

KELVIN J. COCHRAN vs. CITY OF ATLANTA, ET AL.
Anne M. Torres on 02/22/2017

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
ATLANTA DIVISION

ORIGINAL

KELVIN J. COCHRAN,)	
)	
Plaintiff,)	
)	CIVIL ACTION FILE
vs.)	
)	NO. 1:15-cv-00477-LMM
CITY OF ATLANTA, GEORGIA;)	
and MAYOR KASIM REED, IN)	
HIS INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY,)	
)	
Defendants.)	

- - -

VIDEOTAPED DEPOSITION OF
ANNE M. TORRES
FEBRUARY 22, 2017
2:19 P.M.

BAKER DONELSON BEARMAN CALDWELL & BERKOWITZ, P.C.
MONARCH PLAZA, SUITE 1600
3414 PEACHTREE ROAD, N.E.
ATLANTA, GEORGIA

Reported by: Suzanne Beasley, RPR
CCR-B-1184

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Also Present: Kelvin J. Cochran

Videographer: Brandon Brantley

- - -

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1 THE VIDEOGRAPHER: This is the
2 beginning of Media Number 1 in the
3 deposition of Anne Torres in the matter of
4 Kelvin Cochran versus City of Atlanta,
5 et al., Case Number 1:15-cv-00477.

6 Today's date is February 22nd, 2017.
7 The time on the monitor is 2:19 p.m. My
8 name is Brandon Brantley, and I'm the
9 videographer. The court reporter is
10 Suzanne Beasley. We are here with Huseby
11 Global Litigation.

12 Counsel, please introduce yourselves,
13 after which the court reporter will swear
14 in the witness.

15 MR. CONNELLY: Ken Connelly,
16 Christiana Holcomb, and Kevin Theriot,
17 who's presently not in the room but will be
18 momentarily, for Plaintiff Kelvin Cochran.

19 MS. HINTON: Kathryn Hinton for the
20 Defendants.

21 (The signature of the witness to the
22 deposition was reserved.)

23 ANNE MARIE TORRES,
24 having been duly sworn, was examined and testified
25 as follows:

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1 EXAMINATION

2 BY MR. CONNELLY:

3 Q. Good afternoon, Ms. Torres.

4 A. Good afternoon.

5 Q. My name is Ken Connelly, and I'm one of
6 the attorneys for Chief Cochran in this matter.

7 Would you please state and spell your full
8 legal name for the court reporter.

9 A. Sure. My first name is Anne, A-n-n-e.
10 Middle name is Marie, M-a-r-i-e. Last name is
11 Torres, T-o-r-r-e-s.

12 Q. Have you ever been deposed before?

13 A. No.

14 Q. Since you haven't been deposed before, I
15 just want to go over a few basic ground rules so it
16 will make it a little easier and more seamless for us
17 today.

18 A. Sure.

19 Q. The court reporter and the videographer
20 will be transcribing our answers today.

21 A. Okay.

22 Q. So to the best of your ability and your
23 recollection, please make all your answers verbal and
24 clearly stated rather than hand gestures or nods.

25 A. Sure.

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1 Q. This is probably as big a problem for me
2 as it is for anyone, but let's do our best to try and
3 not to talk over each other. Please let me finish a
4 question, and I will try and sense when you're done
5 with an answer before asking you a follow-up. It
6 just makes it easier for the court reporter to type
7 so she doesn't miss anything.

8 A. Okay.

9 Q. If I ever ask something that's unclear
10 that you --

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. -- just tell me right away. I'll rephrase
13 it, or we'll figure out a way for me to clarify it.

14 A. Sure.

15 Q. If you give an answer and then later think
16 of something you want to add to that answer or modify
17 about it, just let me know at any time, and I'll
18 provide you with an opportunity to do that.

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. Is there any reason why you can't provide
21 the most accurate testimony today?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Are you under any prescription medications
24 or other medications that might impair your ability
25 to testify?

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1 A. No.

2 Q. Are you under the influence of any other
3 substance that might impair your ability to testify?

4 A. No.

5 Q. Are you sick at all today?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Have you ever been a party to a lawsuit?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Have you ever testified in court?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Do you understand that your under oath and
12 the testimony you give today has the same import as
13 if you were testifying in a court of law?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Did you review any documents in
16 preparation for this deposition today?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. What documents?

19 A. E-mails.

20 Q. What kind of e-mails?

21 A. E-mails relating to the incident that
22 we're talking about today, meaning e-mails about the
23 book, media responses, press releases, statements.

24 Q. Did you consult with anyone regarding your
25 attendance in the deposition?

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1 A. Counsel.

2 Q. Besides counsel.

3 A. No.

4 Q. Have you read any of the pleadings or
5 documents in this matter? And what I mean by that
6 are complaint, answer, any of the arguments, motions
7 made by counsel?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Have you spoken with any other City
10 officials regarding this case since --

11 A. No.

12 Q. Just a few general background questions
13 before we get into the actual substance of my
14 questions.

15 A. Sure.

16 Q. Where were you born?

17 A. North New Jersey.

18 Q. Did you grow up there?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Do you profess or practice any particular
21 religion?

22

23

24

25

1

2 Q. Talk to me a little bit about your
3 education, if you would.

4 A. I went to college, graduated with a
5 bachelor's in advertising and marketing.

6 Q. Where did you go to college?

7 A. FIT, New York City.

8 Q. Married?

9 A. No.

10 Q. Children?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. How many?

13 A. One.

14 Q. How old?

15 A. Thirteen.

16 Q. Where do you live now?

17 A. Buckhead, Atlanta.

18 Q. After you got out of FIT, give me a
19 thumbnail sketch of your employment history.

20 A. Uh-huh.

21 Q. Take me up to date.

22 A. After I got out of FIT, I started working
23 at an advertising and marketing agency in New York
24 City for about a year. A year into that career, I
25 was recruited to come work for the mayor. At the

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1 time, his name was Corey Booker. I accepted the job.
2 I was his director of communications for about six
3 years. I left that job, and then I was recruited to
4 come down here to Atlanta, and then I currently do
5 the same job, director of communications for
6 Mayor Reed.

7 Q. Why did you leave that job?

8 A. Just wanted to do something different, and
9 politics is a very stressful job.

10 Q. You say politics is a stressful job, but
11 you took the same job down here?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Was that by design or --

14 A. I mean, I love what I do and I enjoy the
15 work. It's stressful, but I love what I do.

16 Q. Talk to me about your current position
17 with the City of Atlanta.

18 A. As director of communications, I'm
19 responsible for essentially communicating the
20 administration's position on a number of issues.
21 Depending on what type of media inquiries we receive
22 on a daily basis, I manage all aspects of press
23 conferences, speech writing, social media, anything
24 communications related.

25 Q. Now, you say director of communications,

1 the administration. Is there --

2 A. For the mayor, for the City.

3 Q. For the mayor. Is that for the mayor and
4 the City?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Is there a difference? In other words,
7 when you put out a press release, is that for the
8 mayor and the City or how does -- is there some sort
9 of a distinction?

10 A. Sometimes. Sometimes some statements are
11 directly on behalf of the mayor. Sometimes some
12 statements are on behalf of a certain department. It
13 depends on the media inquiry or what the subject
14 matter is.

15 Q. And is that noted in your communication?

16 A. Most of the time.

17 Q. How is the office organized? And I'm
18 speaking personnel-wise now. If I were to come in on
19 an interview or you just wanted to tell me, hey,
20 here's how it's organized, tell me who works under
21 you.

22 A. Sure.

23 Q. Who do you report to?

24 A. So I report to the chief of staff and to
25 the mayor. In my office there is -- currently I have

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1 a press secretary. I have a deputy press secretary.
2 I have a speech writer. I have three communications
3 specialists. I have two folks who handle social
4 media, and one individual who handles ceremonial
5 documents.

6 Q. Can you tell me who those people are?

7 A. By name?

8 Q. Please.

9 A. Sure. So it's myself -- I'm sorry, I
10 forgot my assistant. So it's myself. It's Alicia
11 Walker-Williams. She's my assistant. To the office
12 next to me is Alnissa Ruiz-Craig. To the office next
13 to her is Christina Cruz-Benton, Jewanna Gaither, Tom
14 Sabulis, Judi Weber, Jenna Garland, Shabree Morin,
15 Terrence Davis, Erica Radcliff, and Sonja Roberts,
16 and our receptionist, Shana, whose name escapes me
17 right now.

18 Q. So you said you handle all communications
19 from official press releases --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- all the way through to social media?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. How -- talk to me now -- we talked about
24 personnel --

25 A. Uh-huh.

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1 Q. -- and sort of a tree of, you know,
2 responsibility. Talk to me about how a press release
3 or a communication from the City or the mayor --

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. -- is born and how it becomes an adult and
6 then gets sent out into the world.

7 A. For example, if there is a department that
8 has an initiative that they want to promote to the
9 general public, they'll essentially give us some
10 information. That could be in the form of bullet
11 points. It could be a conversation. It could be an
12 in-person meeting. We'll essentially just take that
13 information and write a press release on it and then
14 distribute it once it's approved by management in
15 that office.

16 So again, it depends on the subject
17 matter. It depends on the department. It depends on
18 a few things, but that is in a nutshell how it's
19 done.

20 Q. So you said -- that answer seemed to be
21 focused on like a specific department. What were you
22 thinking about when you said department?

23 A. Oh, let's say the Department of Public
24 Works has a recycling initiative that they want to
25 promote. You know, they'll say -- they'll either

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1 send the information by e-mail, they'll call, it will
2 be an in-person conversation. It depends.

3 Q. Right.

4 A. They'll say, here's the information we
5 want to get out. We'll take it. As communications
6 folks, we'll -- you know, we'll write it, write it
7 out, get it approved by management of that
8 department, and then send it out.

9 Q. When it gets -- so for that Department of
10 Public Works, you said -- do you write the press
11 release based on information they've given you,
12 right?

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. Does it ever go up the chain from you to
15 get approved by the mayor or city officials or --

16 A. No. The mayor does not typically approve
17 all press releases especially if it's related to a
18 certain department. That would go -- it would go to
19 the department head, in this case the commissioner, a
20 manager, the person overseeing the recycling
21 initiative. They would take a look at it, say this
22 is accurate, it's okay to send.

23 Q. In distinction to that, what about when
24 you are putting out a press release or any
25 communication on behalf of the City --

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1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. -- or the mayor, how does that situation
3 work?

4 A. Oh, that's the same thing. My job is to
5 gather facts and information from the folks who have
6 the information that I need. That depends on the
7 subject matter again, but it's my job to kind of
8 gather information, collect it, and figure out how to
9 communicate it.

10 Q. But what I'm asking -- sorry if I wasn't
11 clear.

12 A. Uh-huh.

13 Q. Once you've crafted a message --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- so in that case, would you get input
16 from city officials --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- to craft that message?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. And then does it go back up to -- in other
21 words, it's not a department head now.

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. Who would that be if the City -- you're
24 putting it out in the City's name?

25 A. It's -- only if it's -- you know, if it's

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1 a statement on behalf of the mayor, then it would go
2 to him directly, and he would say, yes, I'm okay with
3 this. If it is -- I'm trying to think of a situation
4 where it wouldn't be him but it would be someone
5 else. If it's our chief operating officer, he
6 attended an event and he participated in a ribbon
7 cutting, and I wanted him -- to get his approval on
8 something. It depends. So those are just different
9 examples of when I would get approval from different
10 folks.

11 Q. So who would you say has final authority
12 regarding communication? I know you said it
13 depends --

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. -- but I'm --

16 A. Yes, uh-huh.

17 Q. -- it sounds like in terms of departments,
18 that you would draft from information.

19 A. Yeah. I would say ultimately the agency
20 who's requesting the press release for the
21 communication to be sent out.

22 Q. And if it's the mayor or the City, then it
23 would be the mayor --

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. -- or somebody that you report to?

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1 A. Yes.

2 (Exhibits 66 and 67 were marked for
3 identification.)

4 BY MR. CONNELLY:

5 Q. The court reporter has handed you what has
6 been marked as Exhibit 66.

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. We'll have a number of these documents
9 we'll review today, so what I'll usually do is give
10 you a few seconds to look it over. Once you've
11 completed that to your satisfaction, just look up,
12 and we can talk about the document.

13 A. Sure. Okay.

14 Q. So this looks to be an e-mail from Robin
15 Shahar --

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. -- regarding an HRC equality index to you.
18 Is this the type of thing you were talking about, you
19 get talking points from someone --

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. -- somewhere and then you -- okay.

22 When you say, "I will take care of this
23 after the 11:00 a.m. press conference" in that
24 9:44 a.m. --

25 A. Uh-huh.

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1 Q. -- is that what you mean, you were going
2 to get started on the drafting process?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. So in this case, would this be Robin
5 Shahar would get the --

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. -- sort of the final draft from you?

8 A. She would get -- she would get a draft
9 review. I'd also give it to the mayor most likely
10 because he was probably quoted in the press release,
11 and I would want him to sign off on his quote.

12 Q. He signs off on the quote, then it goes
13 back to Robin?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. What about social media communication? I
16 know you said you run the gamut from official press
17 releases all the way through social media.

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. How does that work?

20 A. Well, the mayor posts a lot of what you
21 see himself on Twitter and Facebook. Some messages
22 are posted through my office. I could probably pick
23 and choose and show you which ones are and which ones
24 aren't. But for the most part, they'll be lists of
25 press releases, different announcements, different

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1 videos. We post a lot of YouTube stuff, so it
2 depends.

3 Q. So when the mayor posts stuff on his
4 own --

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. -- he just posts it on his own?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. When you post it for him, he gives you
9 approval?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Would that be correct?

12 How about the City? Is there a
13 distinction there? In other words, if you're posting
14 something on -- does the City have a Facebook --

15 A. Yes. It has a whole --

16 Q. Okay. Same question. How does that work?
17 Do you have carte blanche to do whatever you want, or
18 is there someone who's the final?

19 A. Not necessarily. I mean, all social media
20 that's posted to the City counts as approved through
21 my office.

22 Q. And who -- you say approved through your
23 office. You do report to you said I think Candace
24 Byrd?

25 A. Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

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1 Q. And correct me. Who's --
2 A. And the mayor.
3 Q. The mayor?
4 A. Yes.
5 Q. So if you're posting on the City
6 account --
7 A. Uh-huh.
8 Q. -- it gets approved through your office,
9 but --
10 A. I'll approve it. I won't funnel social
11 media posts or Twitter posts up to Candace or the
12 mayor.
13 Q. Okay. So you have final approval --
14 A. Yes.
15 Q. -- on the City side?
16 A. Uh-huh.
17 Q. Do you recognize this e-mail, Ms. Torres?
18 A. Yes.
19 Q. And what is it?
20 A. It is me sending the administration's
21 statement on the book to Dyana Bagby at the Georgia
22 Voice.
23 Q. Who is Dyana Bagby?
24 A. She was a reporter at the time with the
25 Georgia Voice.

1 Q. What's the Georgia Voice?

2 A. It is an online publication. I would say
3 it's an LGBT news outlet.

4 Q. With a focus on those types of issues?

5 A. Yes, uh-huh.

6 Q. Can you just tell me what "atlmedia" is?

7 A. Atlmedia is the generic e-mail address for
8 my office, so if somebody e-mails that, it's going to
9 hit everyone in the office instead of e-mailing folks
10 individually.

11 Q. And do you cc that when you send out an
12 e-mail just to make sure everybody knows what's --

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. -- happening?

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. When was this statement developed?

17 A. I cannot say for sure. I don't remember.
18 It would have most likely been developed the day of.

19 Q. November 24th?

20 A. Yes, most likely, but I don't remember.

21 Q. And you said you took information from a
22 requesting party, say a department?

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. In this case, where would you have gotten
25 that information to create this statement?

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1 A. Meaning I spoke to the mayor. I spoke to
2 our law department. I spoke to our HR commissioner.
3 I spoke to senior officials and --

4 Q. Did you see -- sorry.

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. I'll let you finish.

7 A. And determined what our position would be
8 on the matter.

9 Q. What senior officials are you referring to
10 there?

11 A. At the time, it might have been Melissa
12 Mullinax. I don't remember the other attorneys in
13 the law department, so forgive me. I'm just
14 generalizing law department. Robin Shahr. I said
15 HR, and I'm not sure who else.

16 Q. Were you responding to any media on this
17 when you crafted this statement?

18 A. I'm sorry, what do you mean?

19 Q. In other words, did you get a media
20 inquiry about the book, or was this your --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- initial?

23 A. No. Anytime I've sent out a statement, it
24 is in response to a media inquiry.

25 Q. Do you know who -- so did Dyana ask you

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1 something?

