

2/16/16

John Froelich Commissioner/Portfolio Holder

FEB 17 2016

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Dear Commissioner Froelich,

As you know I have been ordered by a board member to write a letter to be published through the local news media depicting Barnes County Social Services as being problem free and of commendable service to the citizens and its constituency. As I mentioned to you on the phone last Friday (2/12/16) even though I wrote the draft as ordered by the board and emailed a copy to you and board member [REDACTED] on 2/2/16, I am uncomfortable sending it to the news media simply because I do not believe that it is true. So I am choosing not to send it. Also, the fact that I have not been allowed to employ Department of Human Services best HR practices in critical employee related situations has greatly hindered my ability to keep the agency running in a professional and accountable manner. As well, in light of the unprofessional manner that I have been treated by the board and the commission (i.e., The Board and Commission allowing anonymous grievances by a small group of our staff to be filed against me and their biased and unfair response to the same when they acted upon the grievances without consulting with me for a response to the allegations, and without utilizing a county grievance procedure; being verbally abused by a board member in the 1/29/16 Board Meeting, and being reprimanded for contacting the DHS HR for consults, etc.), it is very clear to me that at least some of the leadership I am subordinate to do not want me to bring the performance concerns of the employees who filed their anonymous grievances, up to a professional and accountable standard. When I consulted with an HR expert at the Village Business Institute in Fargo, ND and shared the performance concerns I was seeing in the staff who I had been addressing those issues with he stated, "you've basically been given an agency that is out of control from an HR standpoint." Which I thought was interesting because when I interviewed with the search committee and asked if there were any relational or other problems with the agency the response I received was a firm "no."

To tell the people of Barnes County that Social Services is operating at a professional standard while the employees with the performance issues are not held appropriately accountable for their unprofessional behaviors, is morally reprehensible to me and violates my core professional values and ethics. Since I am unwilling and unable to compromise those professional values and ethics I am no longer able to send the letter nor serve as your Director.

Therefore I resign my position as Director effective immediately. Thank you for the opportunity to serve with the majority of fine staff that BCSS employs, and the less fortunate children, adults and families and thank you for allowing me the trust of the people of Barnes County during my service to you and them.

Sincerely,


Rick Bolonchuk

CC: Maggie Anderson, Director, ND Dept. of Human Services, Mike Metcalf, Chairman Barnes County Commission; Tom Overn; Board Chairman Barnes County Social Services.