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November 5, 2014

Judge Timothy J. Grendell
Geauga County Probate/Juvenile Court
231 Main Street, STE. 200
Chardon, OH 44024

Sent via email.

Dear Judge Grendell,

Approximately 10 months ago I requested appointment to the Board of Commissioners of the Geauga County Park District in order to use my understanding of both public and private sector finance; my experience in managing organizations as part of a large public company, small private non-profit and small government entity; and my previous experience in public land use policy in order to serve the taxpayers of Geauga County.

During that 10 months I have accomplished the following:

- Uncovered a wasteful deficit spending plan of \$1.9 million. This plan included 10%-20% pay increases; the purchase of vehicles for staff to drive home for personal use; the purchase of 3 ATV's & associated equipment for the Ranger Department when they were not using the one they currently had; a \$5,000 spring fling to Chicago to train a *temporary* employee, (training that could be found locally for less than \$1,000), and assorted other types of disgraceful waste. In less than two months I re-worked the 2014 budget with the GPD CFO to eliminate the deficit without cutting any programs.
- With the current Board President, I conducted an all-day public work session with previous department heads in which the following issues were discussed:
 - The hostile work environment fostered by the previous Executive Director as reported and confirmed by all department heads. In private, two employees broke down into tears telling me how they were publically berated and humiliated by the previous Executive Director.
 - I immediately worked with the new Interim Director and HR Department to set up an ongoing Civil Discourse and Individual Treatment of Employees training regime with ongoing monitoring and reporting. This active response eliminated the hostile work environment as confirmed by the current employees.
 - The previous department heads unanimously agreed that the former organizational chart was unworkable and inefficient. This resulted in an organization in which none of the departments worked or collaborated together on projects and programs. Everyone agreed that the collaborative work session was new and very productive.
 - In cooperation with the Interim Director I put together a series of individual meetings with all the previous department heads where I solicited the following information:
 1. Their design of an optimal organizational structure and why.
 2. Identification of any areas of waste, over allocation or under allocation of resources.
 3. Suggestions for implementation of their plan.
 4. What did each of the department heads interviewed want for themselves, i.e. how did they see themselves fitting into the new organization.

- As a result of these and other staff meetings a case statement was developed by the Interim Director which outlined the new organizational structure and why it was beneficial to Geauga Park District. This resulted in a streamlined accountability structure. It also provided for a re-allocation of resources from marketing and administrative functions to the Natural Resource Management and Naturalists Departments.
- Worked with the Board President to make the GPD Board and meetings more accessible to the public. This was accomplished by changing the meeting times and locations to accommodate diverse work and family schedules. The abrupt cancellation of meetings was not part of my plan. In addition, we changed the GPD bylaws to open up the rigid agenda of the Board meetings and to build in “ample time” for public comment. We also eliminated the bylaw requirement that all public access to the Board be at the discretion of, and filtered by, the Executive Director.
- Increased the financial oversight and accountability of the organization to the Board. This was accomplished in the following manner:
 - Changed internal policy so all future land purchases were reviewed by the Planning and Natural Resource Departments *prior* to purchase.
 - An independent appraisal must be obtained *prior* to any land purchase.
 - Prior Board policy was to review and approve monthly spending vouchers only *after* the services were rendered and the vendors paid. This effectively eliminated any Board oversight of current spending. We instituted a pre-approval process of all expenses over \$500. Implementation procedures were developed to assure uninterrupted and efficient flow of organizational activities.
- Worked with the Board President, Interim Director and the Planning and Natural Resource Management Departments to expand access of outdoor recreational activities to the citizens of Geauga County of all ages and all abilities in all types of weather. These activities are to be provided in non-environmentally sensitive areas in a mutually compatible way so all citizens of Geauga County can enjoy our Parks.

All of these changes are fiscally responsible and sound business practices. The taxpayers of Geauga County will benefit from the fiscal discipline and organizational efficiencies created by these changes. If allowed to remain in place they will prevent the gross waste of hard earned taxpayer resources. The residents of Geauga County will benefit from greater opportunities to experience outdoor activities with friends and family. The natural resources of Geauga County, protected by the Geauga Park District, will be increased through the elimination of wasteful spending and the implementation of strategically evaluated, responsible land purchase procedures.

I have no doubt that if the highly professional and competent staff of the Geauga Park District is able to continue the good work they perform, the citizens of Geauga County will be well served. However, given the highly toxic environment created by your critics with their constant barrage of lies, innuendo and personal attacks, and, given that the reflexive, whack-a-mole tactics employed to deal with them has only served to inflame the situation, I have no desire to continue to serve and be collateral damage. Therefore, effective immediately, I hereby resign my position as Commissioner of the Geauga Park District.

Respectfully,

Louis A. Mucci