2 A. I'm assuming so.

3 Q. Do you remember what she asked you?

4 A. Most likely, she would have asked for the
5 City's statement or position on the issue.

6 Q. Do you know how the media became aware of
7 the issue of Chief Cochran's book?

8 A. I don't remember how they became aware.
9 Most likely a tip. The first outlet to bring the
10 book to my attention at least was WSB, and they had
11 received a tip about the book, and they brought it to
12 my attention.

13 Q. And I'm assuming -- I don't work in the
14 press, but I'm assuming they didn't tell you where
15 they got the tip from?

16 A. No. They never do.

17 Q. Probably make sure they don't get many
18 tips after that?

19 A. Probably.

20 Q. I just note here on the --

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. -- on the second into the third sentence
23 it says, "In fact, the City of Atlanta has a number
24 of laws that prohibit discrimination based on sexual
25 orientation and gender identify."

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1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. Why do you prioritize those issues?

3 MS. HINTON: Object to form. You can
4 answer.

5 THE WITNESS: Why did I prioritize?
6 I mean, this is -- I didn't -- any
7 decisions or anything in statements or not,
8 it's not a personal decision. This is how
9 it's crafted, and this is how it's approved
10 by senior officials. It's not necessarily
11 my personal prioritization of it.

12 BY MR. CONNELLY:

13 Q. Can you think of the why these -- why
14 these categories would show up first in the sentence
15 then?

16 A. I think it might be because that is the
17 way it might actually be written in the
18 anti-discrimination policy or ordinance that we have,
19 but that might actually just be the order of the
20 words.

21 Q. Could it have been the bullet points you
22 received from city officials?

23 MS. HINTON: Object to form.

24 THE WITNESS: I think it is probably
25 the way that it's written just in the

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1 ordinance. That might just be the way that
2 the words are in order.

3 BY MR. CONNELLY:

4 Q. At this point, if you look at that final
5 sentence it says, "If disciplinary action is
6 recommended as a result of the investigation" --

7 A. Uh-huh.

8 Q. -- "we'll take decisive action to prevent
9 any inappropriate behavior from occurring in the
10 future."

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. Was it your understanding at 2:27 when you
13 e-mailed this to Dyana Bagby that there was no --
14 there was no disciplinary action that had yet been
15 taken?

16 A. To my knowledge.

17 Q. Up top at 78:27 p.m. --

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. -- You said, "Updated statement coming
20 shortly."

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. Why was there an updated statement; do you
23 recall?

24 A. I have no idea. I cannot remember.

25 Q. Do you recall whether there was discipline

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1 handed down that day?

2 A. I don't remember.

3 Q. You don't remember any meetings you might
4 have been in with respect to that updated statement?

5 A. No, I honestly don't remember. I don't
6 remember if this is the day that the suspension took
7 place. I'm not sure. If it is, then that might have
8 been the reason, but I can't remember.

9 (Exhibit 68 was marked for
10 identification.)

11 BY MR. CONNELLY:

12 Q. The court reporter has handed you what's
13 been marked Plaintiff's Exhibit 68.

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. Subject line is "Final statement from
16 mayor" --

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. -- sent from you to Ms. Yancy, Ms. Taylor,
19 Ms. Byrd, and Ms. Wilson.

20 A. Uh-huh.

21 Q. Who's Ms. Wilson, by the way?

22 A. She is our deputy COO.

23 Q. And this is the final statement from the
24 mayor, correct?

25 A. Uh-huh. It appears that way.

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1 Q. How did you determine the recipients on
2 this list?

3 A. It might be because those were the folks
4 that I probably was conversing with earlier in the
5 day about what the administration's position would
6 be, what steps we're going to be taking.

7 Q. Now, it appears that this statement is
8 different from the --

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. -- earlier statement you sent to Dyana
11 Bagby.

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Can you walk me through how this statement
14 was crafted?

15 A. The statements are different. This
16 statement here is the statement on behalf of the
17 administration. This is a statement on behalf of the
18 mayor himself. So this is me communicating his
19 position or his feelings on a certain subject matter.

20 Q. Do you recall -- having seen this e-mail
21 now with this, with the mayor's statement, does that
22 give you any better understanding or better
23 recollection of when the suspension decision came
24 down?

25 A. I don't recall when the suspension

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1 decision came down. It looks like -- what is this?
2 If this is 11/24, it looks like it happened on 11/24.

3 Q. So sometime between that 2:27 --

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. -- p.m. and 5:22 --

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. -- it appeared that the suspension
8 happened?

9 A. Happened.

10 Q. Correct?

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. You obviously have written out something
13 for the mayor that says Chief Cochran will be
14 suspended --

15 A. Right. Right.

16 Q. -- for a month without pay.

17 Do you recall any meetings involved with
18 coming up with this statement on behalf of the mayor?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Do you recall how you got these bullet --
21 who gave you these bullet points?

22 A. I don't think I had a meeting about them,
23 but most likely I would have gotten them from HR. If
24 it talks about the suspension, it looks like it's HR.

25 Q. And what did they tell you?

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1 A. Then they would have told me, we made the
2 decision to suspend Chief Cochran. He'll be required
3 to complete sensitivity training. They were the ones
4 who probably would have given me the bullet points
5 here to share.

6 Q. Was this statement shared with media
7 outlets?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. In the mayor's name?

10 A. On behalf of the mayor, yeah.

11 Q. When you made these statements on
12 November 24th --

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. -- 2014 both to Dyana Bagby and this
15 mayor's statement --

16 A. Yeah.

17 Q. -- to your knowledge, had Chief Cochran
18 made any statement in the media?

19 A. I don't remember.

20 Q. Do you have any knowledge that he did?

21 A. I don't remember. I don't know.

22 Q. Did Chief Cochran at this time or at the
23 time of the suspension ever contact you seeking
24 guidance on how to respond to media inquiries about
25 him or the book?

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1 A. I don't believe so. I don't remember.

2 Q. Do you know whether he contacted anyone in
3 your office?

4 A. That I definitely don't know.

5 Q. Did anyone else in the mayor's cabinet,
6 including Ms. Yancy or anyone else that works for him
7 at that level in that office, tell you that the chief
8 had inquired about how to handle media inquiries?

9 A. Not to my knowledge.

10 Q. I'll give you a little bit of time to
11 familiarize yourself with that. It's been marked as
12 Plaintiff's Exhibit 49, I believe.

13 A. Uh-huh. Okay.

14 Q. Do you recognize this chain of e-mails?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And what is it, if you recall?

17 A. It looks like an e-mail chain. I don't
18 know if I initiated it. It looks like an e-mail
19 chain where I am alerting everyone that I am going to
20 be doing an interview. This is what I was referring
21 to as WSB being the first media outlet to report the
22 news or break the news on the book. It looks like
23 I'm doing an interview, and I'm reaching out to folks
24 just to make sure I have my points together, I'm
25 communicating our position accurately.

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1 Q. And you mentioned before that WSB had
2 received a tip? Did they then call you? Is that how
3 this WSB --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- opportunity came up?

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. Do you know who else they interviewed?
8 Did you eventually do an interview?

9 A. I did.

10 Q. Strike that first question.

11 Do you know who else they interviewed?

12 A. I don't remember. I think -- no, I'm
13 sorry. I think they interviewed Alex Wan as well.

14 Q. Any other --

15 A. I don't remember.

16 Q. -- interviews you can remember?

17 Whose idea was it to do the interview with
18 WSB?

19 A. I believe I made the decision.

20 Q. So authorized by anyone else, or was that
21 you?

22 A. No. Me.

23 Q. Who did you speak to from WSB; do you
24 recall?

25 A. Aaron Diamant was the reporter.

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1 Q. Do you review any documents before you
2 spoke to Mr. Diamant?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Did you prepare any documents or notes
5 that you can recall?

6 A. I might have.

7 Q. Do you know whether those have been
8 produced by your counsel?

9 A. I mean, it looks like they're right
10 here --

11 Q. So you think --

12 A. -- in e-mail.

13 Q. -- you're the one that wrote this e-mail?

14 You also say here -- I'm reading the third
15 sentence -- "Aaron Diamant will be here at city hall
16 shortly to interview council members." Next
17 sentence, "I have denied their request to interview
18 Chief Cochran."

19 A. Uh-huh.

20 Q. Why did you deny their request to
21 interview Chief Cochran?

22 A. Because at the time when -- so if there is
23 an media inquiry that comes in, then one person is
24 delegated to speak on behalf of the administration.
25 At this point, Chief Cochran was still an employee,

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1 and I didn't feel like it was appropriate for him to
2 speak on a book that we didn't have any knowledge
3 about or didn't have any other further information
4 on, so I decided to speak only behalf of the
5 administration. It's not -- it's not out of
6 the -- it's not -- it's normal for me to make those
7 types of decisions on a daily basis.

8 Q. Do you recall what you said to
9 Mr. Diamant?

10 A. I don't remember.

11 Q. Looking at that e-mail right above that
12 from Ms. Yancy --

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. -- at 10:12 --

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. -- she appears here to be responding to
17 some of the things you were planning on saying.

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. She said, "We've been told by employees it
20 was distributed in a command staff meeting."

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. "I stopped investigating based on the
23 feedback meeting from last week."

24 A. Uh-huh.

25 Q. Were you part of that feedback meeting

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1 that Ms. Yancy mentions?

2 A. No.

3 Q. Do you know -- did she ever tell you what
4 about that meeting caused her to stop investigating?

5 A. No.

6 (Exhibit 69 was marked for
7 identification.)

8 BY MR. CONNELLY:

9 Q. Looking down on that e-mail or this
10 document that's been marked Plaintiff's Exhibit 69 --

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. -- it appears that you're responding to an
13 inquiry from Jonathan Shapiro.

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. And he's with WABE?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. I'm looking at the 11:09 towards the
18 bottom of the page.

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. It said, "Hey, Jonathan, we released a
21 statement yesterday. I will forward it to you. No
22 other interview on this today."

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. Had there been other interviews that day?
25 What were you referring to there?

1 A. I don't believe there were any other
2 interviews that day. Although it's at 11:09, it's
3 highly doubtful that there were any interviews that
4 morning. Typically no other interviews just means
5 that the statement speaks for itself and we're not
6 providing any on-camera interviews.

7 Q. How do you normally schedule interviews?

8 A. Depends. Depends on what time the media
9 inquiry comes in. Depends on what our decision is to
10 respond. Sometimes there are no interviews.

11 Q. How many were you receiving, would you
12 say?

13 A. Media inquiries?

14 Q. Media inquiries for this -- on this issue.

15 A. A lot.

16 Q. And what was the reason for you deciding
17 there would be no other interviews on that?

18 A. Because like I said, I felt that the
19 statement that -- actually the two statements that we
20 had previously released the day before spoke for
21 themselves, and we didn't need to further explain our
22 position on the issue.

23 (Exhibit 70 was marked for
24 identification.)

25

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1 BY MR. CONNELLY:

2 Q. The court reporter's handed you what's
3 been marked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 70. Do you recall
4 seeing this e-mail from Abigail Ohlheiser?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Had you worked with her before?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. I want to talk to you a little bit about
9 what's the process for responding to questions and
10 e-mail posing questions like this.

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. We talked a little bit about press
13 releases and social media. What's the process for
14 answering questions like this that are posed in a
15 serial format?

16 A. The process is typically the same. We
17 will take a look at the questions. We'll confer with
18 other senior officials, if needed the mayor. Depends
19 on the subject matter. And we'll formulate
20 responses, they'll be approved, and then we'll send
21 them out.

22 Q. In number two in your responses --

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. -- I'll just read Abigail's question
25 there, even through it's really just your responses.

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1 But she asks, "Has the mayor reviewed the book in
2 question?" Your response was, "Yes, the mayor has
3 read the book."

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. "There are a number of passages in the
6 book that directly conflict with the City's
7 nondiscrimination policies."

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Do you remember where you got the
10 information the mayor had read the book?

11 A. I believe I had asked, or someone else had
12 asked, and I learned that he had read the book.

13 Q. Asked the mayor?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Do you recall when he had read the book?

16 A. No. I believe he read the book the day
17 that it was brought to our attention, which would
18 have been either the 24th or the 25th.

19 Q. Was it your understanding he read the
20 entire book?

21 A. I do not know if he read the entire book.

22 Q. What did you mean when you said he had
23 read the book?

24 A. He had communicated to me that he had read
25 the book. I did not ask specifically what that

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1 meant.

2 Q. What did you understand the phrase "there
3 are a number of passages in the book that directly
4 conflict with the City's nondiscrimination policies"
5 to mean?

6 A. There were a number of passages in the
7 book that were derogatory towards individuals of
8 different religions, different sexual preferences,
9 different genders, and those are the passages that
10 I'm referring to here.

11 Q. What was your understanding at that time
12 about how any disciplinary action would be handled?

13 MS. HINTON: Object to the form.

14 THE WITNESS: At that time? It
15 appears as though he might have already
16 been suspended at this point.

17 BY MR. CONNELLY:

18 Q. What did you understand the next steps to
19 be in your role?

20 A. There would be an investigation into the
21 matter.

22 Q. What was your understanding of what role
23 the investigation would play in the disciplinary
24 process?

25 A. Depending upon the outcome of the

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1 investigation, additional, if necessary, disciplinary
2 action would be handed down.

3 Q. The bottom of your response to question
4 one, you say -- second to the bottom --

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. -- "Employees sent concerns about the
7 content of the book to the administration, and we
8 took action." Do you know who those employees were?

9 A. Employees sent concerns -- no, I do not
10 know who the employees were.

11 (Exhibit 71 was marked for
12 identification.)

13 BY MR. CONNELLY:

14 Q. The court reporter's handed you what's
15 been marked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 71. Do you
16 recognize this e-mail chain, Ms. Torres?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. What is it?

19 A. It looks like an e-mail chain between
20 myself and Matt Hennie, editor of Project Q.

21 Q. Could you tell me what Project Q is?

22 A. Project Q is a LGBT online news site.

23 Q. Is that similar to the Georgia Voice then?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Looking at that 11:24, which is the back

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1 page. Unfortunately everything runs in reverse in
2 the e-mail world. The 2:29 p.m. --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- you say that -- you say, "Hi, Matt,
5 didn't get your e-mail but here is our statement."

6 A. Right.

7 Q. Do you remember what prompted your e-mail
8 to him?

9 A. He might have called and left a message
10 saying that he sent an e-mail and that no one
11 responded, which is my guess.

12 Q. So at 3:26 right above that, you said, "An
13 updated statement is coming."

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. You talked a little bit earlier with Dyana
16 Bagby. I think that was at --

17 A. Right.

18 Q. -- 2:27, so do you think it's somewhere
19 between 2:27 and 3:26 the suspension happened?

20 A. Possibly.

21 Q. Is that why you think you may have
22 been --

23 A. It looks that way.

24 Q. Moving on to the next page at the
25 4:27 p.m.

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1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. So this is you then giving him the updated
3 statement of 4/27. This is the mayor's statement
4 that we spoke about before --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- as well, correct?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. And his -- just to round out this
9 particular chain, 5:01 -- you don't need to turn the
10 page. It just starts at 5:01 the page before. He
11 says, "I've added that to my story as well as
12 highlighted the mayor's actions on social media."
13 Why do you think he said that to you?

14 MS. HINTON: Object to form.

15 THE WITNESS: Where is the line?

16 BY MR. CONNELLY:

17 Q. It's at the top of page -- it's at the top
18 of the page where the mayor's statement is, the
19 mayor's statements are, sorry. Right there by the
20 staple.

21 A. Uh-huh. Why do I think he said that?

22 Q. Well, he said he highlighted the mayor's
23 actions on social media.

24 A. Uh-huh.

25 Q. If he was looking for information from

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1 you, why is he telling you what he's doing?

2 MS. HINTON: Object to form.

3 THE WITNESS: I don't know.

4 BY MR. CONNELLY:

5 Q. Did you ask him to provide some sort of
6 highlighting --

7 A. No.

8 Q. -- of these issues?

9 I'm going to move to the 12/10, or
10 December 10th e-mail.

11 MS. HINTON: One more page.

12 BY MR. CONNELLY:

13 Q. Which begins actually on the --

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. It's a December 10th e-mail. It starts at
16 3:29 p.m. --

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. -- and it runs over. He asks you a few
19 questions that are starred. At the last star, he
20 says, "Some conservative pundits and activists claim
21 that Chief Cochran was suspended over the antigay
22 remarks in his book, and on at least one occasion,
23 you've countered that."

24 What is he referring to there?

25 A. Which part of that, the one occasion?

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1 Q. Yes, "on at least one occasion you've
2 countered that."

3 A. I don't remember what occasion that might
4 have been.

5 Q. Do you recall countering that?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. And how did you counter it; do you recall?

