

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING**  
**Tuesday, January 9, 2018**

**MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** John Zikaras, Chairman, Tom Clifford, Gary Merlone, Sue Mis, Lisa Brailey, Camille Kurtyka, Mary Connolly, Rosalie Averill, Jean Jones, Edward Kisluk, and Barbara Lombardi.

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Edith Sletner.

**STAFF PRESENT:** Jeff Dussetschleger, David Rogers, Carissa Caserta and Lisa McEachern.

**OTHERS ATTENDING:** Francis Teodosio, Justin Falco

**BOARD RECORDING SECRETARY:** Betty King

**I. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**

John Zikaras, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**II Acceptance of Minutes of Regular Board Meeting of November 14, 2017**

**2018-16**     **ACTION TAKEN:** Motion made by Tom Clifford, to accept the Minutes of the Board Meeting of November 14, 2017 as presented, seconded by Rosalie Averill, with correction to be made page 2, 2018-19 add retro-active to July 1, 2017 and the amount of 2%. All Ayes. Abstain: Tom Clifford.

**III. Correspondence - Jeff Dussetschleger**

Congratulations to Edward Kisluk on being appointed to the District until May 5, 2020.

**IV. Financial Report – Lisa McEachern**

The Financial Report for the Month of December 2017 was reviewed and discussed.

**V. Chairman’s Report – John Zikaras**

None at this time.

**VI. Director’s Report - Jeff Dussetschleger**

The Director's Report was reviewed and discussed.  
**2018-17**     **ACTION TAKEN:** Motion made by Rosalie Averill, to send a letter to Laurel Shaw congratulating her on completing her MPH Program, seconded by Mary Connolly. All Ayes.

**VII. Committee Reports**

**A. Budget Committee – Edward Kisluk**

Ed has called a Budget Committee Meeting January 23, 2018 at 7:00 p.m. to prepare a Preliminary Budget. This will be presented at the February Board Meeting.

**VIII. Old Business**

None at this time.

**IX. New Business**

**A. Body Care Code – David Rogers**

Melanie Dokla and Yvonne Douglas have been working on this as our quality improvement accreditation program. Jeff reviewed the compliances for salons. The line through wording are strikeouts and the underlines are the new text. Jeff and David reviewed the changes to the Body Care Code.

**2018-18**     **ACTION TAKEN:** Motion made by Rosalie Averill, to table the Body Care Code to the February Board Meeting, seconded by Gary Merlone. All Ayes.

**B. Board of Health Action Report 2017**

The Board of Health Action Report 2017 was reviewed.

**C. Quarterly Statistics ending December 2017**

The Quarterly Statistics ending December 2017 Report was reviewed and discussed.

**D. Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2018-2019 – Edward Kisluk**

Ed announced that a Budget Committee meeting will be held two weeks from tonight.

**X. Executive Session**

**a. Personnel Matter – Termination of Employee #1**

**2018-19** **ACTION TAKEN:** Motion made by Rosalie Averill, move to request that the Board of Directors remain along with Attorney Francis Teodosio to discuss Termination of Employee #1, in Executive Session at 7:34 p.m., seconded by Tom Clifford. All Ayes.

7:50 PM Employee #1 invited into Executive Session

7:51 PM Employee #1 requests that the personnel matter be discussed in open session motion made by and seconded with favorable vote by Board to return to open session.

Attorney Falco and his client return to meeting.

Employee #1 presents her information and requests that the letters provided her by the Director of Health and her response be read. (See attached). General discussion had about contents of letters. Board Secretary returned to the meeting while Employee #1 was presenting information. The tape recorder did not activate correctly preventing recording of the session.

**b. Personnel Matter – Allegations against Employee #2**

**2018-20** **ACTION TAKEN:** Motion made by Rosalie Averill move to request that the Board of Directors remain along with Attorney Francis Teodosio, Attorney Falco and Employee #2 to discuss Allegations Against Employee #2, in Executive Session, seconded. All Ayes.

Employee #2 requested that discussions continue in Executive Session.

