



Kenai Peninsula Borough

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Peter A. Micciche
Borough Mayor

Brent Johnson, President
Borough Assembly

April 18, 2023

JOINT STATEMENT FROM THE KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH ASSEMBLY AND MAYOR MICCICHE

On October 21, 2022, a Complaint for Employment Discrimination was filed by Pamela Wastell naming the Kenai Peninsula Borough and Charlie Pierce as defendants. The complaint alleged that Ms. Wastell was sexually harassed by Mr. Pierce in the workplace and that the Employer-Borough should be liable for the conduct of its mayor. Attorneys for the parties have negotiated an out-of-court resolution to this matter. All parties have agreed to settle all sides of this matter for a settlement amount of \$237,500 that will be paid to the Plaintiff. Under the proposed settlement, Charlie Pierce, will pay \$31,250 and the Borough will pay \$206,250. Under the terms of the settlement the Borough is not admitting any wrongdoing.

The decision to settle this matter without further litigation was given considerable thought and time by the Assembly and Mayor Micciche. Prolonged litigation will result in the expenditure of more public funds, and not serve to bring finality to a trying and difficult time. Neither the Assembly nor Mayor Micciche are happy with all aspects of this this settlement, but we also recognize that years of litigation on this matter is not in the best interest of the Borough, or the taxpayers.

The protection of Borough employees is paramount. Mayor Micciche has already implemented important updates to the Borough's *Sexual Harassment, Bullying, and Discrimination Prevention Policy* with specific updates regarding investigation and discipline of elected officials. In addition, Mayor Micciche has publicly stated a commitment to bring forward proposed amendments to Borough Code concerning misconduct in office and conduct outside the scope of an employee's official duties in effort to bolster code language with regard to alleged misconduct by Borough employees and elected officials, including potential personal liability for such conduct.

Peter A. Micciche, Borough Mayor

Brent Johnson, Assembly President