8 A. I don't remember. Most likely through a
9 written statement. I'm not sure.

10 Q. In response to his questions, you said,
11 "Let me check on answers to your first three
12 questions. As for the last one, here is our
13 response."

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. Why did you need to check on those three
16 and have a response to the last one?

17 A. Why did I need to check on the first two?

18 Q. I thought it was three.

19 A. I'm sorry, the first three. Because at
20 the time those were -- the investigation was not
21 complete on December 10th. I believe Chief Cochran
22 was still suspended at the time. I did not have
23 answers to these questions at the time.

24 Q. The one you did answer, you said, "He
25 exercised poor judgment and violated City policy."

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1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. What City policy were you referring to
3 there?

4 A. The City has a policy where city officials
5 who are earning income of any kind outside of their
6 employment need to have it cleared with the office of
7 ethics. They need to report it.

8 Q. What's your understanding of how that
9 process works?

10 A. My understanding is, you know, you're an
11 employee, you want to take on a consulting job. You
12 report it to the office, to the ethics office. You
13 describe in detail what it is that you are trying to
14 do, and they form an opinion and send it back to you,
15 and then clear it with your supervisor as well.

16 Q. And you're saying that one of the reasons
17 that the chief was suspended is because he didn't
18 follow that ethics --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- process?

21 Looking at the 12/17, December 17th -- I'm
22 actually on the front page. There's a --

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. It looks like Matt Hennie at 11:55 a.m. --
25 this is the bottom half of the page --

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1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. -- sends an e-mail to you and says, "Turns
3 out, the chief appeared before leaders of the Georgia
4 Baptist Convention last week while serving his
5 suspension to discuss his book. The GBC then rallied
6 its supporters and created an online petition
7 supporting him," and then he links to a story he's
8 done.

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. Was this the first time you'd heard about
11 the Georgia Baptist Convention?

12 A. I think so. I can't remember, but I think
13 so.

14 Q. What did you do with this information?

15 A. I most likely shared it with others and
16 checked to see if we would be responding to that
17 specific claim.

18 Q. Do you recall who you shared that with?

19 A. I do not remember.

20 Q. I know you said you didn't recall who you
21 shared it with. Do you remember any reaction
22 generally to that -- passing that along?

23 A. To him speaking?

24 Q. To that fact, that Matt Hennie --

25 A. What?

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1 Q. To the fact that Matt Hennie had given you
2 this information.

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. Said you don't remember speaking --
5 specifically who you spoke to.

6 A. I don't.

7 Q. Do you remember any reactions from people,
8 even if you can't remember their faces or their
9 names?

10 A. I mean, later on -- I don't think it was
11 the first time that the chief had spoken during the
12 suspension. I think because he kept talking about
13 it, folks were disappointed that he had chosen to do
14 something that he was told not to do.

15 Q. When you say folks were disappointed?

16 A. Colleagues, the mayor.

17 Q. Talk to me about who those were, who those
18 people were.

19 A. Just a general sense of colleagues, you
20 know, or HR commissioner, who said not to speak
21 during the suspension or talk about it. The mayor
22 wasn't pleased about it. Maybe folks in the law
23 department weren't pleased about it. Just
24 colleagues.

25 Q. So you do remember Commissioner Yancy --

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- being disappointed. What did she say
3 to you specifically; do you recall?

4 A. I don't remember what she said to me
5 specifically.

6 Q. But it was your understanding that she had
7 told Chief Cochran not to speak about the suspension?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Did she tell you that specifically?

10 A. I knew because I received the letter, the
11 termination letter. I had -- I knew details of the
12 suspension and what was asked of him.

13 Q. Okay. I just want to make sure I have
14 this right. You said termination letter.

15 A. I'm sorry, suspension letter.

16 Q. So it's your testimony that you received
17 this -- you got this understanding from the
18 suspension letter?

19 A. Once he was suspended, and I don't know
20 if -- I can't -- forgive me. If it's not the
21 suspension letter, forgive me. But when he was
22 suspended, it would have been relayed to me, here are
23 the terms of his suspension just so that you know in
24 case you are asked any questions about it. At that
25 time, it would have been most likely that she told

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1 me, we have asked Chief not to speak during -- about
2 his suspension while he's not here. That might even
3 be typical practice actually on other employees in
4 general who are suspended. They are asked not to
5 talk about it or provide details about it.

6 Q. When you passed this along, even though
7 you don't remember who --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- you spoke to, before you passed it
10 along, did you attempt to track down whether the
11 information that Matt Hennie had passed to you was
12 accurate?

13 A. I don't remember.

14 Q. Did you task anyone in your office with
15 tracking down --

16 A. I don't remember.

17 Q. -- whether that was accurate?

18 (Exhibit 72 was marked for
19 identification.)

20 BY MR. CONNELLY:

21 Q. The court reporter's placed before you
22 what has been marked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 72.

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. It's a little shorter one thankfully. Do
25 you recognize this document?

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And what is it?

3 A. It is an e-mail exchange between myself
4 and Katie Leslie, a reporter at the AJC.

5 Q. And that's the Atlanta
6 Journal-Constitution?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Is that the paper of record --

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. -- so to speak down here?

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. Looking at the 11/16 e-mail, the closing
13 e-mail at least in this chain to Ms. Leslie, you
14 say --

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. -- "You talked to him on the phone. I
17 think you got his point."

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. Who were you -- when you said "his," I
20 just want to make sure I know who you were referring
21 to.

22 A. I believe this was the mayor.

23 Q. So you think she's talking about the mayor
24 here?

25 A. This is from me to her, correct?

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1 Q. Correct. Yes.

2 A. So this is me talking about the mayor. So
3 when I say, "You talked to him on the phone," I
4 believe she has probably spoke to him on the phone.

5 Q. Let's just -- let me ask you a few more
6 questions here, and I'm not sure if that'll change,
7 but --

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. -- at least we'll get some clarity.

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. You follow up by saying, "His point
12 doesn't matter after the fact. You keep avoiding the
13 central point was that he did not even have a
14 conversation with his boss, the mayor, before the
15 book was published. He doesn't deny that. He did
16 not read the book when he handed it to him."

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. I'm just trying to tease out who the he's
19 and his.

20 A. Yeah.

21 Q. Does that second paragraph throw any light
22 on the first when you say "You talked to him on the
23 phone, I think you got his point"?

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. And what do you --

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1 A. Meaning referring to the mayor? Yes.

2 Q. Yes. Well, let's go down to the bottom of
3 that page.

4 A. Uh-huh.

5 Q. It says, "Katie Leslie's writing to you.
6 She said Cochran said he gave a copy of the book to
7 Reed's office last January, that the mayor later
8 confirmed receiving it and told Cochran he planned to
9 read it."

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. It sounds there like Katie Leslie may have
12 talked to Chief Cochran on the phone.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Is that -- so is that -- does that maybe
15 make you think he didn't -- that she's referring to
16 Chief Cochran in that first sentence?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. Yeah. And I'm not trying to, you
19 know, contradict you. I'm trying just to figure out
20 who the his's and --

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. -- you know, there's a lot of his's and
23 he's in there.

24 A. Uh-huh.

25 Q. But your -- the point I'd like to focus

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1 on having clarified that that is --

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 Q. -- he did not read the book when he handed
4 it to him, so it was your understanding, it sounds
5 like from this sentence --

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. -- that the mayor received the book from
8 Chief Cochran.

9 A. Uh-huh. Yes.

10 MS. HINTON: Object to form.

11 BY MR. CONNELLY:

12 Q. But he didn't read it when he was handed
13 it --

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. -- when it was handed to him?

16 A. That's what it says.

17 Q. Okay. We talked about this a little bit
18 before when you told me you thought the mayor may
19 have read the book much closer in time to the
20 suspension date.

21 A. Uh-huh.

22 Q. Who told you that he had received the
23 book; do you recall?

24 A. Who told me that he had received the book?

25 Q. Yes.

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1 A. At what point, meaning here -- this might
2 have been the first time that I even knew that Chief
3 Cochran had given the book to the mayor. At that
4 point in time, meaning last January.

5 Q. You're saying here, "He did not read the
6 book when he handed it to him." That seems to me to
7 imply that you had some prior knowledge that he had a
8 book in hand but just didn't read it.

9 A. No. It means -- no, it doesn't mean that
10 I had prior knowledge. It means that I probably
11 discovered this after I got the inquiry. Does that
12 make sense?

13 Q. Maybe. Katie Leslie's point to you in the
14 directly preceding e-mail is, "I think Cochran's
15 point is the administration has known about his book
16 for a long while. And our contention below is
17 that --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- Chief Cochran said he gave the mayor a
20 book in January.

21 A. Right.

22 Q. You don't deny that fact here, you just
23 say he didn't read the book when he got it?

24 A. Right. So after this type of inquiry
25 comes in, I will typically ask, right. So at this

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1 time I probably did not know that he gave him the
2 book last January. But I'll say, hey, Mayor, did you
3 get this book last January. If I get a yes, then at
4 that point I'll know, but I think before this e-mail,
5 I don't think I knew that he had given him the book a
6 year prior.

7 Q. Did you go to the mayor after this?

8 A. I believe so.

9 Q. And what did he tell you?

10 A. He probably said, I did get the book, but
11 I didn't read it when he gave it -- I mean, exactly
12 what I'm communicating to her.

13 Q. Okay. So he got the book, he just didn't
14 read it?

15 MS. HINTON: Object to form.

16 THE WITNESS: Yeah. I believe that's
17 the case.

18 (Exhibit 73 was marked for
19 identification.)

20 BY MR. CONNELLY:

21 Q. The court reporter's handed you what's
22 been marked Plaintiff's Exhibit 73.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. Do you recognize this document?

25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. And it appears to be an e-mail from you to
2 Matt Corbin at your atlmedia address --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- communicating the mayor's statement
5 regarding Chief Cochran's termination, correct?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. Who is Matt Corbin?

8 A. He appears to be a reporter, not a
9 familiar one, though.

10 Q. He has an e-mail of "corbinpainting," so
11 he might have a side job.

12 A. Right.

13 Q. Well, the subject line is "Line of fire
14 radio."

15 A. Yeah.

16 Q. Do you recognize that?

17 A. The outlet, no, but I mean, at the time we
18 were receiving a lot of media inquiries from
19 different media outlets, some familiar, some not.

20 Q. Who drafted this statement?

21 A. I believe I drafted it.

22 Q. And who approved it?

23 A. Final approval on that would have come
24 from the mayor.

25 Q. Were there any proprietary drafts of this

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1 that you worked with?

2 A. I don't remember.

3 Q. This is communicated to Mr. Corbin at 9:24
4 p.m. on January 6th, 2015, correct?

5 A. Uh-huh. Yes.

6 Q. Did the mayor have a press conference that
7 day?

8 A. I believe he did. I believe so. I knew
9 we had a press conference. I just don't remember if
10 it was that day.

11 Q. Were you at the press conference?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. Do you know the circumstances of the
14 chief's meeting, or the meeting with the chief
15 regarding his termination?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Did you have any alternative drafts of
18 statements prepared in case the chief decided to
19 resign?

20 A. No.

21 Q. None prepared?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Do you recall when you prepared this
24 particular statement?

25 A. Assuming during the day.

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1 Q. During that --

2 A. During the -- during the same day.

3 Q. Is that usually the way it works?

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. So it's your recollection that this was
6 not prepared prior to January 6th?

7 A. No.

8 Q. Up top there, the actual text, the e-mail
9 separate from the press release, it says, "The mayor
10 is unavailable for additional interviews on this."

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. "However, this is his official statement
13 on the matter."

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. "This is his official statement."

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. What did you mean by unavailable for
18 additional interviews?

19 A. To your point, to your question asking if
20 we had a press conference, if we did and it took
21 place on this day, and the media -- I'm sorry, the
22 mayor addressed media at length, then that is
23 typically my response to folks, which is, he's
24 unavailable for additional interviews, which is he's
25 addressed this topic at length and we're not

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1 providing any more sound.

2 Q. And this is the official --

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. -- statement of the mayor --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. -- or from the City?

7 A. No, from the mayor.

8 (Exhibit 74 was marked for
9 identification.)

10 BY MR. CONNELLY:

11 Q. The court reporter's handed you what's
12 been marked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 74.

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. It appears to be an e-mail from you to
15 Mary Reichard. Do you recognize that name?

16 A. No, but it looks like she was a legal
17 affairs correspondent.

18 Q. You have no reason to doubt the
19 authenticity of this e-mail?

20 A. No.

21 Q. Up top in responding, you attach the
22 mayor's statement.

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. And then you say, "Mayor Reed is
25 unavailable, but I want to be clear considering your

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1 line of questioning below."

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. "Chief Cochran was not let go because of
4 his religious beliefs. He was let go because he
5 exercised poor judgment and violated the City's
6 ethics code by not notifying the proper city
7 officials."

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Who were those City officials you are
10 referring to?

11 A. The ethics office.

12 Q. So is it your testimony that Chief Cochran
13 never contacted the ethics office?

14 A. I didn't say he never contacted them. He
15 did not get approval, from my understanding, to
16 publish the book, to receive earned income from the
17 book. And I knew he had contact with them because
18 that had come out during the investigation.

19 (Exhibit 75 was marked for
20 identification.)

21 BY MR. CONNELLY:

22 Q. The court reporter has marked this as
23 Plaintiff's Exhibit 75. It appears to be an inquiry
24 from a Mark Davis at the AJC to you; is that correct?

25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Do you remember receiving this from
2 Mr. Davis?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Staying on that back page for a second --

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Sorry, needs to go backwards. Makes it a
7 little more difficult. Mr. Davis talks about
8 services he attended at Elizabeth Baptist Church
9 where Pastor Craig Oliver said a few words regarding
10 Chief Cochran, and it looks like he wants to speak to
11 the mayor.

12 A. Uh-huh.

13 Q. Your response is, "I don't know if the
14 mayor will be available today given it is a
15 Sunday" --

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. -- and you've attached a statement.

18 A. Uh-huh.

19 Q. Did you reach out to the mayor that Sunday
20 regarding his availability?

21 A. I probably did.

22 Q. Do you recall what he said?

23 A. I don't remember what he said.

24 Q. Do you recall if he --

25 A. Go ahead.

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1 Q. Sorry.

2 A. Most likely if it was on a Sunday, he
3 probably would have said he wasn't available.

4 Q. Did you ever end up giving an interview to
5 Mr. Davis?

6 A. I don't believe we did.

7 Q. Did you respond to Mr. Davis at a later
8 time regarding that inquiry?

9 A. I don't remember.

10 Q. Did you pass along this information about
11 the Elizabeth Baptist Church and the comments of
12 Pastor Oliver to anyone, including the mayor and/or
13 his senior staff?

14 A. To my knowledge, I only gave this to the
15 mayor and asked if he wanted to provide an interview.

16 Q. When you say you gave it to him, do you
17 mean you forwarded it to him?

18 A. Meaning -- no. Meaning I probably texted
19 him about it.

20 Q. When you texted him, did you explain the
21 contents of Mr. Davis's e-mail?

22 A. Yes. I mean, I -- it's a media inquiry so
23 I'll provide all the details.

24 Q. Did he have any response regarding Pastor
25 Oliver's --

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1 A. No.

2 Q. -- comments?

3 A. No.

4 (Exhibit 76 was marked for
5 identification.)

6 BY MR. CONNELLY:

7 Q. The court reporter has marked this
8 document as Plaintiff's Exhibit 76.

9 A. Uh-huh.

10 Q. Appears to be an e-mail chain between you,
11 Robin Shahar, and Melissa Mullinax. The bottom is
12 Ms. Shahar --

13 A. Uh-huh.

14 Q. -- relaying a conversation she had with
15 Glen Paul Freedman from the Georgia Equality board of
16 directors?

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. She says, "During the conversation he
19 mentioned communications and he sent me an e-mail
20 regarding LGBT appreciation of the mayor's handling
21 of the Chief Cochran termination."

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. Did you ever have contact with LGBT
24 organizations who were sending these types of
25 messages regarding --

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1 A. No. I don't know. I don't remember if I
2 did, but I don't believe I did.

3 Q. You don't believe you did, or you don't
4 recall at all?

5 A. I don't recall at all. It's not
6 necessarily my scope of work.

7 Q. What do you mean it's not your scope of
8 work?

9 A. Meaning it's not in my line of work to
10 communicate with organizations about their position
11 on a certain subject matter.

