



The
Casano
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Michael J. Casano
Mary Mitchell

August 15, 2024

Jon McCraw, City Manager (via e-mail)
5000 Diamondhead Circle
Diamondhead, Mississippi 39525

Derek Cusick, City Attorney (via e-mail)
5000 Diamondhead Circle
Diamondhead, Mississippi 39525

Diamondhead City Council (via e-mail)
5000 Diamondhead Circle
Diamondhead, Mississippi 39525

Re: Mayor Nancy Depreo

Dear Jon, Derek and City Council:

I have been retained to represent Jeannie Klein regarding the hostile work environment created by Mayor Nancy Depreo. Jeannie Klein has an impeccable record of public service spanning over 37 years. She has enjoyed an excellent career as City Clerk for Diamondhead and is a tremendous asset to our city. I suspect that the entirety of City Hall (perhaps, less the mayor) would agree without hesitation.

It cannot be ignored that Nancy Depreo has done some amazing volunteer work for the Diamondhead community. Perhaps this motivated her move into politics. Unfortunately, her political motivations have taken a bizarre and disturbing turn. Jon, Derek and each of the City Council members have personally experienced the conduct to which I refer. When each of you came onto the City Council, Mayor Depreo greeted you with open arms. Then, when you failed to support a position of the mayor or vote with her, you were not simply a councilperson with a different view – you were labeled as corrupt and attacked by Nancy on social media. If you dared question the mayor, you were a part of a witch hunt. She has done the same with the staff at City Hall for failing to “kiss the ring” when requested. I have observed each and every one of you receive the unwarranted wrath of Mayor Depreo and her proxy, Anthony Depreo. We have all observed her bizarre strategy of engaging in some untoward conduct, then “getting ahead” of the consequences by portraying herself as the victim on social media. She has alienated City Hall through her repeated attacks, and she blames...everyone else. Well, it has finally gone too far. Demonizing the victim will not work this time.

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This City has finally achieved a working relationship with the multiple government/quasi-government bodies that function within. The City, Diamondhead Water & Sewer District, Diamondhead Fire Department, Diamondhead Country Club & Property Owners' Association and local businesses are all functioning together for the betterment of Diamondhead. There is one glaring exception that cannot be ignored. Mayor Nancy Depreo is essentially 0-5 with these entities. She has alienated the leadership of every entity by making public statements and social media posts through unfounded claims of government corruption. These comments are often echoed and exacerbated by her proxy, Anthony Depreo. I only point out this pattern of conduct because it must be patently obvious to everyone at City Hall, (again, with the exception of Mayor Depreo), that the drama and toxicity of Mayor Depreo prevents a healthy work environment. The mayor has a well-established pattern of creating a hostile work environment for the City staff that have failed to serve at her beck and call. Mayor Depreo and Anthony Depreo have used social media and public communications to intimidate and harass City employees, including Jeannie. On July 26, 2024, the Mayor crossed the line - this time documented in video, photograph and memorialized in a written statement.

It is my understanding that information of this event was reviewed and discussed in the last City Council meeting, including the Diamondhead Police Department's body camera footage, the Hancock County Sheriff's Office Incident Report, and Supplement #1 Narrative and photos taken by the innocent renters of the City's Activity Center. To that end, on July 26, 2024, Anthony Depreo, at the request of the mayor, engaged in a pattern of harassment and defamation of Jeannie Klein that has been unprecedented to date. Specifically, the Mayor and her son drove to City Hall to "investigate" vehicles of tenants that leased the premises for a wedding reception. In the video, the mayor asked her son to collect information for Jeannie Klein. Again, contrary to her written statement, Anthony clearly stated in the video that he was gathering tag information because Jeannie Klein has been misappropriating City property for her family's use. Anthony suggested that he is fighting the corruption and "bullshit" that goes on in City Hall. As you know, none of this is true. There is no evidence of corruption by Jeannie Klein or any other employee of the City of Diamondhead. There is certainly no evidence of Jeannie Klein misappropriating city property or committing any criminal activity. Instead, this is another chapter in the ongoing toxic work environment created by Mayor Depreo in her (and her son's) delusional theory that City Hall is corrupt. There seems to be a never-ending search for this evidence, because none exists. Instead, the Mayor and her proxy, Anthony, continue to harass, intimidate and slander City Employees.

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Anthony Depreo has viciously attacked all to whom this letter is addressed on social media. The extent to which the mayor was merely an enabler versus an active participant in Anthony's unhinged behavior has previously been left to speculation. The video clearly indicates that Anthony Depreo is serving as the mayor's proxy in the never-ending list of bizarre acts against the City Council, City Attorney, City Staff (current and former), DWSD, DFD, Hancock County Board of Supervisors, Tax Assessor, Jimmie Ladner, numerous small businesses in the community, and a number of citizens in the community.

Jeannie loves her job and co-workers with the City of Diamondhead and would like to continue to perform her duties without further harassment, intimidation and slander from Mayor Depreo. We hereby request that this matter be discussed among the Council with hopes that the Council censure the Mayor's inappropriate conduct and admonish her to cease and desist such actions against my client to prevent further damage.

With kindest personal regards, I remain

Sincerely yours,

The Casano Law Firm, P.A.



Michael J. Casano

MJC/mc