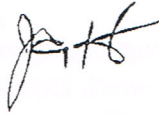


FOX, CHANDLER, HOMANS, HICKS & MCKINNON, LLP

TO: Mayor and Council Members DATE: September 2, 2022
RE: Robert L. Grizzle Complaint – July 15, 2022
FROM: Joey Homans 

All,

I retained Michael Rundles, a retired GBI Investigator with Southern Professional Investigations, to investigate the complaint Mr. Grizzle submitted on July 15.

Inv. Rundles listened to Doug's recording of the interaction with Grizzle on July 6 that resulted in the July 15 complaint, viewed the July 11 Council meeting video recording that included Grizzle's comments about the complaint, interviewed Mr. Grizzle and his wife, Loretta, first and then interviewed the following persons based upon information obtained from the recordings, the initial interviews and subsequent interviews:

Doug;
the four of you;
Dennis;
Teresa;
Amy;
Keith;
Tim Van Tessel;
Felton Wood; and
Robert Williams.

Inv. Rundles prepared a 45-page investigative report that contains his activities and witness statements. The investigative report will be provided to you and will be subject to release pursuant to the Open Records Act after editing certain personal contact information ten days after action is taken and the investigation deemed complete. O.C.G.A. §50-18-72(a)(8). Doug is within Dennis's chain of command. Therefore, you should recommend to Dennis any action you deem proper after reviewing this memorandum and the investigative report.

Grizzle stated that Gene and Felton initiated the code enforcement complaint against him and that Gene and Felton had videoed his home several times and also videoed other property within Lula from the street and that Gene rode with Doug when Doug patrolled the City. Grizzle

2:40 PM

Investigator dialed telephone number [REDACTED] to talk to Bramlett. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

2:42 PM

Investigator dialed telephone number [REDACTED] to talk to Shockley. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for her to return the telephone call.

2:55 PM

Investigator arrived back at city hall and met Forrester. Forrester invited Investigator into a room at city hall. He stated the City Manager, Dennis Bergin, was present and he asked Investigator if Bergin could sit in on the interview. Investigator met Bergin. Forrester stated he had tried to contact their FOP (Fraternal Order of Police) legal defense team in the process and was trying to see if he needed to get an attorney through them. Investigator asked Forrester if he was willing to talk to him. Forrester stated he had not been advised either way but he didn't mind. Investigator advised Forrester he was conducting a civil investigation and not a criminal investigation and according to city policy employees were required to cooperate in the investigation. Bergin stated Investigator was correct about their policy. He stated if it was a criminal matter, he would advise him differently and he might want to seek the advice of POST (Peace Officer Standards and Training) but internally this appeared to be civil and not criminal. Bergin stated they were concerned about the complaint and the sooner they could put this matter behind them the better. Forrester advised Investigator he was willing to talk and suggested they go to his office where they would have some privacy. Investigator asked Forrester if he wanted Bergin to be present during the interview; however, his preference was to talk to him privately. Bergin stated he agreed with Investigator and he excused himself. Investigator and Forrester went to his office. Investigator asked Forrester to tell him what happened when he met Robert Grizzle at his property on July 6, 2022. Forrester stated essentially the following.

Investigator asked Forrester, prior to him providing information, if he received a complaint and he went to the Grizzle residence or he went there on his own. Forrester stated on that day, he went to the Grizzle residence after he had received a complaint. He stated earlier he had received a complaint from a citizen who had been riding around town and he had not followed up on that complaint at that point in time. Forrester stated one of their councilmembers pointed that out to him. He stated at that point he went ahead and made contact with Grizzle. Investigator asked Forrester if he would provide the name of the citizen. He stated on that particular day, July 6, he responded after he had talked to the councilmember. Investigator asked Forrester the name of the councilmember and he stated his name was Gene Bramlett. Investigator asked Forrester to provide the nature of the information he received from Bramlett. Forrester stated he thought possibly they were at a cookout at City Hall and he couldn't remember the exact date. He stated Bramlett asked him to check on a particular truck at the Grizzle residence. Forrester stated the truck was inoperable and Bramlett had showed him a picture of the truck. Investigator showed Forrester two photographs that had been provided to him by the client. Forrester stated he recognized the photographs and they were taken by him on June 3, 2022 after he had received the complaint from the citizen. He stated the citizen who made the initial complaint against Grizzle had several code enforcement violations against himself concerning his truck. Forrester stated he provided a verbal

Williams. He stated Bergin told him it was his discretion on what to do. Forrester stated he told him he would go and take a picture, put it in his file, and sit on it for a couple of weeks. He stated he was thinking in his mind that he may or may not pursue it; he knew Grizzle had some previous complaints with city hall about some grading near his place. Forrester stated the complaints made by Grizzle were false. He stated he and the maintenance supervisor at city hall checked out Grizzle's information and never could substantiate it. Forrester stated he and Bergin followed up on the information and they were unable to substantiate it.