12 Q. Why do you think Ms. Shahar sent you this
13 e-mail?

14 MS. HINTON: Object to form.

15 THE WITNESS: I think she sent it
16 because folks wanted to let her know how
17 they felt about the decision. You know,
18 and at the time, the mayor was
19 receiving -- we were receiving thousands
20 of, quite frankly, disgusting e-mails
21 describing the mayor as an anti-Christ, a
22 Muslim terrorist. I myself had been called
23 a few names on social media. You know, at
24 the time we were receiving very derogatory,
25 disgusting remarks from a number of -- a

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1 number of avenues, be it e-mail, phone
2 calls, social media. So this e-mail was
3 most likely Robin just sending a note to
4 say, here is an organization that agrees
5 with our decision.

6 BY MR. CONNELLY:

7 Q. Up top you said, "Yes, I have seen the
8 good and the bad." I think you've just described the
9 bad.

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. What are some of the good that you recall?

12 A. I think some of the good would have been
13 folks -- you know, when I say folks, it would have
14 been followers on social media, most likely that's
15 what I was referring to, offer words of support, who
16 maybe saw some of the derogatory messages that were
17 being sent to us and, you know, expressed their
18 displeasure with it.

19 (Exhibit 78 was marked for
20 identification.)

21 BY MR. CONNELLY:

22 Q. Going back to that last e-mail real
23 quickly. You don't need to consult it. Do you
24 recall when the derogatory messages began?

25 A. I think they started immediately at the

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1 suspension, around that time.

2 Q. The court reporter's handed you what's
3 been marked Plaintiff's Exhibit 78.

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. Appears to be an e-mail exchange
6 between -- originating with Melissa Mullinax --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- sent to you and a number of other
9 people, and you responded to those people.

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. What did you say Jenna Garland, what was
12 her position?

13 A. Jenna Garland is our press secretary.

14 Q. Does she work under you?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Beginning with Ms. Mullinax's e-mail --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- she says, "This New York Times
19 editorial should be widely distributed."

20 A. Uh-huh.

21 Q. It looks like she posted a link there.

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. With an exclamation point on that
24 sentence.

25 A. Uh-huh.

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1 Q. What was your role in dealing with the
2 issues, the items that Ms. Mullinax listed?

3 A. I'm sorry. What does that mean?

4 Q. Well, she lists "ADL will publicly release
5 letter today."

6 A. Yes. What is my role in --

7 Q. In other words, why would she send that to
8 you? Did you have some sort of role on the
9 communications side of the house?

10 A. No, I didn't have a role, but again, she
11 was letting me know that there were organizations and
12 individuals who saw through the religious rhetoric
13 and understood or supported our decision based on
14 what we had said, which was that this was not about
15 religious beliefs, this was about violating city
16 policy.

17 Q. You just say "saw through the religious
18 rhetoric." What were you referring to there?

19 A. You know, that goes back to some of the
20 derogatory messages, folks attacking the mayor,
21 individuals, and saying that this was a decision that
22 was prompted off of religious beliefs and not a
23 violation of policy.

24 THE VIDEOGRAPHER: The time is
25 3:23 p.m. We're now off the record.

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1 (A recess was taken.)

2 THE VIDEOGRAPHER: The time is now
3 3:35 p.m. We're back on the record.

4 MR. CONNELLY: I'll just note for the
5 record that there's no Exhibit 65, and
6 we're continuing the list of exhibits
7 serially as we go forward.

8 BY MR. CONNELLY:

9 Q. Looking again at the Exhibit 77, I
10 believe.

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. We had said 78, so it's marked as 78. The
13 e-mail exchange between Melissa Mullinax, you,
14 Ms. Byrd, Ms. Taylor, and Ms. Garland, what did you
15 understand "Will support firing decision in detail,"
16 to mean?

17 A. What did I understand it to mean?

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. It says here that he was writing a long
20 op-ed page. To me that means that he was going to
21 express his opinion in detail in the op-ed.

22 Q. Did you have any involvement in helping
23 him prepare that op-ed?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Do you know if Ms. Mullinax would have

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1 had any --

2 A. No.

3 Q. -- hand in that?

4 What's your understanding of who Faith in
5 Public Life is?

6 A. I'm not too familiar with them.

7 Q. Do you know what FIPL press conference
8 refers to?

9 A. I don't remember what that was. It looks
10 like it might be Faith in Public Life. I don't know.

11 Q. But you previously testified just now you
12 don't really what they do?

13 A. I don't know. I'm not familiar with them.

14 Q. Your response to Ms. Mullinax above
15 says --

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. -- "Yes. Please hold on Tweeting right
18 now. Putting together predrafted messages that
19 supporters can Tweet out and post later."

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. What did you mean by supporters?

22 A. People who -- people who supported the
23 administration's decision based on termination by
24 violation of city policy.

25 Q. And how would you know who to send those

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1 to?

2 A. Typically when I send those out, I don't
3 send it to a list of supporters, so to speak. I send
4 it to cabinet members and I ask them to share if they
5 wish if they're on social media.

6 Q. But it sounds like from your testimony
7 just now, you said people who supported you, but in
8 order to get this type of information out, you'd have
9 to send it.

10 A. I don't have a list of supporters.

11 Q. Who would have that list?

12 A. I don't think anybody has that list.

13 Q. So that when you were creating all this
14 media content to send out --

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. -- who are you sending it to?

17 A. I send it to cabinet members and say, here
18 who are messages that we're going to send on social
19 media, please share as you wish. We don't have a
20 list of supporters that I send things to.

21 (Exhibit 77 was marked for
22 identification.)

23 BY MR. CONNELLY:

24 Q. The court reporter has handed you what's
25 been marked Plaintiff's Exhibit 77.

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1 A. Uh-huh.

2 Q. Do you recognize this document?

3 A. Uh-huh.

4 Q. It appears to be an e-mail, correct me if
5 I'm wrong --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- to Melissa Mullinax, and the subject
8 line is "Messages for social media."

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. This appears to be what you were speaking
11 about in the previous e-mail; is that correct?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. You addressed it "MM." I'm assuming that
14 means Melissa, Ms. Mullinax?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. You say, "Please forward to all of our
17 supporters and organizations."

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Now, you spoke just a second ago that you
20 didn't know who the supporters were.

21 A. That is true.

22 Q. This makes it sound like when you say
23 supporters and organizations that you have some
24 people in mind.

25 A. Uh-huh.

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1 Q. Who do you have in mind here?

2 A. I don't have anyone in mind, and I don't
3 have a list of supporters.

4 Q. When you say supporters and organizations,
5 what was your intention with regard to Ms. Mullinax?

6 A. Again, these are messages that I forward
7 to cabinet members more for the cabinet member, and I
8 ask them to share with people who support or may
9 agree with us.

10 Q. So you assume the -- in this e-mail are
11 you assuming that Ms. Mullinax will know who the
12 supporters and organizations are?

13 A. I'm assuming she has individuals she may
14 be in contact with. She just mentioned,
15 organizations here in a previous e-mail.

16 Q. Next sentence you say, "These ready to
17 go."

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. What does that mean?

20 A. They are approved and ready to go, ready
21 to post.

22 Q. Do you recall who these were approved by?

23 A. Most likely might have been approved by
24 myself.

25 Q. Are these messages on behalf of the City

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1 or the mayor?

2 A. On behalf of the mayor.

3 Q. What did you mean when you said, "I'm not
4 a" -- I'm assuming this is some sort of a Twitter. I
5 mean, I've heard it --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- but maybe I can be educated here at the
8 deposition as well. "We want" -- is that hash tag?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. I'm not as far behind as I thought. "I
11 stand with Kasim. We want," hash tag, "I stand with
12 Kasim trending."

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. What did you mean by that?

15 A. Meaning we wanted these messages to be
16 shared widely on social media.

17 Q. And what happens when something's
18 trending? Does that refer to like a number or --

19 A. That means that a large number of people
20 are Tweeting messages with that particular hash tag.

21 Q. The first Twitter message you send to
22 Ms. Mullinax says, hash tag, "I stand with Kasim
23 because all employees have a right to a boss who does
24 not speak of them as second-class citizens."

25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. What did you mean by that statement?

2 A. That meant all employees have a right to a
3 boss who doesn't violate the City's
4 antidiscrimination policy, which means you are biased
5 against someone based on their gender, sexual
6 preference, religious beliefs.

7 Q. So this Tweet means that Chief Cochran was
8 biased against people based on those categories you
9 just mentioned?

10 MS. HINTON: Object to form.

11 THE WITNESS: I don't know.

12 BY MR. CONNELLY:

13 Q. Well, you were the one who created this
14 you just told me, correct?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. So wouldn't any reasonable person reading
17 this think that you had just said that Chief Cochran
18 had treated employees as second-class citizens?

19 MS. HINTON: Object to form.

20 THE WITNESS: No. That's not
21 mentioned in the Tweet.

22 BY MR. CONNELLY:

23 Q. What do these Tweets pertain to?

24 A. These Tweets pertain to the termination,
25 to a termination.

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1 Q. So they pertain to Chief Cochran, he is
2 just not mentioned?

3 A. He is not described as the boss or
4 speaking about people as second-class citizens.

5 Q. But what did you mean when you said
6 "boss"?

7 A. That is a general term.

8 Q. Is it a general term, but what was the
9 occasion of creating these Tweets?

10 A. To push back on the notion that his
11 termination was related to religious beliefs or his
12 personal religious beliefs.

13 Q. Chief Cochran's?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. The second Tweet, hash tag, "I stand with
16 Kasim because there is no place for discrimination in
17 the workplace."

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. What were you referring to there?

20 A. Same, same as the previous Tweet, meaning
21 discrimination as in employees have a right to be
22 treated equally regardless of their sexual
23 orientation, religious beliefs. With the book we
24 felt that there were passages in the book that
25 violated our City's antidiscrimination policy, and

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1 that's what that refers to.

2 Q. That the passages in the book constituted
3 discrimination?

4 MS. HINTON: Object to form.

5 THE WITNESS: There were passages in
6 the book that we felt violated the City's
7 antidiscrimination policy.

8 BY MR. CONNELLY:

9 Q. How so?

10 A. Language, and I don't remember the exact
11 passages, so I can't quote them verbatim, but
12 passages referring to homosexuality as bestiality,
13 terms of that nature.

14 Q. Third Tweet, religious freedom -- I'm
15 assuming that is has, or maybe freedoms. Maybe there
16 was an S missing.

17 A. Uh-huh.

18 Q. "Religious freedoms have been violated.
19 An assertion that is as wrong as it was predictable."

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Explain to me why you wrote that.

22 A. Again, this is pushing back on the notion
23 that Chief Cochran was violated because of his
24 personal religious beliefs. There were a number of
25 people who believed that, and this here is pushing

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1 back against that, that notion.

2 Q. I'm sorry. I just want to make sure. You
3 said he was violated -- I mean, he was terminated --
4 you said violated.

5 A. I'm sorry, terminated, terminated.

6 Q. Facebook message down at the bottom, some
7 of these are Facebook messages, appear to be fairly
8 similar to those Tweets, so I won't tread over ground
9 we've already been over.

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. Hash tag, "I stand by Kasim," at the
12 bottom, "because he has it right. Everyone, no
13 matter who they love, should come to work without
14 fear of discrimination."

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. What were you referring to here?

17 A. Again, the same thing, reiterating the
18 message that all City employees should be able to
19 work in an environment where they're not
20 discriminated against because of their sexual
21 orientation, religious beliefs, gender. Reiterating
22 the same message.

23 Q. And was the message you were trying to
24 convey with this Tweet that there has been
25 discrimination?

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1 A. No. I can't speak to whether or not there
2 was discrimination.

3 (Exhibit 79 was marked for
4 identification.)

5 BY MR. CONNELLY:

6 Q. The court reporter's handed you what's
7 been marked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 79. Do you
8 recognize this document?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Appears to be an e-mail exchange between
11 you and Robin Shahar and a number of other people.

12 A. Uh-huh.

13 Q. Who is Cassandra Coley, by the way?

14 A. I don't know who that is.

15 Q. Is it someone that works in the City, do
16 you believe?

17 A. I don't know. The name's not familiar.

18 Q. There Ms. Shahar is referring to an ADL,
19 Anti-Defamation League press release. You let her
20 know at the top that you did not receive it. "Please
21 feel free to forward when you can."

22 A. Uh-huh.

23 Q. Why did you ask her to forward that?

24 A. I don't remember.

25 Q. Would that be the type of thing you would

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1 keep? Press releases?

2 A. Not necessarily, but I don't remember why
3 I needed it or why I wanted it.

4 Q. Would the ADL be a group or an
5 organization the type of which you referred in the
6 e-mail to Ms. Mullinax?

7 A. Supporters, possibly.

8 Q. Can you think of any other supporters off
9 the top of your head?

10 A. No, I can't.

11 (Exhibit 80 was marked for
12 identification.)

13 BY MR. CONNELLY:

14 Q. The court reporter has handed you what's
15 been marked Plaintiff's Exhibit 80.

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. Do you recognize this document?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. It appears, working from the back to the
20 front, that Ms. Abigail Ohlheiser from the Washington
21 Post was looking for a comment from you on whether
22 the chief had filed an EEOC complaint, correct?

23 A. Yes, uh-huh.

24 Q. It looks like your initial statement is
25 that you hadn't received word of that; is that

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1 correct?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. And then at some point, it looks like
4 Jenna Garland takes over this task.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. What happened there?

7 A. It appears that a day has passed, and so
8 when Jenna responds it is most likely possible that
9 we have received the complaint at that time.

10 Q. I appreciate that. I guess what I'm
11 asking you is why did Jenna take over the response
12 task.

13 A. Oh, I don't know.

14 Q. Did you direct her to do that?

15 A. No. No particular reason. We intermingle
16 responsibilities all the time.

17 Q. Okay. This particular statement attached
18 or I guess cribbed and put in the e-mail directly --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- from Ms. Ohlheiser with you -- or
21 actually you were a part of the -- you were one of
22 the addressees.

23 A. Uh-huh.

24 Q. This appears to be an entirely new
25 statement compared to the other statements --

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- we've seen; is that correct?

3 Did you have any role in drafting this
4 particular statement?

5 A. I'm pretty sure I did.

6 Q. Do you know who would have approved this?

7 A. If it is an EEO -- most likely law and
8 possibly HR, but I don't -- law and possibly HR.

9 Q. But going back to what we spoke to, what
10 you spoke to earlier --

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. -- in the deposition, this is the type of
13 document that would have gotten approval above your
14 level?

15 A. Yes, uh-huh.

16 Q. So this was -- at this point when it goes
17 to Abigail Ohlheiser from Jenna Garland --

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. -- this is the official statement of the
20 City or the mayor?

21 A. The City.

22 Q. She does say, "You contribute to me a
23 spokesperson for Mayor Reed"?

24 A. Yes. That's --

25 Q. I'm not trying to split hairs here. I'm

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1 just trying --

2 A. Yeah. No, that's typical. Most reporters
3 just want to know who the statement is attributed to.

4 Q. Okay, but this is the official statement
5 of the City --

6 A. Yes. Uh-huh.

7 Q. -- attributable to Mayor Reed?

8 A. Just as spokesperson. If it's Mayor Reed,
9 we'll say, attribute this to Mayor Reed.

10 Q. Okay. So --

11 A. If it's coming from us as a spokesperson,
12 that's what that means, so it's not Mayor Reed.

13 Q. And do you recall exactly who approved
14 this?

15 A. Who exactly, I don't know.

16 Q. But it would have been somebody above you?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Do you remember sending this response to
19 anyone else?

20 A. I'm sure I did, but I don't remember who.

21 Q. Does this look like the type of statement
22 that would have been the final sort of EEOC
23 statement?

24 A. It appears that way.

25 Q. That would have gone out to other media

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1 outlets --

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. -- if there were requests?

4 (Exhibit 81 was marked for
5 identification.)

6 BY MR. CONNELLY:

7 Q. The court reporter has placed before you
8 what's been marked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 81. Having
9 had a chance to look at it, do you recognize this
10 document?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. What does it involve?

13 A. It looks like it's e-mail correspondence
14 between myself and WXIA, a local news outlet here.

15 Q. Okay. And what is it pertaining to,
16 subject matter?

17 A. I don't remember any of this.

18 Q. Well, let me give you a couple of seconds
19 to review it then.

20 A. Uh-huh. Okay.

21 Q. So it looks like this is referring to or
22 pertains to a letter that the Georgia --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- House delegation had sent to
25 Mayor Reed.

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And they're looking to see whether the
3 mayor --

4 A. Yes.

5 Q. -- has a response.

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. You send a response to Erica Solomon --

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. -- and atlmedia, your clearinghouse
10 address there?

11 A. Uh-huh.

12 Q. And you say, "Attribute to city
13 spokesperson."

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. Do you recall who drafted this
16 particular --

17 A. It was most likely myself.

18 Q. Okay. And again, asking the same question
19 I asked you before, would this be the type of
20 statement that would need to be cleared at a level
21 higher than yours?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And when you say "attribute to city
24 spokesperson," again, that's the official city
25 spokesperson --

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- speaking for the City?