**2018-21** **ACTION TAKEN:** Motion made by Gary Merlone to leave Executive Session with no action being taken in Executive Session, seconded by Rosalie Averill at 9:28 PM. All Ayes. Note Camille Kurtyka left the meeting shortly after 9PM.

**2018-22** **ACTION TAKEN:** Motion made by Tom Clifford that the allegations against Employee #2 made in the letter date December 21, 2017 to the Director of Health be referred to the Seymour Police Department. Seconded by Barbara Lombardi. Vote passed 7- 1(Merlone) -1(Connelly)

**2018-23** **ACTION TAKEN:** Motion made by Rosalie Averill, to have Attorney Teodosio draft a letter to the Chief of Police of the Seymour Police Department in regards to the allegations. All Ayes.

**XI. Adjournment**

**2018-24**

**ACTION TAKEN:** Motion made by Rosalie Averill to adjourn at 9:35PM,  
seconded by Sue Mis. All Ayes.

December 21, 2017

VIA HAND DELIVERY



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98 Bank Street • Seymour, CT 06483 • Tel: (203) 881-3255 • Fax: (203) 881-3259 • Website: nvhd.org

Dear Colleen:

Termination of your employment is under consideration for the following reasons.

You were written up on December 8, 2017 for performance issues relating to filing errors and your handling of vendor payments, which were initially reported to me by the [REDACTED]. You have exhibited a pattern of poor job performance of a similar nature to the conduct that resulted in that write-up. Since you received the write-up, you have been unprofessionally cold toward me.

On or about December 19, 2017, several employees and Board members were mailed copies of criminal history reports relating to the [REDACTED]. These reports were mailed anonymously. Upon investigation, it was found that various Internet searches relating to the personal matters of the [REDACTED] were performed from your work computer on December 13, 2017 during working time. On December 13, 2017, at approximately 10:54 a.m., photos of these reports were sent from your cell phone number to your work email address. They were printed from your work computer on December 18, 2017 at approximately 12:16 p.m.

It appears that you sent the criminal history reports regarding the [REDACTED] in an effort to intimidate and humiliate her to her colleagues and employer by launching a smear campaign in retaliation for her reporting your work errors to me. This conduct results in a loss of trust and confidence in you and is unethical and unprofessional. In addition, this conduct involved the use of District time and resources.

Further, these actions violate a number of District policies, including our policies on Aggressive Behavior, Solicitation and Distribution, and Computer Usage, and also constitute harassment and interfering with another employee's work under our Employee Conduct and Work Rules.

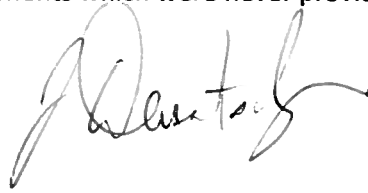
You are hereby directed to meet with me tomorrow at 9:00 a.m. in my office to provide any information that you would like me to consider before I make my final decision. You are hereby placed on administrative leave and must return your key to me immediately and leave District property until our meeting tomorrow morning. You are not to use any District equipment or communications systems or have any contact with the [REDACTED] until further notice.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Dussetschleger DDS, MPH  
Director of Health, Naugatuck Valley Health District

Naugatuck Valley Health District

The following letter dated 12/21/17 addressed to Jeff was presented to me by Collen Lindholm on December 22, 2017 in response to the letter I provided her on December 21, 2017. The letter makes reference to attachments which were never provided by Colleen.

 Jan 17, 2018

12/21/17

Dear Jeff:

This document is in response to your letter titled "Termination of your employment is under consideration", dated 12/21/17. This is a 2 part letter, the first consisting of my response and the second detailing my experiences and treatment working with [REDACTED] over the course of the last year.

I was written up on 12/8 regarding tasks that were still in process and were in fact labeled correctly according to the Connecticut State Library requirements. [REDACTED] claimed on the write up that she wanted it labeled "payroll" which does not have a schedule number although, there are subschedules under payroll, one of which being "Time Sheets". I opened the box and saw employee time sheets. I referred to the list and used the corresponding number of the subcategory. I did not know prior to the write up that [REDACTED] wanted me to just label it payroll. I worked on this all morning and all seemed well. I went downstairs to cover for [REDACTED] lunch break. I then took my lunch break.

