

unbelievable

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To: Leonard Ludi <lludi@kronenwetter.org>; Village Board <VillageBoard@kronenwetter.org>

 4 attachments (5 MB)

Von briesen invoice.pdf; HR-009_Grievance Procedure Policy 08.22.11.pdf; HR-002 Problem Resolution Revised 4.10.2023.pdf; FIN-004_Purchasing Policy_Approved_Signed_2.26.24 VB.pdf;

Leonard,

On January 31st the Village Board held a special meeting with a single agenda item which was "**Discussion & Action: Selection of independent Counsel in Reference to Employee Complaint.**"

The approved Minutes of that meeting state the following:

*Motion by Dumais/Coyle **not to select independent counsel and direct Administrator Ludi to work with personnel on bonafide complaint, if any, and apply the employee handbook if appropriate.** Motion carried by roll call vote 7:0.*

I had trusted that this process would be handled as directed. When I recently saw that about \$5000 had been paid to von Briesen and Roper, I got concerned, wondering how the process got to be so costly so quickly. So I looked into the process that the Board directed ("apply the employee handbook"), and here is what I found:

The Process You Were Instructed to Follow

The Handbook refers the matter of complaints to Village Policy HR-002, Problem Resolution, which directs the Village Administrator to try to resolve the problem after consulting with all parties involved (Step 2), and to document these discussions.

If there is a current complaint of any kind against me, why was I not informed, and given a chance to respond to it, as Step 2 or HR-002 instructs?

HR-002 (attached) then refers any **unresolved** issues to the process directed in **HR-009** (attached).

HR-009, in Part III Step 2 defines the elements required for a bona fide written complaint, and provides for a meeting with the grievant, and a written response from the administrator; all to be concluded within 15 days of receiving the written complaint.

Step 3 provides for an appeal by the grievant upon written request within 10 days, for a hearing before a **Hearing Officer**.

Upon such request for appeal, the administrator shall turn over the grievance and **all grievance responses**, along with a copy of HR-009, to the **Hearing Officer**.

So, the question at this point is - **How can there be any responses to the grievance** that you are to provide to the Hearing Officer, **if you never notified the target of the complaint in order to get any response?** Why have you excluded any opportunity for that person (which presumably is me) to respond or otherwise participate in this process as indicated in the policy?

The Hearing Officer is directed to conduct an open hearing **within 20 days**, recorded by a court reporter, and include witness **testimony taken under oath**, all very much like a regular court of law. This seems like a fair and reasonable way to get to the facts of the issue.

Part VI of HR-009 provides for a selection of 3 qualified candidates for the position of **Hearing Officer**, with the grievant and respondent allowed to each strike one candidate, leaving the remaining person to be the designated Hearing Officer. Again, this seems fair.

So, **where is this hearing officer?**

This was the process you were instructed to follow, and the entire matter should have been wrapped up weeks ago.

The January 31 Village Board motion was specifically "NOT to select independent counsel" for any kind of investigation, and to "apply the employee handbook if appropriate".

Yet, it appears that you have done the **exact opposite of what the Board Directed**, and gone ahead and hired independent counsel to conduct an **unauthorized investigation**, when there is nothing in the Handbook or Policies even remotely describing such a thing.

You are spending thousands of dollars of taxpayer money at the whim of a complainant, on a complaint that no one else has even seen yet, let alone responded to. This makes no rational sense at all, if the goal here really was to resolve a legitimate complaint.

Unauthorized Contract and Expenditure

You contracted with von Briesen on February 13, two weeks after the Board told you not to. You sent out **no RFP's as required**, and **no scope of work outlined, or even potential total project cost**.

Village Policy FIN-004 Purchasing Policy (attached) directs that:

*"all **Professional contracted legal, architectural, engineering, auditing, financial advising, ambulance, informational technology and garbage services, except in the case of emergency purchases, shall be reviewed for recommendation to the Village Board by the appropriate committee**".*

Where are the RFP's as required?

Where is the committee recommendation for this contract?

Where is the Board approval of this contract?

Where is anything that would reflect an honest, responsible, open government process?

The Village has already paid von Briesen and Roper about \$5000, **without authority**, for services through the end of February *only*. Invoices for March and April services are apparently still to be received.

Looking at that invoice (attached) and hours spent, we have to ask how can this be justified as a responsible use of taxpayer money?

HR-009 outlined a **fair and cost- efficient procedure** to settle complaint matters. It is a process that the Board approved, and it is what you as administrator were directed to follow. I for one would have welcomed a straightforward, public hearing and an honest third party review based on verified facts, and conducted as the policy dictates.

If there was any real complaint of any legitimacy, it would not be concealed from the accused, and it would not take this kind of expense and effort to try to find some wrongdoing in order to justify it.

The unprofessional and unauthorized way that the Board's instructions have been disrespected should be alarming, and a disgrace to everyone involved.