3 A. Yes.

4 (Exhibit 82 was marked for
5 identification.)

6 BY MR. CONNELLY:

7 Q. Hopefully this will get a little easier.

8 This appears to be -- the next few will be
9 similar.

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. I just have a few follow-up questions.

12 A. Uh-huh.

13 Q. The court reporter has handed you what's
14 been marked Plaintiff's Exhibit 82. Looks like a
15 similar e-mail from a Max Blau?

16 A. Uh-huh.

17 Q. Are you familiar with him?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Who does he work for?

20 A. Who does he work for now or at the time?

21 Q. At the time.

22 A. He was a reporter at Creative Loafing.

23 Q. What is that?

24 A. It's a printed weekly publication in
25 Atlanta.

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1 Q. Do they have a particular focus?

2 A. No, not necessarily.

3 Q. So he's asking you has the mayor's office
4 responded to that 210 letter yet?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Is he referring to --

7 A. It appears that way.

8 Q. You say in your response, "Mayor's formal
9 response is forthcoming. Here's what he said
10 yesterday and the week before and the week before
11 that."

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. With respect to the "mayor's formal
14 response is forthcoming," was there an official
15 response to this letter?

16 A. I don't remember.

17 Q. Do you know if there was an official
18 meeting with those congressmen?

19 A. I -- no.

20 Q. I'm sorry, I just want to make sure.

21 A. No.

22 Q. You don't remember?

23 A. I don't know about any -- I don't --
24 that's not what I -- I don't know about the mayor's
25 official schedule or his appointments or meetings.

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1 Q. But at this time, you thought there may
2 have been a formal response forthcoming?

3 A. Yes. I just don't remember what that is
4 or what that was.

5 (Exhibit 83 was marked for
6 identification.)

7 BY MR. CONNELLY:

8 Q. The court reporter has handed you what's
9 been marked Plaintiff's Exhibit 83.

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. If you look on that second page, this
12 appears to be a similar e-mail from Emma Margolin at
13 NBC Universal.

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. Had you worked with her before?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Is she local NBC?

18 A. No.

19 Q. Okay. Oh, okay, and I did it wrong.
20 That's my fault. "I'm a reporter at MSNBC, and I was
21 wondering if Mayor Reed had a statement in response
22 to the federal lawsuit filed yesterday on behalf of
23 former Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran."

24 A. Uh-huh.

25 Q. It's not quite -- it doesn't look quite

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1 precisely the exact same --

2 A. Uh-huh.

3 Q. -- but again, this is attributable to a
4 City spokesperson?

5 A. Uh-huh, yes.

6 Q. Again, approved at a level --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- above your level?

9 Second to last paragraph, if you'll follow
10 along with me. "The City of Atlanta remains a place
11 where all people including those who share
12 Mr. Cochran's beliefs are equally valued and
13 respected."

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. What did you mean by that?

16 A. It's not a -- that's not a personal
17 statement. That is a statement on behalf of the City
18 and the administration. I read it to believe again
19 that, as I previously said, that all employees who
20 work for the City have a right to be treated equally
21 and fairly regardless of their religious beliefs,
22 sexual orientation, gender.

23 Q. That second sentence where you said,
24 "However, religious beliefs cannot shield any
25 employee from the consequences of poor judgment and

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1 insubordination." What did you mean by that
2 statement?

3 A. "Religious beliefs cannot shield an
4 employee from the consequences of poor judgment and
5 insubordination." This might have been, and again,
6 this is not a personal statement of mine, and I can't
7 be quite sure. But I -- to me it reads when we say
8 poor judgment, meaning we can't protect employees
9 from feeling discriminated against. In this case I
10 might have been referring to when we say poor
11 decisions because we have referred to his
12 distribution of the book as poor judgment, that seems
13 like that is what that is referring to.

14 Q. You talked about the poor judgment. What
15 does the insubordination refer to?

16 A. I don't remember.

17 Q. You said this wasn't your language just a
18 second ago.

19 A. This was not. I said it's not my
20 language, yes.

21 Q. Right. But you're putting it out as a
22 city spokesperson --

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. -- to Ms. Margolin. Do you remember who
25 put that in there?

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1 A. It's not a matter of who put it in there.
2 I just don't remember how we were -- what that was
3 meant to address. I can't remember.

4 Q. Well, and I appreciate that. What I'm
5 trying to get is if you're putting it out and you're
6 sort of the final line of --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- communication --

9 A. I can't say --

10 Q. -- somebody has to approve it.

11 A. I don't know who -- that is -- I don't
12 know if it's the right way of saying it, put it in
13 there. I don't remember if that was an addition of
14 someone in particular, if it was something I had
15 drafted and they just approved it. I can't say if
16 there was someone who put it in there, so to speak.

17 Q. And it's your testimony too that you don't
18 recall what insubordination referred to?

19 A. No, I don't recall.

20 Q. Last sentence says, "The City will
21 vigorously defend its actions in any legal
22 proceedings brought by Mr. Cochran."

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. "And is confident that the decision to
25 terminate is both the right thing to do and fully

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1 legal."

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. What did you mean by "the right thing to
4 do"?

5 A. Our position was that Chief Cochran was
6 terminated based on his violation of City policy.
7 Based on that position, we believed that his
8 termination was the right thing to do and fully
9 legal.

10 (Exhibit 84 was marked for
11 identification.)

12 BY MR. CONNELLY:

13 Q. The court reporter has placed before you
14 what's been marked as Plaintiff's Exhibit 84.

15 A. Uh-huh.

16 Q. Do you remember reading this document, or
17 does this document look familiar to you?

18 A. It looks familiar.

19 Q. What is it, to the best of your
20 recollection?

21 A. E-mail correspondence between myself and
22 Sean Keenan. I cannot remember what media outlet he
23 wrote for. Oh, wait, Georgia Signal Newspaper.
24 E-mail correspondence between myself and Sean Keenan.

25 Q. Okay. It appears that he's looking into

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1 Chief Cochran's decision to bring a case against the
2 City.

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. And your response on March 3rd, 2015 --

5 A. Uh-huh.

6 Q. -- says you can't answer questions on a
7 pending lawsuit.

8 A. Uh-huh.

9 Q. "The City's position has not changed."

10 A. Uh-huh.

11 Q. "Please feel free to use the language
12 below for a quote, which you can attribute to the
13 spokesperson."

14 A. Uh-huh.

15 Q. Again, that was -- this would be a species
16 of -- this statement would have had to have been
17 approved at a level above you?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Do you remember specifically who approved
20 this statement?

21 A. I do not remember who approved the
22 statement.

23 Q. That second paragraph, "Although
24 Mr. Cochran continues to claim that City ethics
25 officer authorized his publication of the book, that

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1 claim is as untruthful today as it was when first
2 uttered. Mr. Cochran was told that the City code
3 required him to get the approval of the Board of
4 Ethics before publishing his book, something he
5 admits he never did."

6 A. Uh-huh.

7 Q. Do you put this out as the official
8 spokesperson response?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. Who is it that you understand told
11 Mr. Cochran he had to get approval of the Board of
12 Ethics?

13 MS. HINTON: Object to form.

14 THE WITNESS: Who told him? The City
15 code requires him to.

16 BY MR. CONNELLY:

17 Q. Right, but this statement says Mr. Cochran
18 was told --

19 A. Uh-huh.

20 Q. -- that the City code required him to get
21 approval.

22 A. I believe this might have been when he
23 corresponded with Nina Hickson in the ethics office.

24 Q. So by making this statement, you're
25 claiming that Ms. Hickson told him that?

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1 A. Yes.

2 MS. HINTON: Object to form.

3 THE WITNESS: Because at the time we
4 had the results of the investigation, which
5 said the same.

6 BY MR. CONNELLY:

7 Q. How long have you worked for the City?

8 A. It'll be five years in September, so a
9 little -- a little over four years.

10 Q. As a City employee, do you have any
11 City-issued equipment?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. What do you have?

14 A. I have an iPhone and a desktop computer.

15 Q. So you have an iPhone?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Do you carry that phone with you at all
18 times?

19 A. Most of the time.

20 Q. Do you have a personal phone as well?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Have you ever on occasion taken a phone
23 call, a personal phone call because someone dialed
24 into your work phone?

25 A. Yes.

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1 Q. Have you ever called out when you needed
2 to if your other phone was dead?

3 A. Yes.

4 Q. Do you have a laptop?

5 A. No.

6 Q. Desktop?

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. Have you ever searched a website while at
9 work?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. Have you ever purchased anything on Amazon
12 on your laptop?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Have you ever checked your Facebook
15 account from your --

16 A. No.

17 Q. -- lap -- from your --

18 A. No.

19 Q. No. So you've never checked your Facebook
20 on your --

21 A. No.

22 Q. -- desktop?

23 A. No.

24 Q. How about on your work phone?

25 A. No.

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1 Q. Have you ever typed up a personal document
2 on your work computer?

3 A. No.

4 Q. Have you ever paid a bill online using
5 your desktop computer?

6 A. No.

7 Q. Have you during your time with the City
8 ever been made aware, or are you aware of anybody
9 being disciplined for personal use of City property?

10 A. No.

11 Q. If I could just get you to look at --

12 A. Yeah.

13 Q. -- what's been previously marked as
14 Plaintiff's Exhibit 10.

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Does this look familiar to you?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. What is it?

19 A. It is a posting of the mayor's personal
20 Facebook page.

21 Q. When you say the mayor's personal Facebook
22 page, I know you testified earlier that sometimes the
23 mayor will post things on his own.

24 A. Yes.

25 Q. Sometimes he will post -- he will Tweet on

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1 his own; is that correct?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. If I could get you to look at that second
4 page.

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. A November 24th --

7 A. Yes.

8 Q. -- 2014?

9 A. Yes.

10 Q. If you just begin with me there. It says,
11 "Late last week, Mayor Reed learned about material
12 published in a book by Atlanta Fire and Rescue Chief
13 Kelvin Cochran."

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. It's on his personal Facebook page, but
16 that phrase to me --

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. -- makes it sound like --

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. -- somebody else wrote this.

21 A. Yeah. When I say personal, he has a page
22 as a public figure as a politician. And as I stated,
23 we do post sometimes for him. I can tell you yes,
24 that both of these postings were posted by my office.

25 Q. By your office for the mayor?

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. With his approval?

3 A. Yes.

4 MR. CONNELLY: Why don't we take
5 about a five-minute break, and I think we
6 can wrap it up.

7 THE VIDEOGRAPHER: The time is
8 4:06 p.m. We're off the record.

9 (A recess was taken.)

10 THE VIDEOGRAPHER: The time is
11 4:10 p.m. We're back on the record.

12 MR. CONNELLY: Thank you for your
13 time, Ms. Torres. I don't have any further
14 questions.

15 MS. HINTON: I have just a few.

16 EXAMINATION

17 BY MS. HINTON:

18 Q. Ms. Torres, I'd like to go back to
19 Exhibit 72, please. This is the e-mail between Anne
20 and Kate Leslie at the AJC. You got it?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. Okay. I just want to clarify some of your
23 testimony about this document. You had testified I
24 believe that it was your understanding that the mayor
25 had received a copy of the book.

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1 A. Yes.

2 Q. Is that correct? What are you basing that
3 statement on?

4 A. Just an assumption, a recollection.

5 Q. Do you have a distinct memory of having a
6 conversation with the mayor in which he told you that
7 he received a copy of the book?

8 A. No.

9 Q. Okay. So you're assuming that may have
10 happened?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. But you don't know either way?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. You have no personal knowledge of
15 whether or not he received a copy of that book?

16 A. No.

17 Q. Did you have any personal involvement in
18 the decision to suspend Mr. Cochran?

19 A. No.

20 Q. Did you have any personal involvement in
21 the decision to terminate Mr. Cochran?

22 A. No.

23 Q. Do you have any -- did you have any
24 personal involvement in the conversations between
25 Chief Cochran and Nina Hickson?

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1 A. No. As a spokesperson, my primary role
2 and responsibility is just to communicate information
3 that's given to me and how I received it, but it's
4 not based off my personal interactions or
5 recollections or --

6 Q. So what you're basing your statements that
7 we've seen today on would be things that you were
8 obtaining secondhand from those who were involved?

9 A. Yes.

10 MS. HINTON: No further questions.

11 You're free.

12 THE VIDEOGRAPHER: This concludes
13 Media Number 1 in the video deposition of
14 Anne Torres. We're off the record at
15 4:13 p.m.

16 (Deposition was concluded at 4:13 p.m.)

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KELVIN J. COCHRAN vs. CITY OF ATLANTA, ET AL.
Anne M. Torres on 02/22/2017

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E R R A T A S H E E T

Pursuant to Rule 30(e) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and/or the Official Code of Georgia Annotated 9-11-30(e) any changes in form or substance which you desire to make to your deposition testimony shall be entered upon the deposition with a statement of the reasons given for making them.

To assist you in making any such corrections, please use the form below. If supplemental or additional pages are necessary, please furnish same and attach them to this errata sheet.

- - -

I, the undersigned, ANNE M. TORRES, do hereby certify that I have read the foregoing deposition and that to the best of my knowledge said deposition is true and accurate (with the exception of the following corrections listed below).

Page _____ Line _____ should read: _____

Reason for change: _____

Page _____ Line _____ should read: _____

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KELVIN J. COCHRAN vs. CITY OF ATLANTA, ET AL.
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1 Page _____ Line _____ should read: _____

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11 Reason for change: _____

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13 Page _____ Line _____ should read: _____

14 Reason for change: _____

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16 Page _____ Line _____ should read: _____

17 Reason for change: _____

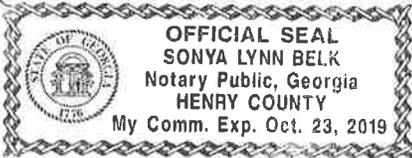
18 Signature *Anne* _____

19 Sworn to and Subscribed before me

20 *Sonya Lynn Belk* Notary Public.

21 This *22* day of *March*, *2017*.

22 My Commission Expires: _____ ESB

23 

24

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1 Page _____ Line _____ should read: _____

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11 Reason for change: _____

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13 Page _____ Line _____ should read: _____

14 Reason for change: _____

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16 Page _____ Line _____ should read: _____

17 Reason for change: _____

18 _____

19 Signature

20 Sworn to and Subscribed before me

21 _____, Notary Public.

22 This _____ day of _____, _____.

23 My Commission Expires: _____

24

25

ESB

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1 C E R T I F I C A T E

2

3 G E O R G I A:

4 FULTON COUNTY:

5

6 I hereby certify that the
7 foregoing deposition was reported, as
8 stated in the caption, and the questions
9 and answers thereto were reduced to the
10 written page under my direction; that the
11 foregoing pages 1 through 101 represent a
12 true and correct transcript of the evidence
13 given. I further certify that I am not in
14 any way financially interested in the
15 result of said case.

16 Pursuant to Rules and Regulations
17 of the Board of Court Reporting of the
18 Judicial Council of Georgia, I make the
19 following disclosure:

20 I am a Georgia Certified Court
21 Reporter. I am here as an independent
22 contractor for Huseby, Inc.

23

24

25

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1 I was contacted by the offices
2 of Huseby, Inc. to provide court reporting
3 services for this deposition. I will not
4 be taking this deposition under any
5 contract that is prohibited by O.C.G.A.
6 15-14-37 (a) or (b).

7 I have no written contract to
8 provide reporting services with any party
9 to the case, any counsel in the case, or
10 any reporter or reporting agency from whom
11 a referral might have been made to cover
12 this deposition. I will charge my usual
13 and customary rates to all parties in the
14 case.

15 This, the 6th day of March, 2017.

16
17 

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19

SUZANNE BEASLEY, B-1184
20 My commission expires on the
21 24th day of August, 2018.
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Anne M. Torres on 02/22/2017

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Anne M. Torres on 02/22/2017

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KELVIN J. COCHRAN vs. CITY OF ATLANTA, ET AL.

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From: Torres, Anne
To: Shahar, Robin
Sent: 11/14/2014 7:36:16 PM
Subject: RE: Information regarding the November 12 launch of the 2014 Municipal Equality Index

I haven't forgotten this. Will have a draft release for your review shortly.

~Anne

From: Shahar, Robin
Sent: Thursday, November 13, 2014 9:47 AM
To: Torres, Anne
Subject: Re: Information regarding the November 12 launch of the 2014 Municipal Equality Index

Thanks.

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Thursday, November 13, 2014 09:44 AM
To: Shahar, Robin; Mullinax, Melissa
Subject: RE: Information regarding the November 12 launch of the 2014 Municipal Equality Index

Got it. I will take care of this after the 11 am press conference.