I was written up while I was on lunch break with no prior attempt to correct or clarify any perceived errors. See attachment CS Library documents.

I accidentally stapled a few check stubs to mileage reports in the vertical position as opposed to the preferred method of horizontal. I apologized and explained that I was not aware it was an issue because this was not a task I had performed in the past. Previous employee [REDACTED] did this. I was given no instructions but to match up the stubs with the correct reports. I feel I should have been provided instruction by Management.

My initial inquiry about the write up was regarding the severity of the discipline versus the perceived offences. I have always been a responsible, respectful employee that has never had any problems working with others and taking on different responsibilities and roles in my time at NVHD as well as every position that I held prior to coming to work for NVHD 12 years ago. All of my Performance Appraisals consistently show positive attitude and "Exceeds Expectations"

I wrote a letter to you requesting clarification and discussion immediately after the incident and received no response from you. You did not speak to me for days. You never mentioned

discussing it.

I also called [REDACTED] to discuss my concerns, I was quite upset and none of my supervisors had attempted to explain it to me. I also emailed all documentation related to the write up. I left another message asking [REDACTED] to call me about this. I did not receive a response.

I looked up the NVHD Policies and Procedures on grievance issues and realized there was a 10 day stipulation for the employee to submit. The 10 days was running out and I heard nothing from [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] after multiple attempts. I emailed [REDACTED] again and inquired on what I should do, he advised me to file the grievance form. I had been hoping to resolve this prior to getting to this point but no one was willing to discuss it.

As the week progressed I began to wonder why no one would respond or even acknowledge the issues with [REDACTED] and not addressing my grievance at all. After hearing numerous complaints from other staff about her erratic and aggressive behavior, I looked her up on the computer at work to see if I could find out why she was exempted from responding to my grievance and why [REDACTED] never once mentioned it or investigated the issue. I wondered why [REDACTED] did not respond to multiple calls and emails. I felt that it related to my workplace grievance and did not constitute misuse of the computer since this all happened on company time and no attempt was made by anyone else to follow the grievance procedure or even discuss anything with me.

I was shocked by what I saw. I was told by the previous director that NVHD was not in the practice of hiring people with criminal pasts in such a high level, sensitive position. I was the email contact for Job Postings and was instructed to remove any applicants that checked "Yes" on their application to being committed of a crime and exclude them from possible candidates for employment. I thought it was a violation of the districts hiring procedures and code of conduct. I knew her other documents were falsified since I had the original employment questionnaire submitted by [REDACTED] via email. Question 2 asks the applicant "Should you become a finalist candidate, background checks, consisting of but not limited to education, credit, civil criminal, and motor vehicle court records, an internet search and reference checks will be performed. In doing so, will anything be found that would need to be explained in advance" with an answer of NO.

Once I saw this information I was concerned there was a violation and could endanger NVHD's reputation, accreditation, as well as many grant funders that have very specific requirements regarding agencies they grant money to. I also knew it would be assumed that I only reported it because of the previous write up rather than true concern for the district and its reputation. I did not know what to do with this information so I consulted the NVHD Personnel Policies which states on page 3, under Other Forms of Harassment which instructs staff to contact a supervisor, Director or any member of the Board. So I sent them anonymous to the individuals indicated in the Personnel Policies.



Your use of the term "smear campaign" when I sent those letters only to the "Management" confidentially as instructed in the Policies and Procedures and you proceeded to confiscate that confidential mail to the board members. A "smear campaign" would have consisted of an entirely different mailing list to public figures in an attempt to discredit her rather than bringing a legitimate ethical concern to the people designated internally to decide if there is an issue or not. I kept it confidential and only shared it with our governing body. As the procedures state.

