

From: Ruth Worthington
To: Jerald Gilbert; Carol Lahman; Theri Ray; Joseph Fletcher
Subject: [EXTERNAL_SENDER]Library Board Meetings
Date: Thursday, November 17, 2022 6:33:58 AM

Greetings,

This will be sent to Jerald Gilbert, City Manager of Enid, Carol Lahman, City Attorney of Enid, Theri Ray, Library Director for Public Library of Enid and Garfield County and Joseph Fletcher, Library Board President.

Sometime during the meeting there was reference made toward me having information about the Discord group for so long and not contacting anyone about it. I am inclined to explain myself. This family reached out to me; they asked for confidentiality. I am married to a pastor, that is a serious request. If I give my word for confidentiality, I will not break it. This Discord situation was concerning their minor child. They were concerned about backlash toward their child if they came forward. I am a mother; I empathize with this line of thinking. I encouraged them to go to the police, simply to know if criminal lines were crossed. I have no conclusions as to why they did not. The parent read me messages back and forth between librarians and teens from the Discord chats. Some of these simply were not appropriate. I have been in leadership with Boy Scouts for most of my adult life. If I had engaged in communication with children in this manner, I would be asked to step down immediately.

I did call Chief Skaggs about this situation to gain guidance. He did not return my call. I believe I had no choice but to wait for the meeting. I became aware of another family traumatized by the Discord group the day before the meeting. According to the public comment, it corroborates everything I heard from the family that contacted me.

Theri, I truly am grieved to have you read this. I have no personal offense against you, I believe we just have different perceptions and I believe you made an extremely poor judgment. I am confident (though not 100% certain) that the investigation will not find criminal activity. However, I am 100% certain that inappropriate conversations occurred with minor children without parental consent.

Why I am writing: I cannot stop thinking about what Joseph Fletcher was alluding to in Executive Session. I went back and watched the meeting. Twice I heard Carol refer to the Public Comment as "serious allegations." What does happen when a Youth Pastor, Coach school or recreational, daycare provider, fill-in-the-blank has "serious allegations" made against them concerning minors? The person in question is removed/suspended,, immediately. This is not my rule, not my ideology, this is how a situation is handled. The person is removed/suspended until an investigation may be completed. Theri has the necessary education and experience to realize private, secret, by invitation only chat rooms is inappropriate with minors. Stating Discord's policy of a minor being able to have accounts at the age of 13 is ludicrous to use to justify opening the accounts and inviting minors to join. The librarians are adults and should have no business communicating with children in this type of forum. Disciplinary action is appropriate due to what citizens came forward to share during the meeting.

Carol, thank you for clarifying that the Library Board will bear NO responsibility for Theri's continued in-person employment after "serious allegations" have been made against her.

I am not sure what I want this letter to accomplish. I just know things are not "square." I hope it works itself out.

Respectfully,

Ruth Ann Miles

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