

Spokane Human Rights Commission

TO: Ryan Oelrich
SUBJECT: SHRC Complaint

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINT

We, the Spokane Human Rights Commission (SHRC), are in receipt of your report of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation by acts to which you report to have occurred on April 4 and April 5, 2004. The essence of this Complaint is the allegation that Spokane Mayor James E. West used the power of his official position to appoint you to the Spokane Human Rights Commission for the express purpose of attempting to engage you in a sexual relationship, and not because of your qualifications for service on the Commission.

In support of your allegation you also submitted, on May 24 and May 25, 2005, personal testimony supporting the alleged discrimination and documentation of electronic conversations that you claim support your complaint. You further claim that certain parts of the transcribed conversations specifically support your contention that Mayor West made the referenced appointment in order to gain your acceptance of his attentions.

You further request satisfaction of this complaint by the creation of a resolution by the SHRC calling for the resignation of Spokane Mayor James E. West. You also indicated that you initiated a request to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for examination of Mayor West's behavior toward you, presumably with respect to its lawfulness.

FINDINGS

1. We find that your claim of inappropriate behavior by Mayor James E. West is supported by the data available for our examination. We agree that the transcribed conversations demonstrate on the part of Mayor West a disregard for your personal requests to him, and a further disregard for the dignity of his office, disregard for the public view of human relations in the City of Spokane, and disregard for the mores of the community.
 2. We find that the documents provided by you do not support a claim of discrimination.
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3. We find that the evidence presented to us, both testamentary and documentary, does influence us in the direction of believing that Mayor West may have betrayed your trust. However, we feel the subject of the Mayor's resignation is more properly left to those investigative agencies already involved and those responsible for the governance of the City.
4. It is necessary to note that Mayor West was requested by this Commission to provide testimony or other evidence on the substance of this Complaint, and that he was counseled by his attorneys not to do so.
5. We find, in view of ongoing investigations by other agencies, no reason to pursue any matters of illegal behavior on the part of any parties to this Complaint.

Sincerely,



James P. Gotzian, Chair
Spokane Human Rights Commission
Phone: 509
Email:

cc: James E. West, Mayor of Spokane
Dennis Hession, Spokane City Council President
Joe Shogun, Spokane City Council Member
Karen Stratton, Office of the Mayor, Liaison to the SHRC