From: Shahar, Robin
Sent: Thursday, November 13, 2014 9:35 AM
To: Torres, Anne; Mullinax, Melissa
Subject: FW: Information regarding the November 12 launch of the 2014 Municipal Equality Index

Hi Anne,

Now that the pension rush is behind us, I am forwarding another press issue. The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) again gave the City a perfect score on the HRC Municipal Equality Index. The organization directed that the City not announce the information until yesterday, so we can now move forward with public notification. Thanks.
Robin

Robin Joy Shahar
Mayor's Adviser on LGBT Issues and Chief Counsel
City of Atlanta Department of Law
68 Mitchell Street, S.W.
Suite 4100
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 330-6487
rshahar@atlantaga.gov
fax: (404) 546-8580

From: whitney.lovell@hrc.org [mailto:whitney.lovell@hrc.org] **On Behalf Of** The Municipal Equality Index
Sent: Monday, November 10, 2014 5:19 PM
Subject: Information regarding the November 12 launch of the 2014 Municipal Equality Index

City leaders,

The 2014 Municipal Equality Index is set to launch on Wednesday, November 12.



For those of you who may be interested in promoting your score or issuing a response to your score, we encourage you to do so but ask that you not issue a statement before 6 a.m. November 12th, or do so **on an embargoed basis only.**

To be clear, the MEI launch will be Wednesday, November 12, and no public statements should be made until that time.

If you are contacted by a reporter who is operating under the terms of the embargo, feel free to respond, but please confirm that your comments should not be used in any way until the embargo has lifted.

Unfortunately, this year for the first time we have had cities that have broken trust and already publicly disclosed their scores. We believe that communicating fully and honestly with the cities being rated is a critical part of the project's success, and when cities compromise the confidence of the project, they do so at the expense of the other cities being rated.

Cities unable to keep the confidence of the project will not be entrusted with confidential information in subsequent years.

That said, with the understanding that this information will be kept entirely confidential, I want to let you know that the report will be live on our website, www.hrc.org/mei, for the benefit of reporters operating **under embargo**, to view beginning late tomorrow (Tuesday) evening. Some of you have asked for information about your peer cities, and scores for all 353 cities rated will be included in that report.

Please feel free to peruse the report in advance of the launch and to utilize information from the report in statements you make or release on Wednesday, November 12th.

Finally, with regard to social media, beginning November 12th we will be tweeting under the hashtag #2014MEI, and we invite you to join us. Here is suggested text if you choose to join us and share your thoughts about the MEI on social media:



Cities scoring 100 points:

- We're proud to score a perfect 100 on @HRC's #2014MEI. See how your city ranks on #LGBT inclusivity: www.hrc.org/mei
- Equality has a home in [city] w/ a perfect 100 on @HRC's #2014MEI. See how your city ranks on #LGBT inclusivity: www.hrc.org/mei

All stars (see p 41)

- We're proud to be an all-star city on @HRC's #2014MEI. See how your city ranks on #LGBT inclusivity: www.hrc.org/mei
- Equality has a home in [city]. We're an all-star in @HRC's #2014MEI. See how your city ranks on #LGBT inclusivity: www.hrc.org/mei

Other cities

- Proud of our score on @HRC's #2014MEI. [City] cares deeply about #LGBT inclusivity and will always keep

We are incredibly excited about the launch of this project and hope you are too. Please contact us at mei@hrc.org with any questions. We look forward to working with you again next year!

Sincerely,

Cathryn M. Oakley

Legislative Counsel, State and Municipal Advocacy

Human Rights Campaign

(202) 572-8974 (office) | (202) 628-0517 (fax) | cathryn.oakley@hrc.org

1640 Rhode Island Ave NW, Washington, DC 20036 | www.hrc.org

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 8:27 PM
To: dbagby@thegavoice.com
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: RE: Chief Cochran

Dyana-

Updated statement coming shortly!!!

Thanks,
Anne

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 2:27 PM
To: dbagby@thegavoice.com
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: Chief Cochran

Hi Dyana-

Here is the Administration's statement re: Chief Cochran's book.

The Reed Administration was not notified of the book before it was published. The Reed Administration will not tolerate discrimination of any kind. In fact, the City of Atlanta has a number of laws that prohibit discrimination based upon sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as race, color, religion, and sex. The Reed Administration is currently conducting a review of the facts surrounding the book. If disciplinary action is recommended as a result of the investigation, we will take decisive action to prevent any inappropriate behavior from occurring in the future.

Thanks,

Anne Torres
Director of Communications
Office of Mayor Kasim Reed
(O) 404.330.6423
(C) 404.904.2618
(F) 404.546.2983
www.atlantaga.gov
@AnneMTorres

Stay connected on Twitter: @CityofAtlanta and @KasimReed



From: Torres, Anne
To: Yancy, Yvonne Cowser; Taylor, Katrina; Byrd, Candace; Wilson, Kristin
Sent: 11/24/2014 10:05:22 PM
Subject: FINAL Statement from Mayor

I was surprised and disappointed to learn of this book on Friday. I profoundly disagree with and am deeply disturbed by the sentiments expressed in the paperback regarding the LGBT community. I will not tolerate discrimination of any kind within my administration.

We are conducting a thorough review of the facts surrounding the book and its distribution. In the interim, I have directed that the following steps be taken:

- Chief Cochran will be suspended for one month without pay;
- Chief Cochran will be required to complete sensitivity training;
- Chief Cochran will be prohibited from distributing the book on city property; and
- Deputy Chief Joel G. Baker will serve as Acting Fire Chief in Chief Cochran's absence.

I want to be clear that the material in Chief Cochran's book is not representative of my personal beliefs, and is inconsistent with the Administration's work to make Atlanta a more welcoming city for all of her citizens - regardless of their sexual orientation, gender, race and religious beliefs.

Anne Torres
Director of Communications
Office of Mayor Kasim Reed
(O) 404.330.6423
(C) 404.904.2618
(F) 404.546.2983
www.atlantaga.gov
[@AnneMTorres](https://twitter.com/AnneMTorres)

Stay connected on Twitter: @CityofAtlanta and @KasimReed



From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Tuesday, November 25, 2014 5:28 PM
To: Jonathan Shapiro
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: RE: Interview request from WABE

I was surprised and disappointed to learn of this book on Friday. I profoundly disagree with and am deeply disturbed by the sentiments expressed in the paperback regarding the LGBT community. I will not tolerate discrimination of any kind within my administration.

We are conducting a thorough review of the facts surrounding the book and its distribution. In the interim, I have directed that the following steps be taken:

- Chief Cochran will be suspended for one month without pay;
- Chief Cochran will be required to complete sensitivity training;
- Chief Cochran will be prohibited from distributing the book on city property; and
- Deputy Chief Joel G. Baker will serve as Acting Fire Chief in Chief Cochran's absence.

I want to be clear that the material in Chief Cochran's book is not representative of my personal beliefs, and is inconsistent with the Administration's work to make Atlanta a more welcoming city for all of her citizens - regardless of their sexual orientation, gender, race and religious beliefs.

-----Original Message-----

From: Jonathan Shapiro [mailto:jshapiro@wabe.org]
Sent: Tuesday, November 25, 2014 11:55 AM
To: Torres, Anne
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: RE: Interview request from WABE

Sounds good, standing by for the statement.

-----Original Message-----

From: Torres, Anne [mailto:amtorres@AtlantaGa.Gov]
Sent: Tuesday, November 25, 2014 11:09 AM
To: Jonathan Shapiro
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: Re: Interview request from WABE

Hey Jonathan-

We released a statement yesterday. I will forward it to you. No other interviews on this today.

Thanks,
Anne

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 25, 2014, at 10:59 AM, Jonathan Shapiro <jshapiro@wabe.org<mailto:jshapiro@wabe.org>> wrote:



Hi Anne, hope this finds you well. We're doing a story about the fire chief's book. I read in the AJC that the mayor is concerned. Can we get him on the phone to talk about the concerns he has and what he feels needs to happen now? Don't see it taking longer than a few minutes. It's for a story to be aired on All Things Considered.

Thanks,

Jonathan Shapiro

Reporter

WABE, Atlanta's NPR Station

Office: 678-686-0333

Cell: 404-431-8484

Twitter: @jmshapiro

www.wabe.org<<http://www.wabe.org>>

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2014 5:13 PM
To: Ohlheiser, Abigail; atlmedia
Subject: RE: Press inquiry frm. Washington Post: Kelvin Cochran suspension

Hi Abby-

Answers to your questions are in red. Let me know if you need anything else.

1) My understanding, based on media reports is that the mayor's office suspended the fire chief in part because the book was distributed to subordinates. Is this true, and do you know how many employees may have received the book? We suspended the Chief because he published the book without the City's knowledge, and identifies himself as the Fire Chief for the City of Atlanta. Employees sent concerns about the content of the book to the Administration, and we took action. We are not sure about how many employees received the book.

2) Has the mayor reviewed the book in question? Can you point to any specific passages that prompted a suspension? Yes, the Mayor has read the book. There are a number of passages in the book that directly conflict with the City's non-discrimination policies.

3) Some LGBT groups have called for Cochran's permanent dismissal in the wake of the suspension. What options are the mayor's office considering going forward? It is too soon to tell if additional disciplinary action will be taken. That will be based on the outcome of the Administration's investigation.

Thanks,
Anne

From: Ohlheiser, Abigail [mailto:Abigail.Ohlheiser@washpost.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2014 8:06 AM
To: atlmedia
Subject: Press inquiry frm. Washington Post: Kelvin Cochran suspension

Hi there,

I'm a reporter at the Washington Post. I'm looking to get a little more information on the suspension of Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran.

Can someone from the Mayor's office confirm or elaborate on the following aspects of the story for me:

1) My understanding, based on media reports is that the mayor's office suspended the fire chief in part because the book was distributed to subordinates. Is this true, and do you know how many employees may have received the book?

2) Has the mayor reviewed the book in question? Can you point to any specific passages that prompted a suspension?



3) Some LGBT groups have called for Cochran's permanent dismissal in the wake of the suspension. What options are the mayor's office considering going forward?

Thanks

Abby Ohlheiser

From: Torres, Anne
To: Matt Hennie
Sent: 1/9/2015 10:22:28 PM
Subject: RE: Statement RE: Chief Cochran
Attachments: Law Department Investigation Re Chief Cochran Book, 1-9-15.pdf

Final copy of the investigation is attached.

From: Matt Hennie [mailto:matt@projectqatlanta.com]
Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 1:42 PM
To: Torres, Anne
Subject: Re: Statement RE: Chief Cochran

Thanks for the update.

Matt

--
Founder & Managing Editor
Project Q Atlanta
678-519-0543

On Wed, Dec 17, 2014 at 1:15 PM, Torres, Anne <amtorres@atlantaga.gov> wrote:
Hey Matt-

Report is substantially complete, but not 100% just yet. Will keep you posted.

Thanks,
Anne

From: Matt Hennie [mailto:matt@projectqatlanta.com]
Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 11:55 AM

To: Torres, Anne
Subject: Re: Statement RE: Chief Cochran

Hey Anne,

Turns out, the chief appeared before leaders of the Georgia Baptist Convention last week, while serving his suspension, to discuss his book. The GBC then rallied its supporters and created an online petition supporting him.

Here's the story I just posted to Project Q:

http://www.projectq.us/atlanta/atlanta_fire_chief_rallies_anti_gay_supporters?gid=16380

If the city has comment beyond my initial question about the status of the investigation, of course I'll update my story to include that.

Thanks,

Matt

--



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Founder & Managing Editor
Project Q Atlanta
678-519-0543

On Wed, Dec 17, 2014 at 10:03 AM, Matt Hennie <matt@projectqatlanta.com> wrote:
Thanks. Forgot you had that going on this morning.

Matt

--
Founder & Managing Editor
Project Q Atlanta
678-519-0543

On Wed, Dec 17, 2014 at 9:58 AM, Torres, Anne <amtorres@atlantaga.gov> wrote:
Hey Matt-

I will follow up after our Underground presser this am.

Thanks,
Anne

From: Matt Hennie [mailto:matt@projectqatlanta.com]
Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 9:55 AM

To: Torres, Anne
Subject: Re: Statement RE: Chief Cochran

Hey Anne,

Touching base to follow up on Chief Cochran. Has the internal investigation been completed?
What's the current status of the matter?

When we talked last week, the investigation was nearing completion. I'm working on a follow up this morning, so I wanted to include the latest developments from your end.

Thanks,

Matt Hennie

--
Founder & Managing Editor
Project Q Atlanta
678-519-0543

On Fri, Dec 12, 2014 at 10:51 AM, Matt Hennie <matt@projectqatlanta.com> wrote:
Thanks for the update.

Matt

--
Founder & Managing Editor
Project Q Atlanta
678-519-0543

Our Director of HR has been out vaca, so I've been trying to get answers re: status of investigation and when he is expected to complete sensitivity training. He returns to work on January 6th.

FYI on the sensitivity training –training will be for Chief, AFRD command staff and all cabinet members (this includes commissioners).

I will keep you posted. Hopefully, I will have something today.

~Anne

From: Matt Hennie [mailto:matt@projectqatlanta.com]

Sent: Friday, December 12, 2014 10:25 AM

To: Torres, Anne

Subject: Re: Statement RE: Chief Cochran

Hey Anne,

Happy Friday! Circling back around to check on the status of the responses to the questions I sent on Wednesday.

Thanks,

Matt Hennie

--
Founder & Managing Editor
Project Q Atlanta
[678-519-0543](tel:678-519-0543)

On Wed, Dec 10, 2014 at 3:49 PM, Matt Hennie <matt@projectqatlanta.com> wrote:

Thanks!

Matt

--
Founder & Managing Editor
Project Q Atlanta
[678-519-0543](tel:678-519-0543)

On Wed, Dec 10, 2014 at 3:29 PM, Torres, Anne <amtorres@atlantaga.gov> wrote:

Hi Matt-

Let me check on answers to your first three questions. As for the last one, here is our response:

The Reed Administration suspended Chief Cochran because he exercised poor judgment and violated city policy.

The City of Atlanta employs a diverse workforce. The Reed Administration expects all city commissioners and managers to respect every employee's personal religious beliefs and sexual orientation. By identifying himself as the Atlanta Fire and Rescue Chief in his book, Chief Cochran disregarded the city's anti-discrimination policies. He also failed to notify the Mayor of the book before it was published. City policy requires employees to notify their

- * What's the status of the "review of facts" surrounding the book and its distribution?
- * When does the chief's suspension end and he returns to active duty?
- * When is he expected to complete the sensitivity training?
- * Some conservative pundits and activists claim that Chief Cochran was suspended over the anti-gay remarks in his book. And on at least one occasion, you've countered that. Can you clarify why he was suspended?

From: Matt Hennie [mailto:matt@projectqatlanta.com]

Sent: Wednesday, December 10, 2014 1:32 PM

To: Torres, Anne

Subject: Re: Statement RE: Chief Cochran

Hey Anne,

I'm working on a follow up about Chief Cochran's suspension, so I wanted to touch base with a couple of questions:

- * What's the status of the "review of facts" surrounding the book and its distribution?
- * When does the chief's suspension end and he returns to active duty?
- * When is he expected to complete the sensitivity training?
- * Some conservative pundits and activists claim that Chief Cochran was suspended over the anti-gay remarks in his book. And on at least one occasion, you've countered that. Can you clarify why he was suspended?

Thanks,

Matt Hennie

--

Founder & Managing Editor
Project Q Atlanta
[678-519-0543](tel:678-519-0543)

On Mon, Nov 24, 2014 at 5:11 PM, Torres, Anne <amtorres@atlantaga.gov> wrote:
Thanks, Matt.

From: Matt Hennie [mailto:matt@projectqatlanta.com]

Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 5:01 PM

To: Torres, Anne

Subject: Re: Statement RE: Chief Cochran

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Anne -- Thanks for the updated statement. I've added to that to my story as well as highlighted the mayor's actions on social media.

Matt

--

Founder & Managing Editor
Project Q Atlanta
[678-519-0543](tel:678-519-0543)

On Mon, Nov 24, 2014 at 4:27 PM, Torres, Anne <amtorres@atlantaga.gov> wrote:
Updated statement. This is from Mayor Reed:

I was surprised and disappointed to learn of this book on Friday. I profoundly disagree with and am deeply disturbed by the sentiments expressed in the paperback regarding the LGBT community. I will not tolerate discrimination of any kind within my administration.

We are conducting a thorough review of the facts surrounding the book and its distribution. In the interim, I have directed that the following steps be taken:

- Chief Cochran will be suspended for one month without pay;
- Chief Cochran will be required to complete sensitivity training;
- Chief Cochran will be prohibited from distributing the book on city property; and
- Deputy Chief Joel G. Baker will serve as Acting Fire Chief in Chief Cochran's absence.