Your letter stating that I have been "unprofessionally cold" to you when you have ignored me since 12/8 and refused to address my grievance. When you requested I make a bank deposit, by then I had lost all trust and in you as well as [REDACTED] so I requested that you place the deposit in a sealed envelope. I was simply trying to protect myself from any other potential false accusations. I had already been written up for fabricated offenses. I was also not aware being "warm" to you was a job requirement particularly after being treated with such disrespect by you. I find that completely unprofessional and discriminatory of you to accuse me of being "unprofessionally cold".

12/21/17

This report serves as the true details of the past year working with [REDACTED]

The first time I felt pressured working for [REDACTED] was at last year's NVHD Christmas Party. During the party, I noticed she had retreated to her office. I went to check and see if everything was ok and she was crying and told me [REDACTED] was harassing her and she couldn't deal with it anymore. I tried to cheer her up, made her a cup of coffee and we talked. I jokingly mentioned that I was glad that my doctor prescribed anti-anxiety medications to help me cope with the work atmosphere. She asked if she could have a pill, I told her it could be dangerous and I didn't know if she had any medical issues that would interact with the medication. She assured me she used to have an rx for the same med a long time ago and it was fine. I reluctantly gave her one.

After that she was asking for pills 3-5 days out of the week and when I told her it wasn't a good idea and I didn't want to get in trouble, she became instantly nasty and belligerent to me. So the next time she asked, I gave it to her.

She again recently claimed [REDACTED] was "harassing" her via text and continued asking me for pills. She claimed she was upset that [REDACTED] did not write [REDACTED] up for "harassing" her over the weekend. These texts can be viewed for actual content which differed very much from [REDACTED] account. I spoke to [REDACTED] regarding the pill issue with [REDACTED] and she had no advice as she explained the erratic, aggressive and harassing behavior that [REDACTED] has subjected her to and agreed that it

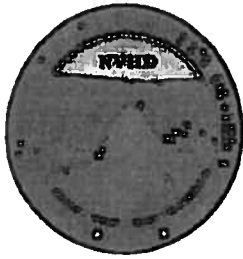
would get worse if I did not comply.

I have 2 young children and need a fulltime job and medical benefits. [REDACTED] had already been heard saying that "Colleens medical is costing the district too much" so I complied with her pill requests throughout the spring and summer hoping she would not fire me as she did the 2 previous admins she had working for her. [REDACTED] was fired in December after having issues with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] the next admin working for [REDACTED] only lasted a few months before she was also fired. [REDACTED] had already complained to me that [REDACTED] was a problem and troublemaker and was harassing her and wanted me to work with her now. I was excited and thought we would make a good team.

I began seeing a pattern of older staff being let go and accused of harassment by [REDACTED] and was dealing with a very hostile work environment with the pill pressure since she came to work at NVHD. I continued to give her my pills when she asked as I was in no position to lose my medical insurance or paycheck. I felt very threatened and intimidated by the way she treated me if I did not comply with her pill demands.

This letter was prompted by my Medical Doctor who noticed the adverse effect on my health over the last year and recommended I find another job as the current environment was hostile and toxic. My blood pressure and anxiety is becoming very difficult to deal with as a result of these events and I need to get the whole truth out or my health will further deteriorate in this overwhelmingly hostile, discriminatory atmosphere. Medical doctors assessment attached.

If all harassment and retaliatory actions do not cease, I will be have no choice but to file a complaint per General Statutes 4-61dd for retaliation of bringing light to the abuse of authority, corruption and lack of proper procedure that has been occurring at NVHD.



# Naugatuck Valley Health District

98 Bank Street Seymour, CT 06483

T: 203-881-3255 F: 203-881-3259 W: www.nvhd.org

December 28, 2017

Colleen Lindholm  
904 Andrew Mountain Road  
Naugatuck, CT 06770

**VIA Registered Mail**

Dear Colleen:

On December 21, 2017, I notified you that termination of your employment was under consideration and provided the reasons. The following day, you provided a letter detailing your response. I have considered all the information provided in your letter. (It should be noted that your letter referenced attachments that were not provided. Based on the description of the attachments, they would not change my decision.) You are being terminated from your employment for the following reasons.

