, Tina; Petronio, Sheri; Cotugno, Marsha; Polanco, Yuly; Gutierrez, Lauren; Fajardo, Jesenia; Harris, Angela; Peligian, Donna; Emidy, Jennifer  
**Subject:** Follow up from last week's team meeting

Good afternoon, City Clerk team.

Thanks for your during the staff meeting last Tuesday. I just wanted to summarize the topics we discussed.

## Printer Toner Management

When someone notices that a printer/copier is running low on toner:

1. If you are in the office and know how to replace the cartridge, please do so and email Tina with copy to me, clarifying which copier you replaced the toner for and what cartridge you replaced.
2. If you are not in the office or don't know how to replace the cartridge, please ask someone who is able to replace the cartridge and the person replacing the cartridge should email Tina with copy to me describing which copier you replaced the toner for and what cartridge you replaced.

## Appointment Letters Process for Tracking and Updating Roll Call and Contact Info for Stenos

1. When Sheri receives or creates an appointment letter of any type, she will immediately make a paper copy of that appointment letter for Angela and place it on Angela's desk.
2. Angela will contact the appointing body (Mayor, City Council Chief of Staff, etc.) to request any personal appointee information (phone, email, etc.) not on the appointment letter
3. Angela will enter the details of the appointment (both from the letter and from her request) into Airtable (a tool we are using to manage Boards and Commissions).
4. When the appointment letter becomes a Final Paper, Sheri will let Angela know and Angela will do the following:
  - a. Update Airtable with Final Paper
  - b. Notify the lead clerk for the committee that they should reach out to the appointee and chair to ensure swearing in
5. Once the member is sworn in, the lead clerk should notify Angela and then, if necessary, Angela will:
  - a. Enter swearing-in details in Airtable
  - b. Add the member to the Zoom upload CSV
  - c. Notify Shawn or Tina to update MinuteTraj
  - d. Email the name and contact info for the member to the steno for the committee to request that they:
    - i. Archive the old Roll Call and create a new Roll Call
    - ii. Archive the old Contact List and create a new Contact List

I look forward to feedback and suggestions for improvement on the above, but hope this works well for the team.

I'm hoping to have another team meeting this Friday and will send out the calendar invite when I know my schedule better.

Talk to you all soon,

Shawn Selleck (he/him/él) | City Clerk | City of Providence

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## Mastroianni, Tina

---

**From:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 23, 2021 4:56 PM  
**To:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Cc:** Harris, Angela; Petronio, Sheri; Matos, Sabina  
**Subject:** RE: Developing Angela's Training Plan

| Tracking: | Recipient       | Delivery                     |
|-----------|-----------------|------------------------------|
|           | Selleck, Shawn  | Delivered: 2/23/2021 4:56 PM |
|           | Harris, Angela  | Delivered: 2/23/2021 4:56 PM |
|           | Petronio, Sheri | Delivered: 2/23/2021 4:56 PM |
|           | Matos, Sabina   |                              |

1. Jesenia completes the agenda and then I proofread. She's got a very good grasp of what needs to be done but someone has to proofread the agenda against the packet that we receive to make sure all the information is correct. So, I don't "prepare" the agenda, Jesenia does and I proofread what is done. Anyone on the team will have to pick up the Board responsibility and proofread what Jesenia has done.
2. With regard to Ordinances tomorrow night – no, there is no one else that can clerk that meeting as it is dealing with zoning matters and there is no one else, unfortunately, who has ever done zoning and that isn't something that can be learned in a day, it has taken me YEARS to learn about zoning. But if we had moved forward from the beginning, when Angela became second deputy with training the leadership team on various committees rather than overloading her with administrative functions then we would not be in this predicament.
3. I cannot at this point take off my production hat, and I certainly never take off my management hat as well, due to the fact that I have huge Ordinances public hearing and meeting upon the rise. I do my best to wear both hats as well as I can under the circumstances.

I don't know what capacity I can pull together over the next two days, I will do what I can when I can.

