

**Kenneth G. Sedlak
33 Orchard Street
Avon, CT 06001-3229**

June 06, 2017

Robert Shillington, President
The Avon Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.
25 Darling Drive
Avon, CT 06001-4218

Re: Claims

Dear President Shillington:

Until now I have remained silent regarding the ongoing accusations by Matthew Gugliotti that revolve around both me and others. I can no longer maintain that silence.

The Board of Directors ("BoD") has previously investigated and dismissed these claims as unfounded and has notified Mr. Gugliotti as to its conclusion, yet he continues to re-submit the same claims.

As disturbing as is Mr. Gugliotti's inability to accept answers he does not like, perhaps even more disturbing is that there are some members of the BoD who continue to entertain these claims. Since December 2012 Mr. Gugliotti has been a retired member of The Avon Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. ("AVFD" or "Department") and has been everything but a productive member of the Department. In fact, the only true contribution he has had in that time frame is to introduce chaos and disruption to the Department.

The BoD must realize that, when Mr. Gugliotti initially brought these claims, his claims were investigated and found to be without merit. In fact, in the time frame that he had presented these claims he was represented by legal counsel. Simply put, Mr. Gugliotti had his claims heard, they were found to be without merit, and it should have been over with; to continually allow his claims to resurface puts those accused in double, triple, etc. jeopardy; whose rights are being trampled with that? Our criminal justice system doesn't allow it, why would the AVFD?

Have the BoD members who have allowed this to continue considered the impact on both those who must endure the constant accusations and the Department as a whole? Those members must recognize that they do not represent the interests of one individual but that of the entire department. Additionally, it must be recognized that Mr. Gugliotti's habit of making claims against anybody who does not act in his favor (Vice President Michael Galliher as an example) is nothing more than a bullying tactic to intimidate people from speaking up against him.

Perhaps it is imperative to explore the behavior of some members of the BoD in order to shed light on the reason why this continues. It has been discovered that, based on an ongoing Freedom of Information Act ("FOIA") request, both Jean Barton and Tad Green violated the privacy of executive session by revealing to Mr. Gugliotti the contents of at least one executive session when strategy in handling Mr. Gugliotti's claim was being discussed. In public session when called out on it, Ms. Barton's response was "my bad". How is this acceptable and further, how can either of those BoD members be allowed to participate in any discussion regarding this claim as clearly their lack of objectivity has been compromised?

Further, it is my understanding that, during an email review for the same FOIA request as noted above, an email chain between Mike Nolan and Mr. Gugliotti was uncovered. The text of the email contains Mr. Nolan revealing to Mr. Gugliotti the results of the March 2017 BoD elections in which Peter Buonome and Matt Polesel were elected. Upon hearing of the election results, Mr. Gugliotti's response was, "the pieces are falling into place, off with their heads" or words to that effect. Does this mean that both Messieurs Buonome and Polesel are predisposed to Mr. Gugliotti's cause and cannot act objectively?

It is of note that when Mr. Buonome served on the BoD in an appointed position between 2011 – 2012, there was another legal matter in which he was privy to, most of which occurred in executive session. At the end of his term, Mr. Buonome admitted to Chief Michael Trick and myself that he took information on legal strategy gained in executive session and gave it to the then member whose claim was being discussed, which Mr. Buonome acknowledged that he should not have done. This caused harm to the AVFD as the issue continued, when the member backed out on what should have been a mutually beneficial settlement. No disciplinary action was taken at the time because Mr. Buonome was not a member of the AVFD and his appointment was coming to an end. Based on his history and Mr. Gugliotti's remarks upon his recent election, the BoD must ask if Mr. Buonome can be objective.

I ask that the BoD close this matter once and for all, as has been done multiple times in the past. Mr. Gugliotti's defamatory statements toward Department leaders and members must end or come with consequence. Mr. Gugliotti has repeatedly threatened to sue the Department. If he wants to sue, let him. If he does, he should bear the price for bringing vexatious litigation.

Sincerely,



Kenneth G. Sedlak
Captain, Immediate Past President