



February 19, 2021

Mr. Roger Pohlman
2606 Frances Ave
Red Wing, MN 55066

RE: Notice of Termination

Dear Mr. Pohlman:

This letter serves as notice of the immediate termination of your at-will employment as a disciplinary action effective today, February 19, 2021. You have not met the Council's performance expectations as explained in this letter.

In particular, the grounds for your termination are as follows:

Pursuant to the City's evaluation process, the Council Administrator sought Council input on your performance. Several Council members responded that they did not trust you. This is a major concern for the City because of the importance of the Police Department's work. If the majority of the Council does not trust you, it cannot rely on you to perform the important work of the Department. Council members believe you have intentionally portrayed Council members as anti-police, when, in fact, their concerns were with your leadership and not with the performance of other members of the Police Department.

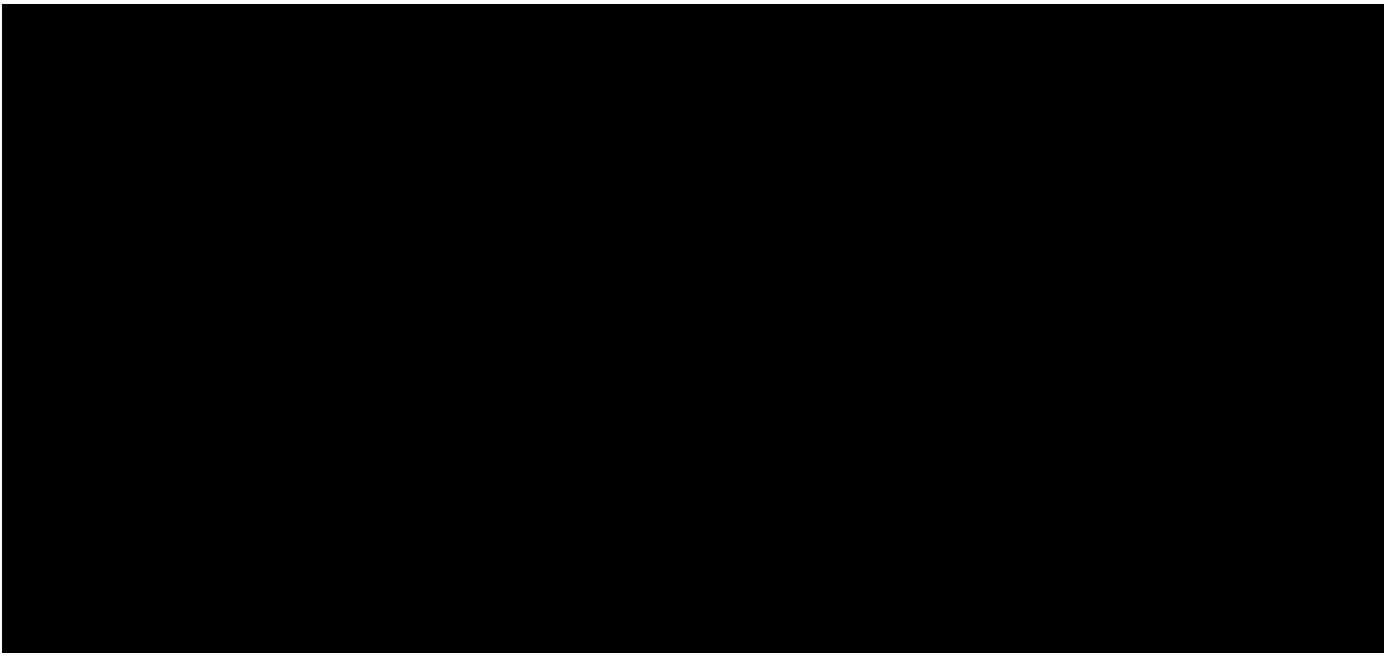
The City Council is concerned that you do not support Council initiatives and have shown a lack of leadership in supporting the same. As an example, you have shown a lack of leadership in connection with the Advisory Team. Some individuals view your participation as a stumbling block rather than a productive participant in the work. The Council also viewed your appointment of the police officers to the Advisory Team without the Council's input as contrary to the Council's direction. The Council had input into the appointment of the other members of the team, but you went ahead and appointed members without seeking such input. This is not the first example of where the Council has provided you with direction and you have not complied with such direction. For example, the Council previously asked you to notify it of meetings that you may have in their wards so that they could attend such meetings if they wished. You have failed to comply with this direction.

Another concern is your defensiveness when suggestions are provided to you. Rather than accepting that perhaps you could do something in a different or more productive manner, you are defensive and come off as unreceptive to input on your performance and an unwillingness to take feedback and to grow.

The City Council is also concerned about your failure to respond to citizens and your failure to timely and effectively communicate with the Council. As an example, the Council believes that the information that you provide to the Council in your Council write-ups provides your view of the agenda item and is often one-sided. It does not provide a meaningful presentation of all of the options available to the City. This concern has been brought to your attention in the past, but continues to be an issue. Further, to encourage the City Council to make the decision you want, you have placed a sense of immediacy on an issue, when, in fact, there was no pending deadline.

In addition, you emailed a Council member, during a Council meeting, with your disappointment that a particular contract that you wanted approved was tabled by the Council. This communication was unprofessional. First, your communication was not accurate as the Council had not approved a similar contract involving the fire department. Second, your communication failed to note that the entire Council tabled the contract and that it was not the action of one Council member; yet, you directed your communication to one Council member. When this matter was discussed with you the next day, you stated that you sent the email out of frustration and that you knew it was wrong. This response also raises a concern. The City expects that its police chief will not lash out out of frustration. The failure to reflect on how such a communication would be received before sending and to take some time to think about a productive way to communicate raises concerns about your impulse control and your professionalism. In addition, had you taken some time to reflect on your message, you may have realized that it was also not accurate. Moreover, such communications are not conducive to maintaining good working relationships with the Council.

City Council members and City staff have also received complaints from citizens that you do not return their calls or emails. This is also a concern as the Council expects its department heads to be responsive to citizen concerns. Even if a department head does not agree with the citizen's view or the merit of the complaint, the Council expects department heads to be responsive and to have the courtesy of returning citizens' calls or emails. Council members have had to run interference with citizens and schedule meetings with you to get the communication between the citizen and you to occur.





Sincerely,



Becky Norton
City Council President

cc: Personnel File