*Tina L. Mastroianni*  
*First Deputy City Clerk*  
*City of Providence*  
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*Providence, RI 02903*  
[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)  
*(401) 680-5392*

**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 23, 2021 4:26 PM  
**To:** Mastroianni, Tina <tmastroianni@providenceri.gov>  
**Cc:** Harris, Angela <Aharris@providenceri.gov>; Petronio, Sheri <Spetronio@providenceri.gov>; Matos, Sabina <ms.sabina.matos@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** RE: Developing Angela's Training Plan

Hi Tina,

My intent is not to make an impossible request, but to make sure we can manage while you are out.

If Jesenia is dependent on you to prepare the Board agenda for next Monday, how will it get done in two weeks?

Even if you have no time to train anyone to do anything, could you identify who on our team is capable of filling in for the various roles that you have responsibility for?

Are you the only person capable of clerking Ordinances tomorrow evening or could someone take your place so that you can plan or train others on different tasks?

You accomplish such a huge volume of work for our office, but right now I am pleading with you for the sake of our leadership team, to take off your production hat for a moment and put on your management hat so that Sheri, Angela and I are better prepared for what greets us when you leave next week.

Please let me know how we can help reduce your immediate load of work over the next three days so you can help us prepare.

Thank you,

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From: Mastroianni, Tina  
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 3:45 PM  
To: Selleck, Shawn <[sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:sselleck@providenceri.gov)>  
Cc: Harris, Angela <[aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:aharris@providenceri.gov)>; Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>; Matos, Sabina <[ms.sabina.matos@gmail.com](mailto:ms.sabina.matos@gmail.com)>  
Subject: RE: Developing Angela's Training Plan

Shawn,

This is an impossible request for me to fill as I have a public hearing and meeting upon the rise for Ordinances on Wednesday night that I need to prepare for during the day on Wednesday and then I have the Board of Contract and Supply agenda that I'm working on with Jesenia to get that out before 2:00 on Thursday.

Additionally, there is no way that Angela can learn what she would need to know in the little time that I will have left. I'm already overworked and overstressed by the situation as is and don't have the mental capacity to fulfill the request. I'm using what little brain power I have left to complete what actually needs to be done over the next two days.

*Tina L. Mastroianni*  
*First Deputy City Clerk*  
*City of Providence*  
*25 Dorrance Street*  
*Providence, RI 02903*  
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From: Selleck, Shawn  
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 3:16 PM  
To: Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>  
Cc: Harris, Angela <[Aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:Aharris@providenceri.gov)>; Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>; Matos, Sabina <[ms.sabina.matos@gmail.com](mailto:ms.sabina.matos@gmail.com)>  
Subject: RE: Developing Angela's Training Plan

Thanks for letting me know, Tina.

With Angela's plate cleared, could you take this opportunity (and obvious immediate need in light of your upcoming absence) to train her and transfer as many of your responsibilities to her and Sheri as possible during the rest of this week?

Please put together a plan and let me know by tomorrow (Wednesday) at noon what you feel can and can't be transferred by the end of the day Friday, and then we can figure out how to take care of the rest.

If it helps, you and Angela can both work in 305 the rest of the week, and I'll approve overtime for Angela if necessary.

Thanks in advance,

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<http://openmeetings.providenceri.gov/>

From: Mastroianni, Tina  
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 2:06 PM  
To: Selleck, Shawn <[Sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:Sselleck@providenceri.gov)>  
Cc: Harris, Angela <[Aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:Aharris@providenceri.gov)>; Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>; Matos, Sabina <[ms.sabina.matos@gmail.com](mailto:ms.sabina.matos@gmail.com)>  
Subject: RE: Developing Angela's Training Plan

Shawn,

I'm writing to inform you that I will be taking medical leave beginning on Monday, March 1<sup>st</sup> for an undetermined amount of time.

I have no comments to make relative to what is written below.

Thank you.

*Tina L. Mastroianni  
First Deputy City Clerk  
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25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903  
[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)  
(401) 680-5392*

From: Selleck, Shawn  
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2021 1:12 PM

To: Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>  
Cc: Harris, Angela <[Aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:Aharris@providenceri.gov)>; Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>; Matos, Sabina <[ms.sabina.matos@gmail.com](mailto:ms.sabina.matos@gmail.com)>  
Subject: Developing Angela's Training Plan

Good afternoon, Tina.

