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Owasso councilor calls for investigation of city attorney

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OWASSO - An Owasso city councilor has lashed out against City Attorney Julie Lombardi, saying her conduct regarding recent legal issues warrants an investigation if not termination.

Attorney Christopher Camp, on behalf of his client, City Councilor Patrick Ross, wrote an 18-page letter dated Tuesday to the City Council.

Camp wrote that he was retained by Ross following threats of federal litigation against the councilor from three developers: Sai Milan LLC, SAHO Properties and Maple Glen Development Co. Inc.

The developers were denied final plat approval at a council meeting March 19, with Ross being one of two councilors to vote against all three measures.

In litigation filed April 2, the developers asked a judge to reverse the council's rejection of the plats, which were later approved by the council in a May 7 revote.

The lawsuits remain pending.

"It appears that Lombardi has conspired with (City Manager Rodney) Ray in an attempt to publicly malign Mr. Ross and intentionally expose him to legal liability and financial ruin, all in the name of political revenge," Camp writes.

He suggests, among other things, that Lombardi acted inappropriately in leading a public discussion of certain municipal legal issues that should have been addressed confidentially in executive session; that she intentionally acted to increase Ross' legal exposure; and that she responded too hastily to the developers' lawsuits.

Camp concludes the letter by saying that his client requests that Lombardi's conduct be investigated, and, if warranted, that she be fired.

Lombardi said she will respond in detail to Camp's letter in the next week or so, adding that none of Ross' assertions is new to her.

"I have previously responded to his concerns," she wrote via email to the Tulsa World.

She added, "I am deeply disappointed that any member of Owasso's City Council would question my commitment to represent them as fully and zealously as possible in any legal matter."

At Ross' request, Lombardi's job performance was listed as an agenda item for the City Council's June 4 meeting, but the matter was tabled.

The council placed Ray on paid suspension at a special meeting May 24 and voted to launch an independent investigation into his office. He was arrested this week after being charged with writing a bogus check for more than \$1,000, a felony, and falsely reporting a crime, a misdemeanor.

Prosecutors claim that Ray wrote a bogus check for \$3,082.89 for a hearing aid and then lied to police about it, saying the check had been stolen.