

December 21, 2015

City of Spokane Human Resources Department
4th Floor
808 W. Spokane Falls Blvd.
Spokane, Washington 99201-3327

Re: Concerns regarding Hostile Work Environment, Gender Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Retaliation.

Dear Human Resources Department:

I am writing to formally request your help and support in relation to the hostile work environment, gender discrimination, and retaliation I was subjected to under former Spokane Police Chief, Frank Straub. It is my hope that we can resolve these issues informally and out of the spotlight. To date, I have been incredibly fearful of filing this request for help, but as Chief Straub is no longer in his role, I am hopeful that I can do so without facing additional retaliation.

Prior to Chief Straub's appointment, I was employed in a protected position as a police planner, focusing on resource allocation. Since his hiring my world has been turned upside down. Things started off pleasantly enough. When Chief Straub was hired in 2012, I was promoted to Business Services Director, a new position responsible for records management, fleet, police planning, and serving as a liaison with accounting. In this role, however, I was no longer a protected employee.

It became evident early in his tenure here that Chief Straub intended to accomplish his goals regardless of whether he had to break rules and established procedures in order to do so. This included efforts to obtain funding for things that were not permitted and skirting procedures in order to manufacture certain results. I repeatedly told Chief Straub that he could not take these shortcuts and that he had to follow procedure. In response, Chief Straub started trying to get rid of me, post haste.

In June 2013, I was sent to a three week leadership training in Boston. I later learned that Chief Straub said that he wanted me to attend so that for that period, at least, I would be out of his way. During our leadership team meetings, which included Monique Cotton and several others, the Chief subjected us to constant negative feedback. During one of the meetings, he described himself as "a cock sucker" and threatened to fire me and demote Brad Arleth.

On August 13, 2013, I took on a temporary project that was supposed to last for less than 12 months. I did this solely to get away from the suffocating and toxic exposure I was subjected to

with Chief Straub each day. In October, I was moved to City Hall to work on the project. I later learned that as soon as I took the temporary project, the Chief removed me from the organization chart at the Spokane Police Department. I was replaced shortly thereafter by a male with no experience at the same pay rate I had been receiving. That male with no experience was subsequently given an \$18,000.00 raise by Chief Straub.

I met with Mr. Straub on October 9, 2013 to discuss return to my role upon completion of the project. The very next day he cut off all of my access to the Spokane Police Department, thus eliminating any opportunity for me to return to my position.


My story has even become a cautionary tale for other City employees. For example, the husband of a city colleague was subsequently hired as a police officer. During his on-boarding, he was told not to get on the Chief's bad side or else he would get "Carlied." This disgusts me.

To add insult to injury, several of my former colleagues, Joe Walker and Brad Arleth asked Chief Straub about my status when I did not return to my prior job. The Chief told them that I had to go because I was a "cunt."

As indicated above, I did not lodge a formal complaint at the time as I was terrified of retaliation. I knew nobody could or would do anything to help, as evidenced by Monique Cotton's recent complaint. Nobody from the City has contacted me at all since I made comments to the media to try to shed some light on this matter.

In summary, I have been subjected to a hostile work environment, gender discrimination, and retaliation. I am currently still employed for the City, although I do not enjoy the role that I have been forced into as much as I enjoyed my prior position at the Spokane Police Department. It is my goal to discuss this matter with you informally in an effort to resolve these issues short of any formal action. I do not want to cause the City any trouble, but I remain fearful of retaliation. I am asking you to take prompt and immediate steps to protect me.

Very truly yours,



Carly Cortright