I was disappointed that you left the meeting early yesterday, but I think that I understand the following:

1. You don't want to attend another meeting on this topic (I will cancel tomorrow's meeting).
2. You didn't like some of the language I used to describe how we would train Angela (I will let you draft the language in a plan).
3. You feel Angela's training has been hampered by her responsibility for the Lobbyist Reports and Airtable (I will remove those from her plate).

I have never tried to stand in the way of Angela's training. I haven't received any requests from anyone asking if Angela had time to receive training at any specific time (I would have gladly said yes). On the other hand, I have been working with Sheri to create opportunities for her to teach Angela about the docket, the first of which Angela said she was not able to take advantage of because of personal reasons, unfortunately, but I'm sure Sheri will be happy to work with her this week.

Tina: Would you like to take the lead on developing and implementing a training plan for Angela that you feel is appropriate?

Effective immediately, I am clearing Angela's plate of Airtable and Lobbyist Reports. There is nothing on her plate that I've directly assigned her.

I look forward to continuing to support Angela in becoming a leader in our office however I can and look forward to your thoughts/feedback.

Thanks in advance,

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## Mastroianni, Tina

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**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 2, 2021 12:13 PM  
**To:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Subject:** RE: Changes in City Clerk Management

Hi Tina,

I hope you were able to relax a little over the weekend, yesterday, and continue to do so. I continue to think about what I can do to have a more positive influence on our team and work environment.

First, I wanted to thank you for speaking with me last Thursday and share why you were taking time off. I know we can work together to avoid miscommunication and improve collaborative decision making, and I can continue to utilize approaches that are welcomed by the team.

One recent idea I had would accomplish both delivering something we need and also reducing the time that I am leading meetings. I have been talking about Parliamentary Procedure training for a long time and the idea has been that I would lead that. After our discussion, it seems ideal that I do not lead it . . . and that we hire someone from outside instead.

What if we hire Evan Lemoine, who delivered the other trainings, to see if he can do something higher level for us? We would just need to figure out scheduling for our team. I hope we can work on that together. Maybe we could take turns, with half of the team taking a class live (on Zoom) with Evan and recording it, and then the other half could watch that recording. The next class the roles would be reversed. Anyway, that is just an idea.

I hope you don't mind me sharing these ideas. The reasons you needed to take time off are on my mind constantly and I want you to know that I'm committed to rebuilding with you.

Have a nice day,

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**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 28, 2021 11:30 PM  
**To:** Mastrolanni, Tina <[tmastrolanni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastrolanni@providenceri.gov)>; Petronio, Sheri <[Spetronio@providenceri.gov](mailto:Spetronio@providenceri.gov)>; Harris, Angela <[Aharris@providenceri.gov](mailto:Aharris@providenceri.gov)>  
**Subject:** Changes in City Clerk Management

Good evening, Leadership Team,

After our series of communications recently, followed by conversations with each of you individually last week, I understand that some significant changes in management approach are necessary in our office. We've had some challenging times, but this time is different.

I've put a lot of thought into this over the past couple of weeks, and I'd like to propose the first changes I plan on making and ask for your feedback. Before I do that, I want to state a couple of things. First, our office should be a positive place for us all to come to work and I'm committed to that with your help. Second, I'm asking all of you (including myself) to

do some personal, mental work to be more mindful when we are receiving communications from each other and avoid taking offence or interpreting communication in a more negative way than it was intended. I promise to read any communication from you in a positive light and will reach out to you via phone to discuss if I feel that there is a concern you are expressing. The phone might be a great tool for all of us to use more often. Is that something you all can commit to doing with me?

Now for the changes. I'm going to just start with three, but I hope they will be welcome and I'm very serious about this.

First, I will send agendas out before any meeting (I've been doing this, but I will be even more consistent about it). I will also try to do this farther in advance, and would like our meeting times to be more consistent. Can we develop a plan to make this happen together?

Second, I will avoid, as much as possible, being the person who is speaking in our meetings going forward. I may ask questions, but I want someone else on our team to be delivering the messages. How does this sound?