You were written up on December 8, 2017 for performance issues relating to filing errors and your handling of vendor payments, which were initially reported to me by the [REDACTED]. You have exhibited a pattern of poor job performance of a similar nature to the conduct that resulted in that write-up. Since you received the write-up, you have been unprofessionally cold toward me, such as by not returning greetings and by avoiding eye contact. You filed a grievance, but rather than waiting for the process to be handled in accordance with the timelines contained therein, you engaged in the following conduct.

On or about December 19, 2017, approximately 15 employees and Board members were mailed copies of criminal history reports relating to the [REDACTED]. These reports were mailed anonymously. Upon investigation, it was found that various Internet searches relating to the personal matters of the [REDACTED] were performed from your work computer on December 13, 2017 during working time. On December 13, 2017, at approximately 10:54 a.m., photos of these reports were sent from your cell phone number to your work email address. They were printed from your work computer on December 18, 2017 at approximately 12:16 p.m.

It appears that you sent the criminal history reports regarding the [REDACTED] in an effort to intimidate and humiliate her to her colleagues and employer by launching a smear campaign in retaliation for her reporting your work errors to me. This conduct results in a loss of trust and confidence in you and is unethical and unprofessional. In addition, this conduct involved the use of District time and resources.

You claimed that you undertook a computer search to determine why the [REDACTED] was "exempted from responding" to your grievance. First, you have shown familiarity with the policy, and it is clear that there is no

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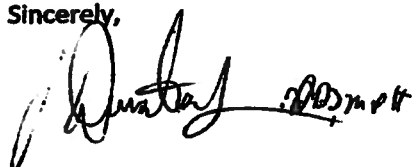
requirement for the [REDACTED] to respond to your grievance. Further, your Google searches pertained to her previous name, her divorce, and specifically police blotter information related to her. Your searches had nothing to do with determining why an individual would not need to respond to a grievance under District policies. None of your searches related to the [REDACTED] and her *job functions*. They related to her personal affairs and not your workplace grievance, as you contend. Accordingly, your explanation is rejected.

You admitted to engaging in this conduct and claim that you did so out of concern for NVHD's reputation, accreditation, and grants. You contend that you sent the criminal history reports in accordance with the District's policy for reporting harassment. It must be noted that what you reported was not that you were being harassed, but that another employee had a criminal record, a fact that had nothing to do with her work or her treatment of you. You contend that the [REDACTED] falsified her application by not disclosing the criminal record in advance. However, the application, which you quoted in your letter, does not require the applicant to disclose a criminal record; rather, it provides the applicant an opportunity to explain a matter in advance rather than in response to the results of a background check. The [REDACTED] did not falsify her application by not exercising the option to disclose a criminal background in advance. The criminal record and the application were both known by the Board Chairman and the previous Director of Health when the [REDACTED] was hired. You shared the information beyond the Board by sharing it with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] as well.

These actions violate a number of District policies, including our policies on Aggressive Behavior, Solicitation and Distribution, and Computer Usage, and also constitute harassment and interfering with another employee's work under our Employee Conduct and Work Rules. In responding to these allegations, you admitted to unlawful distribution of drugs during working time in violation of the Alcohol and Drug Policy. Your poor work performance is a factor in the decision as well.

For the foregoing reasons, your employment with Naugatuck Valley Health District is hereby terminated effective immediately. Enclosed is your final paycheck along with information on filing for Unemployment. Please bear in mind, the State of Connecticut, not Naugatuck Valley Health District, will determine your eligibility for Unemployment benefits. COBRA information will follow under separate cover. Although employees terminated for disciplinary reasons are not entitled to a vacation payout, as a courtesy, your final paycheck includes pay for this entire week when you had a previously scheduled vacation. Please contact me by email, [REDACTED] to make arrangements to pick up your personal belongings.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Dussetschleger DDS, MPH  
Director of Health  
Naugatuck Valley Health District

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