Forrester stated it was public knowledge when the mayor, Joe Thomas, and the two new council members, Gene Bramlett and Denise Shockley, ran for office their focus was to start a police department and get a new city manager. He then stated it was "talk on the street". Forrester stated Bramlett had stated on numerous occasions there were going to be changes made and people were not going to like it.

Forrester stated he was given a truck, when he was hired, to use in his job and it was a take-home vehicle. He stated Bramlett, who was on the Public Safety Committee, made sure that was changed and Forrester no longer had a take-home vehicle. He stated the members of the Public Safety Committee were Bramlett, Shockley, Thomas, and Bergin.

Forrester stated Bramlett talked to some citizens in Lula and they seemed to know about city business that no one else should know about. He stated he had private conversations with Bramlett and they were leaked out to the public. Investigator asked the name of the citizen. He stated it was Felton Woods. Forrester stated Bramlett had asked him on numerous occasions about cases he had. He stated the last significant incident that happened was about a month and a half ago. Forrester stated one day Bramlett came to his office and talked to him for about an hour. He stated during that conversation Bramlett showed him some pictures he had on his phone and he told him he wanted him to check on it for him. Forrester stated the pictures were of Shockley's residence. He stated the pictures were of an old refrigerator and an old washer and dryer. Forrester stated Bramlett told him the pictures were taken by Woods who sent them to the mayor's wife, Patti, who sent them to him. He stated Bramlett asked him how he would handle it. Forrester stated he told him he would handle it very carefully. He stated he told Bramlett if it involved the mayor, a councilmember, or any city official, he would talk to his supervisor about how to handle it. He stated Bramlett told him he shouldn't do that; he should handle it himself. Forrester stated when he went out on a call, he kept confidential the name of the person who provided him information. He stated when Bergin came in that day, he told him that Bramlett brought him a complaint and he explained it to him. Forrester stated Bergin told him he would handle it at the council meeting that night. He stated he went out to the Shockley property and took some pictures; Bergin had told him to go out and see what it looked like. He stated Bergin talked to Shockley that night and she acknowledged that was her property. Forrester stated somehow the Gainesville Daily Times got word of the incident. He stated on Facebook, Woods bashed Shockley. He stated rumor around city hall was that Shockley was not their puppet. Forrester stated there was an article on Access North Georgia about dirty politics in Lula. He stated it got blown out of proportion and everyone thought he was the one who contacted the news media. Forrester stated Thomas, Bramlett, and Patti came to his office to talk to him about the article but they were intercepted by Bergin. He stated he wasn't the one who reported to the new media.

Forrester stated the old Public Safety Committee consisted of Lamb Griffin, Mordecai Wilson, and Mayor Jim Greer. He stated the newly elected councilmembers, Bramlett and Shockley, were placed on the Public Safety Committee. Forrester stated during casual conversations he had with Thomas and Bramlett, they indicated they didn't like the way he was hired and they didn't think the position was needed. He stated it was no secret they didn't like Bergin either.

Investigator asked Forrester to provide him with a copy of the City of Lula Code Enforcement Policy.

ID Data:

Doug Forrester

City Marshal

City of Lula

770-869-3801 (work)

[REDACTED] (cell)

5:57 PM

Investigator talked to Shockley and set up an interview for Friday, July 22 at 6:15 p.m.

7:13 PM

Investigator talked to Bramlett and set up an interview for Friday, July 22 at 2:00 p.m.

8:47 PM

Investigator received a copy of the City of Lula Marshals Office Policy Manual which had been approved July 30, 2021.

Date: 07/22/2022

11:30 AM

Investigator arrived at the Grizzle residence and knocked on the door. A female answered the door and Investigator asked to speak to Grizzle. The female advised he would be home in a few minutes. Investigator returned to his vehicle to wait for him.