Third . . . decisions about what processes we are going to work on improving will be made collaboratively. You'll see me ask you (and other staff) for suggestions for areas we should focus on together, and we can decide what offers the most opportunity for us as a team. I may work on extra/new projects myself, or ask staff who do have extra bandwidth to help out if they want, but as far as improving processes related to our traditional work, we'll discuss this together. Would this be an improvement?

The first example of change #1 and #2 being put into effect will take place tomorrow. I've asked Sheri to give a very short presentation on Final Papers. I would like Angela to attend, as well as all of the new staff who joined our office in the last year. I might be asking some questions, but Sheri will be leading the conversation. I'll send out an invitation now and hope it is a good meeting. I will ask Jenn to manage the front desk while we are listening to Sheri.

I don't want this email to be too long, so I'll stop there, but will send other ideas as I have them and welcome your feedback and suggestions for how we can build a positive environment for all of us.

I look forward to turning a new page for our office, starting tomorrow, March 1, 2021.

Talk to you all soon,

Shawn Selleck (*he/him/él*) | City Clerk | City of Providence  
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# ATTACHMENT 14

**Mastroianni, Tina**

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**From:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 16, 2021 2:04 PM  
**To:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Cc:** Almeida, Jeff  
**Subject:** RE: Takeaways from Today's Conversation

| Tracking: | Recipient            | Delivery                     |
|-----------|----------------------|------------------------------|
|           | Echevarria, Emmanuel | Delivered: 3/16/2021 2:04 PM |
|           | Almeida, Jeff        | Delivered: 3/16/2021 2:04 PM |

Emmanuel and Jeff,

Thanks for taking the time to meet today. I'm sorry for my bluntness at times and I will try to work on that but I thought it better to be honest right up front before getting into the weeds on anything.

I was totally taken off guard by Shawn's opening statement and was completely unaware of what the meeting was about, I truly thought that it was just a check-in and wasn't prepared for anything but that.

I don't know what the future holds for me but I thank you for being so considerate and kind.

Best,

*Tina L. Mastroianni  
First Deputy City Clerk  
City of Providence  
25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903  
[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)  
(401) 680-5392*

**From:** Echevarria, Emmanuel  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 16, 2021 11:40 AM  
**To:** Selleck, Shawn <[Sselleck@providenceri.gov](mailto:Sselleck@providenceri.gov)>; Mastroianni, Tina <[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)>  
**Cc:** Almeida, Jeff <[jalmeida@providenceri.gov](mailto:jalmeida@providenceri.gov)>  
**Subject:** Takeaways from Today's Conversation

Shawn and Tina,

I appreciate your willingness to speak with us. I understand these meetings can be unpleasant, but are necessary to the improvement of office functionality and relationships.

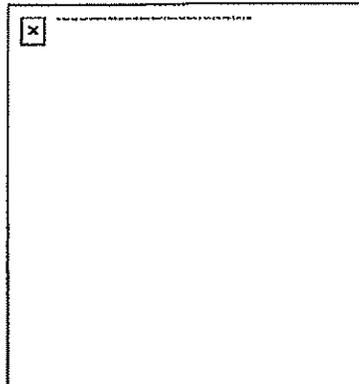
I want to take an opportunity to document some takeaways from today's conversation:

1. Be respectful of time: set up meetings and stick to the time limits. Be prepared with a clear agenda, and advise participants what they are expected to produce for the meeting before the meeting. Have clear goals, and be precise about what can be accomplished in a discussion. Anything that remains can be resolved offline, whether in a document, an e-mail, or a project task.
2. Clearly define roles: if something is owed, be clear on who is responsible, and by when.
3. Be respectful: be mindful of spoken and written tone, avoid accusations of character. Keep the focus on processes, not people, and don't take constructive procedural criticism personally.
4. Avoid anger: do engage in shouting matches. If you are feeling frustrated in a meeting, end the meeting, reconvene when enough time has passed, and reflect on what you're actually trying to resolve by coming together. Cool heads tend to prevail. Don't take the bait- meaning if you hear something you don't like, you don't have to respond to each individual thing. Some words are written or spoken out of frustration, don't feel like to you need to respond to every word.
5. Management collaboration is key: whether or not there is conflict, the goals and objectives remain the same. Don't ignore conflict, but be mindful of the staff you are around, and work toward having as harmonious an office as possible. This means the focus should be on the products and services in front of staff.
6. Address conflict constructively: feel free to educate each other on your perceptions or feelings. Again, don't take these personally, this can be a helpful tool in understanding each other better. If tensions or feelings are high, take a few minutes, or however long is appropriate, and revisit the issue with an open mind.

