

To the Board of Directors,

My name is Samantha Wilson, and I am the target of City Attorney Tom Carpenter's attacks. I am a black woman, a native of Little Rock, and the FOIA Coordinator who Mr. Carpenter was having a conversation with when he used the word "n[REDACTED]" on September 26, 2022. Prior to this event, I have never had an issue with Mr. Carpenter. Our limited interactions have always been cordial. This made his use of "n[REDACTED]" during our conversation even more shocking. I never expected it. I never saw it coming.

After the incident, I proceeded in the appropriate manner. I memorialized the event, notified HR, and was prepared to allow the process to run its course. Instead, I have been punished for my professionalism. I've been punished for having the audacity to speak out against someone who has blatantly created a toxic, hostile work environment. Even with a corroborating witness (a young white woman), Mr. Carpenter's word has been believed without question. Sit with this for a moment because I've had to. I have been placed in a position where I must prove he said it instead of him proving he did not. I've been forced to defend myself under circumstances that become more aggressive by the day. As a black woman, I am exhausted. I am exhausted by the fact that the essence of who I am was disregarded and there is no recourse for my injury. I had faith in a system that does not care for me or value my existence.

Let me be clear. I, like Mr. Carpenter, am a lawyer. I fought through three years at The University of Chicago Law School to be an advocate for others. It appears I must be an advocate for myself at this moment. As lawyers, we operate under a strict code of professional ethics. I have never had my professional integrity questioned or attacked in the way that Mr. Carpenter has come after me. Since filing my complaint, Mr. Carpenter has made claims that records related to LITFest were deleted by a city employee. The city employee he is referring to is me. I have been at City Hall since February 2021. I have not had a complaint or any form of disciplinary action taken against me. Mr. Carpenter's claim against me would be the first and only comes after I reported him to HR. This is retaliation pure and simple. Mr. Carpenter is a white man; I am a black woman. I continue to reiterate that because I need people to understand the gravity of the situation. I am not naïve. Mr. Carpenter is upset. He is upset that I dared to step outside of the place he believed I as a black woman should remain. Mr. Carpenter uses "n[REDACTED]" in conversation with me on Monday, September 26, 2022 and a few days later, I'm labeled a corrupt employee.

I never wanted any of this and still do not. Reporting Mr. Carpenter to HR was not a decision I made lightly. He is the City Attorney of Little Rock. He holds a great amount of power not only due to his position but his longevity in that position. Falsely accusing Mr. Carpenter is not to my advantage. I don't reap any benefits from bringing these claims against him. To the contrary, telling the truth has put an undeserved target on my back. Additionally, Mr. Carpenter has used external parties to City Hall to attack me as well. These parties have pushed his claims to the media while neglecting to mention the city employee who allegedly deleted records is the same employee who filed the complaint against him.

Mr. Carpenter's accusations against me were brought to my attention by an email he sent to Matt Campbell which I was copied. Mr. Carpenter wanted to be sure I saw it. It should also be noted Mr. Campbell is actively suing the City which means Mr. Carpenter is directly releasing information to a party suing his client. After receiving this accusatory email, my name has been thrown into blogs and news stories in an attempt to damage my reputation. Mr. Carpenter is fighting to protect his image while attempting to ruin mine. This may have a lasting impact on my professional life and has caused me

tremendous anxiety and grief. I now spend my day anxiously awaiting the next attack. I never could have imagined I would find myself in this situation---a situation where my boss has used the public to attack my job performance, professional career, livelihood and character for the sake of, what looks like, some vendetta Mr. Carpenter has against the mayor.

The truth is this: Mr. Carpenter did not call me a “n[REDACTED]”. He, however, used the word “n[REDACTED]” in conversation with me on September 26, 2022. My white female colleague, who was also in the room, heard it and confirmed as much. Mr. Carpenter was presented with this information and categorically denied it. He, then, proceeded to retaliate against me by secretly doing an IT pull on my computer and accusing me of deleting documents. I will not be harassed by Mr. Carpenter, his friends, the press or anyone else for that matter. So, let’s not lose sight of what this is about. Mr. Carpenter’s deflection is apparent. The longer he is allowed to retaliate and harass me only emboldens him to continue this behavior. I told the truth and that will always remain the case. I pray my words resonate with you all and anyone else who reads them.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samantha W.". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Samantha" is written in a large, looped script, and the initial "W." is written in a simpler, more upright cursive style.

Samantha Wilson