Grizzle arrived at his residence within a few minutes. Investigator spoke to Grizzle and he immediately started talking about the truck parked on the roadway. He stated he brought it from Commerce and put a Christmas tree in the back of it. Grizzle stated the mayor and other people came and had their picture taken with it. He acknowledged it was on the right of way and he really didn't want it there; it was killing his grass. Grizzle invited Investigator to his residence. He stepped inside to get him something to drink and when he returned, he and Investigator sat on the front porch. Grizzle asked Investigator if he had a copy of his letter. Investigator advised him he had a copy with him.

Investigator provided Grizzle his name, the purpose of the visit, and told him he had watched a video of the council meeting where he first voiced his complaint. Grizzle stated that councilman had caused trouble all over the city. He stated there was a residence close by that had a white fence

you changed the structure you had to get a building permit but not if you changed the railing etc. Grizzle provided a contact number for Van Tassel.

Investigator asked Grizzle if Wood and Bramlett were in favor of code enforcement. He stated Wood didn't want it. Grizzle stated Bramlett had been on his property multiple times prior to him being elected to the council. He stated three prior administrations of mayors had been on his property, all on good terms.

Grizzle stated there was something that happened with Wood before code enforcement was sent to his residence. He stated it was no secret he didn't care for Wood. Grizzle stated he had to run him off his property. He stated when Wood first moved near him, he found him cutting his (Grizzle's) grass. Grizzle stated he didn't want Wood on his property because he knew what he had done to a fellow church member. He stated there was a black man who was very poor, on government assistance, who went to a Methodist Church. Grizzle stated the black man lived in a dilapidated house. He stated with the little money the man had and what they could raise at church they paid to have him a room built at his house that would be livable. Grizzle stated Wood was hired to do the work. He stated they didn't have a building permit office at the time and Wood didn't properly build the room. Grizzle stated Wood was paid \$6800 to do the job. He stated that was probably back in 1999 or 2000. Grizzle stated Wood took the money, put up no more than twenty 2x4's, and took the man's money. He stated he didn't care for Wood because of what he had done to the man. Investigator asked him if he personally voiced that to Wood. He stated he had not voiced that to Wood's face.

Grizzle stated he had been asked to be grand marshal during their Fourth of July parade. He stated Bramlett came up to him and told him he thought he was wrong about how he felt about Wood. Grizzle stated Bramlett told him Wood was a good guy; he stated that was in May 2022. He stated he told Bramlett he didn't care if he was friends with Wood but he wasn't going to befriend him. Grizzle stated he told Bramlett he had no use for Wood; he knew what he had done to that man with no money who didn't have the mental capacity to know better than to hire him. He stated he told Bramlett what he did to that man. Grizzle stated he could tell Bramlett didn't like it but he didn't think he would retaliate against him for it. He stated there were not a lot of code violations to find at his house and his chickens had been where they are for 22 to 23 years.

Investigator asked Grizzle what he meant when he said Forrester had committed serious violations. He stated Forrester told him he could haul him before a judge right then. Grizzle stated he couldn't do that on the first visit concerning code enforcement. He stated he (Grizzle) was a little smart about that but he didn't raise his voice nor use foul language. Grizzle stated he told him to take him before Hammond (judge) right then. He stated when Forrester came to his residence, he parked and then walked up near to where he was sitting at the pool. Grizzle stated he was with his granddaughters and it was one of the granddaughter's birthday. He stated he was offended by that because everyone knew it was his granddaughter's birthday. Investigator asked Grizzle how anyone would have known that. He stated it was on Facebook. Grizzle stated his wife knew more about that and Investigator could talk to her. He stated Forrester walked up to his fence and called his name and wanted him to come over to him. Grizzle stated he told him he was watching three kids but he gave him permission to come onto his property to talk to him. He stated he thought he came to talk to him about his truck. Grizzle explained to Investigator about a situation he had with

was written and he said it should be on the books in Lula. He said they should be going by state guidelines.