Thank you again for your willingness to meet together and with us. We're happy to help.

Best,

Emmanuel



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## Mastroianni, Tina

---

**From:** Selleck, Shawn  
**Sent:** Friday, March 19, 2021 11:46 AM  
**To:** Echevarria, Emmanuel; Mastroianni, Tina  
**Cc:** Almeida, Jeff  
**Subject:** RE: Takeaways from Today's Conversation

Thank you, Emmanuel and Jeff.

I really appreciate your time and I appreciate Tina's participation, both in the meeting we had, and her eager participation in meetings we've had throughout this week about managing our office better.

Today is my first day of a three week leave. It provides a great opportunity for a visible shift in management because of my absence and I'm happy that Tina and I (along with Sheri and Angela) have been able to craft much of that shift as a team ahead of my leave.

You asked me to put in writing the plan that I envisioned . . . demonstrating a different management approach. You also asked me to write up my main asks of Tina.

As far as the plan . . . I genuinely want to let Tina lead most of the operations of the office in a way that she feels removes me as an obstacle, but includes me as a collaborator and partner going forward. My being on leave will be a period during which this will be naturally occurring to a certain extent, and if Tina likes how things go while I am away, I am interested in discussing what she liked and did not like about me being away, and to consider how we can preserve the positive aspects while addressing the negatives (hopefully she at least misses my labor!). I'm hopeful that we can learn to better support each other as we partner to lead our office. There may be some additional details to fill in along the way, but that pretty much sums up what I'd like to try for the time being.

As far as the asks of Tina . . . Ironically, it seems like we're on the same page completely as to the goals, but because of distractions and disagreements that have interfered in the past, we've never been able to accomplish what we apparently both want to see happen. We want to document processes . . . and then after that is done, we can decide as a leadership team, which processes require the most improvement and then work to develop changes. I understand Tina's frustration with me diving in and changing some processes before the documentation was complete. I feel that with some situations (like claims) we had no choice but to build the airplane while we were flying it. But I agree that shouldn't be our normal approach. My ask of Tina, is that she lay the groundwork for what processes need to be documented and carve out time to do that, either by herself or with other team members that have knowledge about a particular process. That might be tough for her to do while managing the whole office and covering my responsibilities over the next three weeks, but gradually, especially when I return, I know we can do this together. Tina has already reiterated the importance of documenting the responsibilities of a Stenographic Reporter and how they partner with a clerk, to complete a meeting, as we define it. We are both in agreement as to the importance of this.

That's all I have for now. This week has gone well considering where it started. I look forward to continuing this progress and rebuilding both the operational capacity and morale of the Department of City Clerk.

Tina, thank you . . . for however long you stay (and I hope it is longer than me) . . . I appreciate the immeasurable value you provide to the department.

I hope everyone has a great weekend,

Shawn Selleck (*he/him/él*) | City Clerk | City of Providence

sselleck@providenceri.gov | 401-680-5256  
25 Dorrance Street, Room 311; Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
<http://openmeetings.providenceri.gov/>

From: Echevarria, Emmanuel  
Sent: Tuesday, March 16, 2021 11:40 AM  
To: Selleck, Shawn <Sselleck@providenceri.gov>; Mastroianni, Tina <tmastroianni@providenceri.gov>  
Cc: Almeida, Jeff <Jalmeida@providenceri.gov>  
Subject: Takeaways from Today's Conversation

Shawn and Tina,

I appreciate your willingness to speak with us. I understand these meetings can be unpleasant, but are necessary to the improvement of office functionality and relationships.

