

From: Pisarik, Holly  
To: Schimsa, Rebecca <RebeccaSchimsa@gov.sc.gov>  
Date: 7/21/2016 3:09:07 PM  
Subject: RE: Simpsonville Mayor Complaints

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Please draft a letter to send in response to these regarding the Governor's authority here and encouraging them to send specific complaints to the ethics commission.

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From: Schimsa, Rebecca  
Sent: Friday, July 15, 2016 9:15 PM  
To: Pisarik, Holly  
Subject: Simpsonville Mayor Complaints

Holly – Below is an example of the correspondence we have received from the attached constituents regarding the Simpsonville mayor. I know we looked into these awhile back, but we still need to respond if possible.

Good morning,

I write this letter in genuine concern for the great City of Simpsonville, South Carolina.

We are lead by many great people within this community, one of whom is Chief of Police Keith Grounsell. As you may recall Grounsell was wrongfully terminated in 2012 for exposing corruption inside of city council at the time. He was instructed to turn a blind eye to the activity and was terminated when he refused. Several corrupt city employees were subsequently investigated, terminated, and charged criminally as a result of Grounsell blowing the whistle on their criminal activity. As a result of Grounsell maintaining his integrity he was reinstated in 2013 after his wrongful termination. Since, Grounsell has lead the City of Simpsonville Police Department with great passion and a vested interest in his community. This community has grown together and become stronger - until late 2015.

Unfortunately Mayor Janice Curtis was elected into office in 2015. With Curtis ran Jenn Hulehan, Matthew Gooch, and Ken Cummings. Also unfortunately, Curtis and her 3 running mates have proven to be starch critics of Chief Grounsell and continue to look for every opportunity (even those proven insufficient) to punish and demean Grounsell. In my humble opinion, the City of Simpsonville City Council and city administrator stepped over the line this previous week.

Grounsell was suspended for an email communication in which he, simply, asked for additional information from the anonymous young lady he received the email from. You see, the email alleged a false police report had been filed by Grounsell but provided no specifics. Grounsell requested her name and additional information regarding the report in order to initiate an investigation by SLED (as he was unfamiliar with the case). Grounsell never received any additional emails from the young lady. Instead she contacted someone inside of City Council and filed a complaint. Please, read the email correspondence from Grounsell. In my humble opinion, Grounsell was in no way rude and conducted himself professionally at all times. This is the type of email that most people would not bat an eye at. Yet, this was also an opportunity for a certain mayor and her running mates to target Grounsell.

Grounsell was suspended by the City of Simpsonville administrator, David Dyrhaug, as a result of

the email. What's more is Dyrhaug disregarded City Policy, as written in city codes, to do this. He did not consult with the Mayor or any members of City Council before effecting or announcing the suspension. This is against rules clearly laid out in city ordinance.

An emergency council hearing was conducted a few days later. Council agreed, lead by Mayor Curtis, to suspend Grounsell for 30 days without pay over an email which was in no way worthy of such a response. Of course, Curtis will claim it wasn't but we all know that it was personal. Most of the city knows that Curtis is a good friend of Perry Ikor, the former mayor fired and convicted by Grounsell's report in 2012.

If you would, look at the signs and overwhelming support given to Grounsell throughout this ordeal. His city supports him overwhelmingly. This is a case of City Council members, lead by Mayor Curtis, refusing to consider all wishes clearly communicated by her/their constituents. What's more, this is a case of Mayor Curtis and other officials acting without integrity and without regard for the laws which govern these type of events.

To boot, the emergency council meeting lasted nearly five hours. The meeting room for the council was filled to capacity with an overwhelming percentage of citizens present supporting Grounsell. When it was over Mayor Curtis and the city council refused to provide citizens with the status of the Chief of their Police Department. Curtis simply called the emergency session adjourned after many concerned citizens waited nearly 5 hours. This city did not know who their police chief was! Mayor Curtis refused to provide, and stil refuses to provide, any additional information on the nature of Grounsell's suspension. Of course, she has been, in addition to Dyrhaug and the city attorney, unable to be reached. Curtis and others have criminally violated FOIA in more ways than one.

This is a chaotic situation here in Simpsonville lead by a city council which refuses to demonstrate integrity. The biggest victim here is this city - followed Closely by Grounsell. Grounsell is a great leader, overwhelmingly supported by those who work for him and those who he serves. Grounsell has always demonstrated integrity and transparency in a time where law enforcement needs it most. And sadly, Mayor Curtis and city council is silent in a time where their silence speaks volumes.

Attached please find an article written by the greenville news which specifies several legal violations committed by Mayor Curtis, Dyrhaug, and the Simpsonville City Council in regards to this situation.

This is a mess up here. Would you please help this great city continue to be a great place?

Thank you greatly,

A concerned citizen of Simpsonville

<http://www.greenvilleonline.com/story/news/local/golden-strip/2016/04/05/attorney-simpsonville-had-multiple-foia-violations-police-chief-action/82659450/>