



Mayor  
Joseph "Joe" Bishop

City Clerk  
Chris Workman

City Council  
Randy G. O'Neal - District 1  
Kevin Dorn - District 2  
Christy Frederic - District 3  
Tom Bouchie - District 4  
Nathan Martin - District 5

To: Mayor Joe Bishop and the Pineville City Council

From: City Attorney Mark Vilar

Re: Ordinance appropriating and authorizing payment to Brittany Poston Meshell

Date: January 14, 2025

Ms. Meshell filed an EEOC complaint against the City in May, 2024 alleging, among other things, that she was discriminated against and constructively discharged from her position. My office, and attorneys for RMI, have been involved in the EEOC process from the beginning. The EEOC process allows the parties to mediate the dispute in an effort to avoid entering full blown litigation. We recently conducted mediation with Ms. Meshell, and her attorneys, and reached a tentative resolution which requires the City to appropriate and pay Ms. Meshell \$188,500.00. In exchange for payment of this amount, Ms. Meshell will release all claims of any type against the City and its current and former employees.

As City Attorney, and in conjunction with the attorneys for RMI, we recommend that the City agree to this settlement for a number of reasons:

1. Title VII is a Federal law and it states that the City is vicariously liable and therefore responsible for paying damages incurred as a result of the acts of its employees. Under Title VII, the employees themselves are not responsible. This particular Federal law is different than State law and other Federal laws. At the end of the day, Title VII requires that the City is responsible in this instance;
2. This payment to Ms. Meshell eliminates the City's exposure and the out-of-pocket monetary costs of entering full blown litigation which would exceed this amount if brought to trial;
3. The amount of time City employees would be required to spend involved in the litigation process, from depositions to document production to court proceedings, would result in a significant lack of production, would drain City resources and would greatly impact those employees' ability to provide City services; and
4. This situation placed Statewide focus on the City for the wrong reasons and there is value in turning the page. In light of the above, I recommend moving forward with this ordinance.

I recognize that the information provided is somewhat limited. At the appropriate point in the future, the City, as it has done in the past, will make available to the public additional information in accord with Public Record Law.