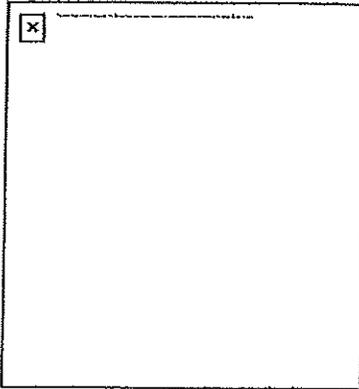
I want to take an opportunity to document some takeaways from today's conversation:

1. Be respectful of time: set up meetings and stick to the time limits. Be prepared with a clear agenda, and advise participants what they are expected to produce for the meeting before the meeting. Have clear goals, and be precise about what can be accomplished in a discussion. Anything that remains can be resolved offline, whether in a document, an e-mail, or a project task.
2. Clearly define roles: if something is owed, be clear on who is responsible, and by when.
3. Be respectful: be mindful of spoken and written tone, avoid accusations of character. Keep the focus on processes, not people, and don't take constructive procedural criticism personally.
4. Avoid anger: do engage in shouting matches. If you are feeling frustrated in a meeting, end the meeting, reconvene when enough time has passed, and reflect on what you're actually trying to resolve by coming together. Cool heads tend to prevail. Don't take the bait- meaning if you hear something you don't like, you don't have to respond to each individual thing. Some words are written or spoken out of frustration, don't feel like to you need to respond to every word.
5. Management collaboration is key: whether or not there is conflict, the goals and objectives remain the same. Don't ignore conflict, but be mindful of the staff you are around, and work toward having as harmonious an office as possible. This means the focus should be on the products and services in front of staff.
6. Address conflict constructively: feel free to educate each other on your perceptions or feelings. Again, don't take these personally, this can be a helpful tool in understanding each other better. If tensions or feelings are high, take a few minutes, or however long is appropriate, and revisit the issue with an open mind.

Thank you again for your willingness to meet together and with us. We're happy to help.

Best,

Emmanuel



**EMMANUEL R. ECHEVARRIA**  
**DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES**  
Providence City Hall  
25 Dorrance Street  
Room 401  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903  
401 680-5615  
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## ATTACHMENT 15

June 25, 2021

Today I learned that Shawn Selleck was going to be taking some professional development classes and this caused me to become very upset. The reason that this upsets me is that there are those of here in Supervisory roles in this office that would love to be able to take professional development courses but are unable to do so because there is work that needs to be done and due to the fact that the Clerk isn't allowed to come into the office because of the hostile work environment that he has created here we are down a member of this department and are unable to take the opportunities that we would like to.

Additionally, we were told that he wasn't allowed to come into the office when staff was present and yet today he walked into this office sometime after 9/9:15 and proceeded to his office and also went into the vault. As I stated we were told that he would not be allowed to come through our office to go to his office and that if he needed to do so that he was to enter his office through the Council side.

Lastly, just to give you an idea of what we go through when we know he's coming in the building while we are here, we're told in advance of his coming to the building just so that we can prepare ourselves for the chance that we might see him, our stomachs are in knots, we're on edge and feel awful until we know that he has left the building. This is no way for anyone to have to work like this, it's wrong, I don't know how many times we have to state that he has created an environment that is so upsetting and awful to work in, my feeling is that it's abusive. We've filed multiple complaints with HR and yet he is still "lurking" around. Just the thought of seeing him on the few occasions we do is so upsetting and traumatizing. This is not right, it's abusive to have to work in an environment like this.

John J. Iglizzi  
Council President  
Councilman - Ward 7



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## ATTACHMENT 16

**\*\*CONFIDENTIAL\*\***

August 26, 2021

*Re: Status of City Clerk Shawn Selleck*

Dear Honorable Council Members:

I am writing in response to inquiries from City Council Members regarding the status of City Clerk Shawn Selleck.

Shortly after I was elected Council President, it came to my attention that there was a long-standing personnel matter within the Office of the City Clerk that preceded my presidency. Subsequently, three female staff members, who are subordinates to Mr. Selleck, requested a meeting to discuss the work environment of that office. During the meeting, they presented allegations against Mr. Selleck, including but not limited to alleged toxic work environment (condescending and dismissive behavior), and alleged inappropriate management style.

Per the City Solicitor's office, the Supreme Court has issued a temporary back-to-work order for Mr. Selleck until the future hearings are held. The services of Carly Iafrate, Esq. have been retained to conduct an independent investigation into the allegations. Upon completion of her review, Ms. Iafrate will issue a report on her findings.