I want to be clear that the material in Chief Cochran's book is not representative of my personal beliefs, and is inconsistent with the Administration's work to make Atlanta a more welcoming city for all of her citizens - regardless of their sexual orientation, gender, race and religious beliefs.

From: Matt Hennie [<mailto:matt@projectqatlanta.com>]
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 3:45 PM
To: Torres, Anne
Subject: Re: Statement RE: Chief Cochran

Thanks. Will keep an eye out for the updated statement.

Matt

--

On Mon, Nov 24, 2014 at 3:26 PM, Torres, Anne <amtorres@atlantaga.gov> wrote:
Updated statement coming!!!

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2014 2:29 PM
To: matt@projectqatlanta.com
Subject: Statement RE: Chief Cochran

Hi Matt-

Didn't get your email, but here is our statement. If you have additional questions, please let me know.

The Reed Administration was not notified of the book before it was published. The Reed Administration will not tolerate discrimination of any kind. In fact, the City of Atlanta has a number of laws that prohibit discrimination based upon sexual orientation and gender identity, as well as race, color, religion, and sex. The Reed Administration is currently conducting a review of the facts surrounding the book. If disciplinary action is recommended as a result of the investigation, we will take decisive action to prevent any inappropriate behavior from occurring in the future.

Thanks,
Anne Torres
Director of Communications
Office of Mayor Kasim Reed
(O) [404.330.6423](tel:404.330.6423)
(C) [404.904.2618](tel:404.904.2618)
(F) [404.546.2983](tel:404.546.2983)
www.atlantaga.gov
@AnneMTorres

Stay connected on Twitter: [@CityofAtlanta](https://twitter.com/CityofAtlanta) and [@KasimReed](https://twitter.com/KasimReed)

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Tuesday, January 06, 2015 11:16 PM
To: Leslie, Katie (CMG-Atlanta)
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: RE: copy of book

You talked to him on the phone..I think you got his point.

His point doesn't matter after the fact. You keep avoiding the central point which is that he did not even have a conversation with his boss (the Mayor) BEFORE the book was published. He doesn't deny that. He did not read the book when he handed it to him.

-----Original Message-----

From: Leslie, Katie (CMG-Atlanta) [mailto:Katie.Leslie@ajc.com]
Sent: Tuesday, January 06, 2015 4:58 PM
To: Torres, Anne
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: RE: copy of book

To be fair, I think Cochran's point is that the administration has known about his book for a long while.

Katie Leslie
Atlanta City Hall Reporter, AJC
ph: 404-526-5969
Twitter: @katieleslienews and @ajcatlantaneews

-----Original Message-----

From: Torres, Anne [mailto:amtorres@AtlantaGa.Gov]
Sent: Tuesday, January 06, 2015 4:51 PM
To: Leslie, Katie (CMG-Atlanta)
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: Re: copy of book



Katie-

Mayor receives hundreds of books every year. What the Mayor has said repeatedly is that Chief Cochran did not have a conversation with him PRIOR to the book being published. Handing someone a book after the fact is ridiculous.

-Anne

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 6, 2015, at 4:44 PM, Leslie, Katie (CMG-Atlanta) <Katie.Leslie@ajc.com<mailto:Katie.Leslie@ajc.com>> wrote:

Cochran said he gave a copy of the book to Reed's office last January, and that the mayor later confirmed receiving it and told Cochran he planned to read it.

Does anyone there deny this?

Thanks. Deadline at 6.

Katie Leslie
Atlanta City Hall Reporter, AJC
ph: 404-526-5969
Twitter: @katieleslienews and @ajcatlantaneews

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Tuesday, January 06, 2015 9:24 PM
To: Matt Corbin; atlmedia
Subject: RE: Invitation from Line of Fire Radio

Hi Matt-

Mayor is unavailable for additional interviews on this, however, this is his official statement on the matter:

Statement from Mayor Kasim Reed on the Termination of Atlanta Fire Chief

ATLANTA – Mayor Kasim Reed issued the following statement today, announcing the termination of Atlanta Fire and Rescue Chief Kelvin Cochran:

“I have made a decision to separate from Atlanta Fire and Rescue Chief Kelvin Cochran, effective immediately. I want to make my position and the City of Atlanta’s position clear. The City’s non-discrimination policy is non-negotiable. Neither race, nor gender, no religion, nor creed, nor sexual orientation, nor physical ability, nor gender identity will be used to discriminate against any City of Atlanta employee.

I appreciate Chief Cochran’s service as Fire Chief. Chief Cochran’s personal religious beliefs are not the issue. The City and my Administration stand firmly in support of the right to religious freedom, freedom of speech, and the right to freely observe one’s faith.

I take no pleasure in this decision, but as the Commanding Officer of 750 employees within the Fire and Rescue Department, his judgment and management skills were the subject of the inquiry and my decision to terminate his employment with the City of Atlanta.

I am person of deep faith, and we are a city of laws. Chief Cochran’s book, “Who Told You You Were Naked,” was published in violation of the city’s Standards of Conduct, which required prior approval from the Board of Ethics.

Despite my respect for Chief Cochran’s service, I believe his actions and decision-making undermine his ability to effectively manage a large, diverse workforce. Every single employee under the Fire Chief’s command deserves the certainty that he or she is a valued member of the team and that fairness and respect guide employment decisions. His actions and his statements during the investigation and his suspension have eroded my confidence in his ability to convey that message.

Chief Cochran also failed to notify me, as Mayor and Chief Executive of the City of Atlanta and his employer, of his plans to publish the book and its inflammatory content. This demonstrates an irreconcilable lapse in judgment.

Chief Joel Baker will serve as the Interim Fire Chief and will be able to compete for the permanent job. Going forward, the Fire and Rescue Department Command Staff and all members of my Cabinet will participate in a sensitivity training offered by the well-respected Basic Diversity firm in January. This same training will be rolled out to all managers this year.

Any Fire and Rescue Department employees with additional suggestions for moving forward are invited to share those ideas with me. I am all ears and will do everything I can to support the healing that needs to take place within the Fire and Rescue Department and for all City employees.”

From: Matt Corbin [mailto:corbinpainting@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, January 06, 2015 3:33 PM
To: atlmedia
Subject: Invitation from Line of Fire Radio



Dr. Michael Brown would like to invite Mayor Kasim Reed as guest's on his nationally syndicated radio program *The Line of Fire*, to discuss the Mayors decision to separate Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran from the department. Please let me know Mr. Mayor's availability. *The Line of Fire* airs live 2-4pm ET M-F.

Best,
Matt

Matt Corbin
Producer | **The Line of Fire**
704-241-0042
www.askdrbrown.org
www.lineoffireradio.com

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Wednesday, January 07, 2015 5:42 PM
To: Mary Reichard; atlmedia
Subject: RE: media inquiry for today/radio broadcast tomorrow



Hi Mary-

Mayor Reed is unavailable, but I want to be clear considering your line of questioning below. Chief Cochran was not let go because of his religious beliefs. He was let go because he exercised poor judgment and violate the city's ethics code by not notifying the proper city officials, Mayor included. The Mayor's official statement is below. Feel free to use for the broadcast.

Thanks,
Anne

"I have made a decision to separate from Atlanta Fire and Rescue Chief Kelvin Cochran, effective immediately. I want to make my position and the City of Atlanta's position clear. The City's non-discrimination policy is non-negotiable. Neither race, nor gender, no religion, nor creed, nor sexual orientation, nor physical ability, nor gender identity will be used to discriminate against any City of Atlanta employee.

I appreciate Chief Cochran's service as Fire Chief. Chief Cochran's personal religious beliefs are not the issue. The City and my Administration stand firmly in support of the right to religious freedom, freedom of speech, and the right to freely observe one's faith.

I take no pleasure in this decision, but as the Commanding Officer of 750 employees within the Fire and Rescue Department, his judgment and management skills were the subject of the inquiry and my decision to terminate his employment with the City of Atlanta.

I am person of deep faith, and we are a city of laws. Chief Cochran's book, "Who Told You You Were Naked," was published in violation of the city's Standards of Conduct, which required prior approval from the Board of Ethics.

Despite my respect for Chief Cochran's service, I believe his actions and decision-making undermine his ability to effectively manage a large, diverse workforce. Every single employee under the Fire Chief's command deserves the certainty that he or she is a valued member of the team and that fairness and respect guide employment decisions. His actions and his statements during the investigation and his suspension have eroded my confidence in his ability to convey that message.

Chief Cochran also failed to notify me, as Mayor and Chief Executive of the City of Atlanta and his employer, of his plans to publish the book and its inflammatory content. This demonstrates an irreconcilable lapse in judgment.

Chief Joel Baker will serve as the Interim Fire Chief and will be able to compete for the permanent job. Going forward, the Fire and Rescue Department Command Staff and all members of my Cabinet will

participate in a sensitivity training offered by the well-respected Basic Diversity firm in January. This same training will be rolled out to all managers this year.

Any Fire and Rescue Department employees with additional suggestions for moving forward are invited to share those ideas with me. I am all ears and will do everything I can to support the healing that needs to take place within the Fire and Rescue Department and for all City employees.”

From: Mary Reichard [mailto:maryrkadi@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, January 07, 2015 11:57 AM
To: atlmedia
Subject: media inquiry for today/radio broadcast tomorrow

--
Topic: Kelvin Cochran let go over LGBT views
Deadline: today by 3:00 eastern
Desired Interviewee: Mayor Reed or spokesperson of your choice
Time required of you: 7 minutes by telephone
Format: Radio, edited to fit
Special info: I must originate call for recording purposes

Questions:
How do you see the line between personal views and ability to do a job?
How will you find out if others in the government believe in the traditional understanding of marriage and what will you do if those views aren't yours?

Mary Reichard, JD, MHA

Legal Affairs Correspondent
The World & Everything In It
World News Group
417-316-3134

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Sunday, January 11, 2015 6:08 PM
To: Davis, Mark (CNI - AJC)
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: Re: A Sunday inquiry from the AJC



Mark-

I don't know if the Mayor will be available today given it is Sunday. Here is the official statement we sent out over the course of the last week:

"I have made a decision to separate from Atlanta Fire and Rescue Chief Kelvin Cochran, effective immediately. I want to make my position and the City of Atlanta's position clear. The City's non-discrimination policy is non-negotiable. Neither race, nor gender, no religion, nor creed, nor sexual orientation, nor physical ability, nor gender identity will be used to discriminate against any City of Atlanta employee.

I appreciate Chief Cochran's service as Fire Chief. Chief Cochran's personal religious beliefs are not the issue. The City and my Administration stand firmly in support of the right to religious freedom, freedom of speech, and the right to freely observe one's faith.

I take no pleasure in this decision, but as the Commanding Officer of 750 employees within the Fire and Rescue Department, his judgment and management skills were the subject of the inquiry and my decision to terminate his employment with the City of Atlanta.

I am person of deep faith, and we are a city of laws. Chief Cochran's book, "Who Told You You Were Naked," was published in violation of the city's Standards of Conduct, which required prior approval from the Board of Ethics.

Despite my respect for Chief Cochran's service, I believe his actions and decision-making undermine his ability to effectively manage a large, diverse workforce. Every single employee under the Fire Chief's command deserves the certainty that he or she is a valued member of the team and that fairness and respect guide employment decisions. His actions and his statements during the investigation and his suspension have eroded my confidence in his ability to convey that message.

Chief Cochran also failed to notify me, as Mayor and Chief Executive of the City of Atlanta and his employer, of his plans to publish the book and its inflammatory content. This demonstrates an irreconcilable lapse in judgment.

Chief Joel Baker will serve as the Interim Fire Chief and will be able to compete for the permanent job. Going forward, the Fire and Rescue Department Command Staff and all members of my Cabinet will participate in a sensitivity training offered by the well-respected Basic Diversity firm in January. This same training will be rolled out to all managers this year.

Any Fire and Rescue Department employees with additional suggestions for moving forward are invited to share those ideas with me. I am all ears and will do everything I can to support the healing that needs to take place within the Fire and Rescue Department and for all City employees."

Considering church services have just ended and city hall is closed today, I cannot determine at this time if the Mayor will meet with Pastor Oliver. I will keep you posted.

Thanks,
Anne

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 11, 2015, at 12:57 PM, Davis, Mark (CNI - AJC) <Mark.Davis@ajc.com> wrote:

Good afternoon. Today I attended worship services at Elizabeth Baptist Church, where pastor Dr. Craig L. Oliver Sr. said a few words in defense of a church deacon, former city Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran. He also had a few pointed words for Mayor Reed:

"Just because you sign my check doesn't mean you can control what I think or say," he said. Hundreds of congregants applauded.

He also passed out hundreds of letters, addressed to the mayor, for church members to sign. That letter says, in part, that church members are "deeply troubled by your decision to terminate Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran and your utter disregard for his First Amendment rights to free speech..." He's promised to hold a brief vigil Tuesday afternoon outside Atlanta City Hall before personally delivering the letters to Reed.

Would it be possible to speak to the mayor? If not, do you have a statement regarding the pastor's message and the letter? Will the mayor meet with Dr. Oliver?

Please call.

Mark Davis

Atlanta Journal-Constitution

www.ajc.com; myajc.com

223 Perimeter Center Parkway

Atlanta, Ga. 30346-1301

404-526-7206

404-556-7074 (m)

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2015 12:35 AM
To: Shahar, Robin; Mullinax, Melissa
Subject: RE: Undelivered LGBT thank you's to Mayor Reed



Yes, I have seen the good and bad. :)

We do not archive this information. I have been having daily conversations with the Mayor updating him on the feedback we have been receiving via comments left on news sites and on social media. I will loop you in on any future mentions.

~Anne

From: Shahar, Robin
Sent: Monday, January 12, 2015 7:23 PM
To: Torres, Anne; Mullinax, Melissa
Subject: Re: Undelivered LGBT thank you's to Mayor Reed

Thx.

Have you seen social media messages supporting the Mayor's decision to fire Cochran? If so, what do you do with that info? Going forward, can I be copied on messages you see re: the mayor and lgbt issues?

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Monday, January 12, 2015 07:19 PM
To: Shahar, Robin; Mullinax, Melissa
Subject: RE: Undelivered LGBT thank you's to Mayor Reed

Hi Robin-

We monitor all socia media channels for conversations centered on the Mayor, that includes LGBT sites. Yes, we do include LGBT press articles in our city clips.

~Anne

From: Shahar, Robin
Sent: Monday, January 12, 2015 5:13 PM
To: Torres, Anne; Mullinax, Melissa
Subject: Undelivered LGBT thank you's to Mayor Reed

Hi Anne and Melissa. I was speaking with Glen Paul Freedman, the Chair of Georgia Equality's Board of Directors. During the conversation, he mentioned communications he sent me by email regarding LGBT appreciation of the Mayor's handling of the Chief Cochran termination. One example is the letter sent by Georgia Equality state-wide, including to elected officials, which can be seen at the link below:

[http://equalityfederation.salsalabs.com/o/35006/images/Georgia%20Equality%20Banner\(3\).jpg](http://equalityfederation.salsalabs.com/o/35006/images/Georgia%20Equality%20Banner(3).jpg)

Though Glen sent this to me last week, I never received it. He tried to re- send this to me while we were talking on the phone, but it did not come through. He sent an email to me without content, and it immediately arrived on my screen. I wonder if my spam blocker is holding messages which contain LGBT content. Glen said he also emailed the Mayor with messages of appreciation- I don't know if those were received.

According to Glen, LGBT social media has been electric with comments of praise for the Mayor since last Tuesday. Many of these comments can be seen at the face book pages for Georgia Equality, Project Q and Georgia Voice. I have asked Glen to collect examples of these and send them to me.

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Anne- does anyone from your office monitor LGBT social media for Mayor-related content? Also, are they including LGBT press articles regarding the Mayor in the City's clips? If not, can we do this... immediately?

Robin

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2015 4:56 PM
To: Mullinax, Melissa
Subject: Messages for Social Media

MM-

Please forward to all of our supporters and organizations. These are ready to go. We want #IStandWithKasim trending.