Upon the conclusion of the findings, any and all disciplinary action may be taken, including, but not limited to, additional training, suspension, termination and/or a Section 403 hearing.

Whenever these types of allegations are presented, it is imperative that we take them seriously, and take all the appropriate actions in order to protect the worker and maintain a professional work environment.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

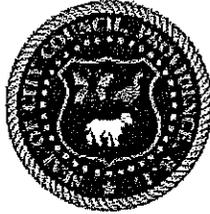
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Iglizzi".

John J. Iglizzi  
Council President

Cc: Jeffrey Dana, City Solicitor  
Kenneth Chiavarini, Deputy Solicitor

John J. Iglizzi  
Council President  
Councilman - Ward 7



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**\*\*CONFIDENTIAL\*\***

August 30, 2021

Dear Honorable City Council Members:

Please be aware that recently I received written requests from Tina Mastroianni, Sheri Petronio, and Angela Harris, asking to be temporarily transferred from the Providence City Clerk's Office.

The three staff members described working conditions that they stated were negatively impacting their mental and physical health. As you know, an investigation is underway by Carly Iafrate, Esq. concerning the actions of Shawn Selleck, the City Clerk, as related to the unresolved allegations of a toxic work environment and inappropriate management style in the City Clerk's office. Until this investigation is concluded and resolved, in the best interest of all parties, I have granted these staff members' requests for accommodation of a temporary transfer.

Allegations of this type must be taken seriously, and it is imperative to minimize harm to employees whose complaints are pending and unresolved. We cannot ignore repeated and documented requests for help and accommodation by members of our staff. While the issues in the City Clerk's office are long-standing and preceded my time as Council President, I have been acting to ensure that the complaints are properly addressed, investigated, and rectified in a manner that protects the health, safety, and well-being of all individuals in the City Clerk's Office.

Beginning today, August 30, 2021, the above-referenced staff members will begin reporting to alternate work assignments. I have informed Mr. Selleck of these transfers and let him know that funds will be available to him to hire outside stenographers or other temporary support he may need during this interim period.

I am respectfully requesting your sensitivity to this serious situation, along with your patience, as we work towards a resolution. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Iglizzi".

John J. Iglizzi  
Council President

Cc: Jeffrey Dana, City Solicitor  
Kenneth Chiavarini, Deputy Solicitor  
Emmanuel Echevarria, Director of Human Resources  
James Lombardi, Chief of Staff

## ATTACHMENT 17

**Mastroianni, Tina**

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**From:** Mastroianni, Tina  
**Sent:** Friday, August 27, 2021 7:44 AM  
**To:** 'Council President John J. Iglfiozzi'  
**Subject:** REQUESTING A TRANSFER

**Importance:** High

Good Morning Council President,

I am writing this email to you under much distress and concern for my wellbeing. I am respectfully requesting to be transferred out of the Department of City Clerk immediately. I can no longer work under the direction of the current City Clerk, Shawn Selleck. His lack of leadership, knowledge and management skills have caused me to become both physically and mentally ill. I am constantly under so much stress that I cannot sleep at night, I'm sick to my stomach every morning going to work and I've recently started to get nose bleeds. The conditions under which I am currently working, being under his supervision are intolerable and abusive.

I, again, respectfully request an immediate transfer out of the Department until the current situation with the Clerk has some resolution. Please, for the sake of my wellbeing and mental health grant this request.

Respectfully,  
Tina

*Tina L. Mastroianni  
First Deputy City Clerk  
City of Providence  
25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903  
[tmastroianni@providenceri.gov](mailto:tmastroianni@providenceri.gov)  
(401) 680-5392*

# ATTACHMENT 18

**John J. Iglizzi**  
**Council President**  
**Councilman - Ward 7**



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**\*\*CONFIDENTIAL\*\***

August 29, 2021

Ms. Angela Harris  
City of Providence  
25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Ms. Harris:

I am in receipt of your communication requesting to be temporarily transferred out of the Providence City Clerk's office until the investigation now underway by Carly Iafrate, Esq. concerning the actions of Shawn Selleck, the City Clerk, as related to the unresolved allegations of a toxic work environment and inappropriate management style in the City Clerk's office, is concluded and rectified to the mutual satisfaction of all.