Twitter Messages

#IStandWithKasim because all employees have a right to a boss who does not speak of them as 2nd class citizens. <http://nyti.ms/1KFECYc>

#IStandWithKasim because there is no place for discrimination in the workplace. <http://nyti.ms/1KFECYc>

Religious freedom have been violated? An assertion that is as wrong as it was predictable. <http://nyti.ms/1KFECYc> #IStandWithKasim

Atlanta is a welcoming city for all - let's keep it that way #IStandwithKasim <http://nyti.ms/1KFECYc>

Facebook Messages

Finally! Someone gets it right. There is no place for discrimination in the workforce. I support Mayor Kasim Reed's decision to terminate the Fire Chief. <http://nyti.ms/1KFECYc>

Religious freedoms have been violated? An assertion that is as wrong as it was predictable. Read today's New York Times Editorial here: <http://nyti.ms/1KFECYc>

#IStandwithKasim because he has it right: everyone, no matter who they love, should come to work without fear of discrimination. Read it here: <http://nyti.ms/1KFECYc>

Anne Torres

Director of Communications
Office of Mayor Kasim Reed
(O) 404.330.6423
(C) 404.904.2618
(F) 404.546.2983
www.atlantaga.gov
@AnneMTorres

Stay connected on Twitter: @CityofAtlanta and @KasimReed



From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2015 2:01 PM
To: Mullinax, Melissa; Byrd, Candace; Taylor, Katrina; Garland, Jenna
Subject: RE: Support on Cochran Issue

Yes. Please hold on tweeting right now. Putting together pre-drafted messages that supporters can tweet out and post later. Standby.

-----Original Message-----

From: Mullinax, Melissa
Sent: Tuesday, January 13, 2015 7:15 AM
To: Torres, Anne; Byrd, Candace; Taylor, Katrina; Garland, Jenna
Subject: Support on Cochran Issue

Team-

This NYT editorial should be widely distributed! It was posted online this morning.
<http://mobile.nytimes.com/2015/01/13/opinion/god-gays-and-the-atlanta-fire-department.html>

- ADL will publicly release letter today.
- jeff graham/ga equality is writing long piece for ajc op ed page- will support firing decision in detail- will run Thursday.
- Faith in Public Life will run ajc oped Friday.
- I will be at the FIPL press conference this morning at the Capitol at 10am.

Thanks,
MM

Sent from my iPhone



From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Friday, January 16, 2015 8:29 PM
To: Shahar, Robin; Coley, Cassandra; Mullinax, Melissa
Subject: RE: Emails

I did not. Please feel free to forward when you can.

~Anne

-----Original Message-----

From: Shahar, Robin
Sent: Friday, January 16, 2015 11:56 AM
To: Coley, Cassandra; Torres, Anne; Mullinax, Melissa
Subject: Emails

Hi Melissa and Anne- did you receive a copy of the adl press release last tuesday (right after cochran was fired)? My computer blocked their email to me which included a copy of their release.

Hi Cassandra. I learned yesterday that the anti-defamation league emailed me a copy of the press release they did the day chief cochran was fired. I never received it. I asked them to send a copy to my home email- which they did this morning. I have tried to send it from my home to work- it won't go through.

This is a serious problem for me. I don't understand what content is causing the block to occur, but I need dit to fix immediately.

I am out sick today, but please feel free to get on my computer if you need to. Thanks.

Robin



From: Garland, Jenna
Sent: Friday, January 23, 2015 10:11 PM
To: Ohlheiser, Abigail; Torres, Anne
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: RE: Wapo request for comment on reports that former fire chief has filed EEOC complaint

Hi Abby - here is our statement in response. You can attribute to me as a spokesperson for Mayor Reed.

Thank you -

Jenna

Former Chief Cochran filed a Charge of Discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and declared under penalty of perjury that the statements in the charge are true and correct. Unfortunately, the only truthful portions are his statements about his tenure as Chief and the identity of those in the room with him during two meetings. Everything else is patently false.

The City will respond directly to the EEOC at the appropriate time to inform the agency that instead of "unspecified policies," Mr. Cochran was informed at the time of his suspension that he had failed to follow the City Code in seeking to engage in an outside income-producing venture. He was also informed that the issue was not the religious nature of his book, but the fact that he was espousing theories about certain groups of people that were in conflict with the City's policy of inclusiveness. He was further informed that there was an issue with his espousing these beliefs while identifying himself as the Atlanta Fire Chief and while falsely claiming that his job description required him to run the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department on the basis of these beliefs. Finally, Mr. Cochran was informed that distributing the book to members of his command staff in the workplace was improper and sent a message to his staffers that they were expected to embrace his beliefs.

Although Mr. Cochran continues to claim that the City Ethics Officer authorized his publication of the book, that claim is as untruthful today as it was when first uttered. Mr. Cochran was told that the City Code required him to get the approval of the Board of Ethics before publishing his book, something he admits he never did.

Mr. Cochran states in his EEOC charge that he was told his faith influenced his leadership style and that this was the reason for his termination. What he was actually told was that his distribution of a book about his beliefs within his department had caused his employees to question his ability to continue to lead a diverse workforce.

The religious nature of his book is not the reason he is no longer employed by the City of Atlanta. The totality of his conduct—including the way he handled himself during his suspension after he agreed not to make public comments during the investigation—reflected poor judgment and failure to follow clearly defined work protocols.

Mr. Cochran continues to make false statements and accusations, even under penalty of perjury to the EEOC. This is just further proof that he has shown himself to be the wrong person for a leadership role in the City of Atlanta.

###

-----Original Message-----

From: Ohlheiser, Abigail [mailto:Abigail.Ohlheiser@washpost.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2015 10:47 PM
To: Torres, Anne
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: Re: Wapo request for comment on reports that former fire chief has filed EEOC complaint



We've published on the complaint after getting confirmation elsewhere. If you have a statement to send along when available (tomorrow or later is fine), please do send along and we can update to include.

Thanks
Abby

From: Torres, Anne <amtorres@AtlantaGa.Gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2015 6:42 PM
To: Ohlheiser, Abigail
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: Re: Wapo request for comment on reports that former fire chief has filed EEOC complaint

Will do!

Have a good night.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jan 22, 2015, at 6:26 PM, Ohlheiser, Abigail <Abigail.Ohlheiser@washpost.com<mailto:Abigail.Ohlheiser@washpost.com>> wrote:

Great, that's what I thought. Thanks. Please do let me know if you do receive such a notification?

From: Torres, Anne [mailto:amtorres@AtlantaGa.Gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2015 6:02 PM
To: Ohlheiser, Abigail
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: RE: Wapo request for comment on reports that former fire chief has filed EEOC complaint

Yes, when the EEOC receives a complaint, the city is notified. I'm not sure of the exact process, but I assume that it sends notice to our HR Dept, Law Dept, and Chief Operating Officer.

From: Ohlheiser, Abigail [mailto:Abigail.Ohlheiser@washpost.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2015 5:59 PM
To: Torres, Anne
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: RE: Wapo request for comment on reports that former fire chief has filed EEOC complaint

Thanks.

Could you clarify, if you know (on background is fine) whether the city would receive some sort of alert if such a complaint were filed?

Thanks
Abby

From: Torres, Anne [mailto:amtorres@AtlantaGa.Gov]
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2015 5:57 PM
To: Ohlheiser, Abigail
Cc: atlmedia
Subject: RE: Wapo request for comment on reports that former fire chief has filed EEOC complaint

Hi Abigail-

Here is our statement:

"The City has received no information that former Chief Cochran filed a complaint with the EEOC. We intend to defend the Mayor's decision vigorously whether, through the EEOC administrative process or in any other appropriate forum."

Thanks,
Anne

From: Ohlheiser, Abigail [mailto:Abigail.Ohlheiser@washpost.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2015 5:10 PM
To: Torres, Anne
Subject: Wapo request for comment on reports that former fire chief has filed EEOC complaint

Hi there,

I'm a reporter at the Washington Post. I'm seeing reports that Kelvin Cochran has filed an EEOC complaint against Atlanta for the termination of his employment. I was wondering if the Mayor's office had a comment or any information on that complaint. Thanks!

Abby Ohlheiser

From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 11:57 PM
To: Solomon, Erica; atlmedia
Subject: RE: Mayor Reed Response FW: Georgia House Delegation: Letter to Mayor Kasim Reed on the recent termination of Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran

Attribute to city spokesperson:

Mr. Cochran was informed at the time of his suspension that he had failed to receive the required approvals pursuant to the City Code in seeking to engage in an outside income-producing venture. He was also informed that the issue was not the religious nature of his book, but the fact that he was espousing theories about certain groups of people that were in conflict with the City's nondiscrimination policy. He was further informed that there was an issue with his espousing these beliefs while identifying himself as the Atlanta Fire Chief. Finally, Mr. Cochran was informed that distributing the book to members of his command staff in the workplace was improper and risked sending a message to his staffers that they were expected to embrace his beliefs.

The religious nature of his book is not the reason he is no longer employed by the City of Atlanta. The totality of his conduct—including the way he handled himself during his suspension after he agreed not to make public comments during the investigation—reflected poor judgment and failure to follow clearly defined work protocols.

Please note that the Mayor will officially respond to this letter separately.

From: Solomon, Erica [mailto:esolomon@wxia.gannett.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 6:51 PM
To: atlmedia
Subject: Mayor Reed Response FW: Georgia House Delegation: Letter to Mayor Kasim Reed on the recent termination of Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran

Hello,

Does Mayor Reed have a response to the letter that the Ga. House Delegation sent about the rumination of former Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran?

Thank you,

Erica-Denise Solomon

Assignment Desk Editor
WXIA-TV/ Myatltv
newsroom/ 404-873-9114
cell/ 404-670-6181
esolomon@11alive.com





From: Turner, Lisa

Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 6:45 PM

To: Solomon, Erica

Cc: Thomas, Marcita

Subject: FW: Georgia House Delegation: Letter to Mayor Kasim Reed on the recent termination of Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran

From: Mercer, Shawna [<mailto:Shawna.Mercer@mail.house.gov>]

Sent: Tuesday, February 17, 2015 5:04 PM

Subject: Georgia House Delegation: Letter to Mayor Kasim Reed on the recent termination of Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran

Dear members of the media –

Please see the attached letter from Rep. Barry Loudermilk (GA-11) and several members of the Georgia House delegation on the recent termination of Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran.

Other co-signers of the letter include:

Rep. Buddy Carter (GA – 01)

Rep. Lynn Westmoreland (GA – 03)

Rep. Tom Price (GA – 06)

Rep. Austin Scott (GA – 08)

Rep. Jody Hice (GA – 10)

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Shawna Mercer | *Director of Communications*

Congressman Barry Loudermilk | GA-11

238 Cannon HOB | Washington D.C. 20515

(202) 225-2931 | loudermilk.house.gov



From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 3:56 PM
To: Max Blau; atlmedia
Subject: RE: GOP Congressmen letter the mayor

Mayor's formal response is forthcoming. Here's what we said yesterday....and the week before....and the week before that....

Attribute to spokesperson:

Mr. Cochran was informed at the time of his suspension that he had failed to receive the required approvals pursuant to the City Code in seeking to engage in an outside income-producing venture. He was also informed that the issue was not the religious nature of his book, but the fact that he was espousing theories about certain groups of people that were in conflict with the City's nondiscrimination policy. He was further informed that there was an issue with his espousing these beliefs while identifying himself as the Atlanta Fire Chief. Finally, Mr. Cochran was informed that distributing the book to members of his command staff in the workplace was improper and risked sending a message to his staffers that they were expected to embrace his beliefs.

The religious nature of his book is not the reason he is no longer employed by the City of Atlanta. The totality of his conduct—including the way he handled himself during his suspension after he agreed not to make public comments during the investigation—reflected poor judgment and failure to follow clearly defined work protocols.

From: Max Blau [mailto:maxcblau@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2015 10:47 AM
To: atlmedia
Subject: GOP Congressmen letter the mayor

Hi Anne and Jenna,

Has the mayor's office responded to that 2/10 letter yet? If so, could you pass that along? If not, would you like to respond?

Thanks,

--

Max Blau
Staff Writer: Creative Loafing
Twitter: [@MaxBlau](https://twitter.com/MaxBlau); Website: maxblau.blogspot.com
Phone: 224.436.2120



From: Torres, Anne
Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2015 4:00 PM
To: Margolin, Emma (NBCUniversal); atlmedia
Subject: RE: Statement request for msnbc

Hi Emma-

Statement below. Please attribute to city spokesperson.

Mr. Cochran was informed at the time of his suspension that he had failed to receive the required approvals pursuant to the City Code in seeking to engage in an outside income-producing venture. He was also informed that the issue was not the religious nature of his book, but the fact that he was espousing theories in the workplace about certain groups of people that were in conflict with the City's nondiscrimination policy.

He was further informed that there was an issue with his espousing these beliefs while identifying himself as the Atlanta Fire Chief. Finally, Mr. Cochran was informed that distributing the book to members of his command staff in the workplace was improper and risked sending a message to his staffers that they were expected to embrace his beliefs.

The religious nature of his book is not the reason he is no longer employed by the City of Atlanta. The totality of his conduct—including the way he handled himself during his suspension after he agreed not to make public comments during the investigation—reflected poor judgment and failure to follow clearly defined work protocols.

The City of Atlanta remains a place where all people, including those who share Mr. Cochran's beliefs, are equally valued and respected. However, religious beliefs cannot shield any employee from the consequences of poor judgment and insubordination.

The City will vigorously defend its actions in any legal proceedings brought by Mr. Cochran and is confident that the decision to terminate Mr. Cochran was both the right thing to do and fully legal.

Thanks,
Anne

Anne Torres
Director of Communications
Office of Mayor Kasim Reed
(O) 404.330.6423
(C) 404.904.2618
(F) 404.546.2983
www.atlantaga.gov
@AnneMTorres

Stay connected on Twitter: @CityofAtlanta and @KasimReed



From: Margolin, Emma (NBCUniversal) [mailto:Emma.Margolin@nbcuni.com]
Sent: Thursday, February 19, 2015 10:52 AM
To: atlmedia
Subject: Statement request for msnbc

Hi there,

I'm a reporter at msnbc in New York, and I was wondering if Mayor Reed had a statement in response to the federal lawsuit filed yesterday on behalf of former Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran. Feel free to email me back here, or you can give me a call at the below number.

Office: 212-664-1774

Thanks so much,
Emma

From: Torres, Anne
To: Sean Keenan; atlmedia
Sent: 3/3/2015 4:28:10 PM
Subject: RE: ex-Fire Chief sues



Hi Sean-

The City will not (and can't) answer questions on any pending lawsuit. The Mayor has spoken out on this issue on numerous occasions and the city's position has not changed. Please feel free to use the language below for a quote which you can attribute to spokesperson.

Thanks,

Anne

Anne Torres
Director of Communications
Office of Mayor Kasim Reed
(O) 404.330.6423
(C) 404.904.2618
(F) 404.546.2983
www.atlantaga.gov
@AnneMTorres

Stay connected on Twitter: @CityofAtlanta and @KasimReed

Mr. Cochran was informed at the time of his suspension that he had failed to follow the City Code in seeking to engage in an outside income-producing venture. He was also informed that the issue was not the religious nature of his book, but the fact that he was espousing theories about certain groups of people that were in conflict with the City's non-discrimination policy. He was further informed that there was an issue with his espousing these beliefs while identifying himself as the Atlanta Fire Chief and while falsely claiming that his job description required him to run the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department on the basis of these beliefs. Finally, Mr. Cochran was informed that distributing the book to members of his command staff in the workplace was improper and sent a message to his staffers that they were expected to embrace his beliefs.

Although Mr. Cochran continues to claim that the City Ethics Officer authorized his publication of the book, that claim is as untruthful today as it was when first uttered. Mr. Cochran was told that the City Code required him to get the approval of the Board of Ethics before publishing his book, something he admits he never did.

Mr. Cochran states that he was told his faith influenced his leadership style and that this was the reason for his termination. What he was actually told was that his distribution of a book about his beliefs within his department had caused his employees to question his ability to continue to lead a diverse workforce.

The religious nature of his book is not the reason he is no longer employed by the City of Atlanta. The totality of his conduct—including the way he handled himself during his suspension after he agreed not to make public comments during the investigation—reflected poor judgment and

failure to follow clearly defined work protocols.

From: Sean Keenan [mailto:theseankeenan@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, March 02, 2015 10:19 AM
To: atlmedia
Subject: ex-Fire Chief sues

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sean Keenan and I write for the Georgia State Signal newspaper.

Next week, we will be running an article about former Atlanta Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran's decision to sue the city for what he felt was an unjust termination.

I hoped I could speak with someone regarding the mayor's perspective on the matter.

I wrote a couple articles about this situation when Cochran was originally fired and it seemed quite clear that he was relieved of duty due to a breach in department protocol.

Cochran has amassed a sizable backing for his cause, so I am curious as to what grounds for suit they think they have.

Please contact me as soon as possible regarding contacts that will be able to entertain similar questions.

Additionally, I would love to have a quote from the Mayor Reed on the subject if possible.

My deadline is this Thursday afternoon. Thank you.

Regards,

Sean Keenan
678.654.9443