In the best interest of everyone, I am granting your request for an accommodation of a temporary transfer, effective Monday, August 30, 2021. Please report to Internal Auditor Gina Costa, who will coordinate your work assignments during this interim period.

Please let me know if you have any further concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Iglizzi".

John J. Iglizzi  
Council President

Cc: Jeffrey Dana, City Solicitor  
Kenneth Chiavarini, Deputy Solicitor  
Emmanuel Echevarria, Director of Human Resources  
James Lombardi, Chief of Staff  
Gina Costa, Internal Auditor

John J. Iglizzi  
Council President  
Councilman - Ward 7



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**\*\*CONFIDENTIAL\*\***

August 29, 2021

Ms. Sheri Petronio  
City of Providence  
25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Ms. Petronio:

I am in receipt of your communication requesting to be temporarily transferred out of the Providence City Clerk's office until the investigation now underway by Carly Iafrate, Esq. concerning the actions of Shawn Selleck, the City Clerk, as related to the unresolved allegations of a toxic work environment and inappropriate management style in the City Clerk's office, is concluded and rectified to the mutual satisfaction of all.

In the best interest of everyone, I am granting your request for an accommodation of a temporary transfer, effective Monday, August 30, 2021. Please report to Internal Auditor Gina Costa, who will coordinate your work assignments during this interim period.

Please let me know if you have any further concerns.

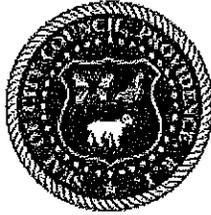
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Iglizzi".

John J. Iglizzi  
Council President

Cc: Jeffrey Dana, City Solicitor  
Kenneth Chiavarini, Deputy Solicitor  
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James Lombardi, Chief of Staff  
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**John J. Iglizzi**  
**Council President**  
**Councilman - Ward 7**



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**\*\*CONFIDENTIAL\*\***

August 29, 2021

Ms. Tina Mastroianni  
City of Providence  
25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Ms. Mastroianni:

I am in receipt of your communication requesting to be temporarily transferred out of the Providence City Clerk's office until the investigation now underway by Carly Iafrate, Esq. concerning the actions of Shawn Selleck, the City Clerk, as related to the unresolved allegations of a toxic work environment and inappropriate management style in the City Clerk's office, is concluded and rectified to the mutual satisfaction of all.

In the best interest of everyone, I am granting your request for an accommodation of a temporary transfer, effective Monday, August 30, 2021. Please report to Internal Auditor Gina Costa, who will coordinate your work assignments during this interim period.

Please let me know if you have any further concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Iglizzi".

John J. Iglizzi  
Council President

Cc: Jeffrey Dana, City Solicitor  
Kenneth Chiavarini, Deputy Solicitor  
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James Lombardi, Chief of Staff  
Gina Costa, Internal Auditor

**John J. Igliazzi**  
**Council President**  
**Councilman - Ward 7**



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**\*\*CONFIDENTIAL\*\***

August 30, 2021

Mr. Shawn Selleck  
City Clerk  
City of Providence  
25 Dorrance Street  
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Mr. Selleck:

Please be aware that Tina Mastroianni, Sheri Petronio, and Angela Harris have each requested a temporary transfer from the Providence City Clerk's Office. I have accommodated this request for temporary reassignment, effective today, Monday, August 30, 2021.

As you know, an investigation is underway by Carly Iafrate, Esq. concerning your actions, as related to the unresolved allegations of a toxic work environment and inappropriate management style in the City Clerk's office. Until the investigation is concluded and resolved, I have granted these requests for accommodation of temporary transfer.

During this interim period, if you need any additional resources (i.e., funds to hire private stenographers), please contact me and I will work to accommodate your request.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Igliazzi".

John J. Igliazzi  
Council President

Cc: Jeffrey Dana, City Solicitor  
Kenneth Chiavarini, Deputy Solicitor  
Emmanuel Echevarria, Director of Human Resources  
James Lombardi, Chief of Staff