Grizzle stated he invited Forrester on his property. He stated he had the right to tell him to move the truck, which he agreed to move. Grizzle stated Forrester told him he had 14 days to move the truck; however, he thought he had 30 days to move it, legally. He stated he was trying to do it as fast as possible. Grizzle stated Forrester started talking about the chickens and when he told him that, he told him he wasn't going to move them. He stated Forrester had given him a warning and that's when he was done. Grizzle stated all he had to do was turn around and walk off of his property. He stated he could have warned him and then left, but he didn't. Grizzle stated Forrester wanted to stay and argue that he had to move the chickens. He stated he continued to tell him he was not going to move the chickens. Grizzle stated Loretta pulled it up on her phone and found where you can have chickens on residential property in Hall County. Grizzle pointed out to Investigator the fence on his property connected to the chicken pen. He stated Bergin was aware of it due to a water line issue. Investigator asked Grizzle how long ago that was and he stated about four or five years. Grizzle stated Bergin had been at his property and had seen the chicken pen; that's when he asked Forrester if he was still the city manager. He stated Forrester just looked at him. Grizzle stated he asked Forrester again if Dennis Bergin was still their city manager. Grizzle asked Investigator if that was a reasonable enough question when he was facing code enforcement telling him to move his chickens that had been there for more than 20 years. Investigator advised Grizzle that question could be taken two ways. He stated it could be taken sarcastically or are you asking the question. Grizzle agreed it could be interpreted as being sarcastic but even with that, he didn't think it was that unreasonable even if he was being sarcastic. Grizzle stated he thought that was a reasonable question and he knew people had been trying to fire Bergin. He stated Bergin had always been fair with him. Grizzle stated after he asked Forrester if Bergin was still the city manager, Forrester told him he could cite him for obstruction right then. He stated he didn't raise his voice but it scared his 12-year-old granddaughter and she was crying. Grizzle stated his point was Forrester should have left it alone after he gave him a warning. He stated even if he became belligerent, Forrester still should have been professional but he didn't get belligerent. Grizzle stated after Forrester told him he could cite him for obstruction, he stated he looked Forrester in the eye and told him he didn't have the authority. Grizzle stated obstruction for code enforcement and law enforcement was to prevent them from doing their job when they're trying to arrest someone or serve a warrant. He stated if Forrester thought he was being sarcastic, he should have scoffed at him. Grizzle stated he couldn't cite him for obstruction of justice. He stated he told Forrester it was time to leave and he told him he was not going to move the chickens.

Investigator asked Grizzle why he filed a complaint against Forrester if in his mind he knew it was Bramlett. He stated he didn't know if he could have done a formal complaint against Bramlett; he didn't know how to go about it. Grizzle stated in the meeting he mentioned recall and that was his plan for him. He stated if they didn't put him out, he was going to proceed with recall. He stated he couldn't go to his councilman because he was the one who started everything.

Investigator asked Grizzle if he thought anything could be salvaged with his relationship with code enforcement or was it tainted by the situation with Bramlett. He stated he felt like it was tainted, he didn't think it was salvageable, they were hungry for power. Grizzle stated he didn't have anything against code enforcement and he didn't want to see it abolished. He didn't think they should be

ID Data:

Robert Grizzle

Loretta Grizzle

1:50 PM

Investigator sent an email to City Manager Dennis Bergin that read: Mr. Bergin, At your convenience, please send me the dates the following individuals served in City of Lula government and their positions: Tim Allen, Milton Turner, Dennis Bergin, Jim Greer, Mordecai Wilson, and Garnet Smith. Thank you.

1:58 PM

Investigator arrived at the Bramlett residence. Bramlett met Investigator on his front porch. Investigator explained the purpose of the visit. Bramlett stated essentially the following.

Bramlett stated he wanted everybody treated fairly. He stated it came to his attention that one of the councilmembers had trash in their yard that needed to be removed. Bramlett stated he went to Forrester and took him pictures that had been sent to him. He stated he thought Forrester talked to the city manager. Bramlett stated he told Forrester earlier just because they were councilmembers, they were not above the law or above the code of Lula; they should be treated just like everyone else. He stated Forrester went and checked it out and somehow the councilmember found out from the city manager that he was the one who reported it. Bramlett stated somehow it got to the newspaper and the article read, dirty politics in the city of Lula and named him for turning in a councilmember. He stated he got it smoothed over with that councilmember. Bramlett stated there was a resident who got fined for having animals on his residential property. He stated in a committee meeting with the mayor and the city manager, he asked the city manager the status of Grizzle and the front of his property being zoned residential and the back being zoned agricultural. Bramlett stated he asked the city manager if it needed to be checked out. He stated that was as far as his part went. Bramlett stated he could only guess that Bergin told Forrester to check it out to see if there was a violation. He stated Forrester went out and there was a violation with Grizzle's truck sitting on the side of the road. Bramlett stated he didn't know what happened between Forrester and Grizzle. He stated in a meeting Grizzle started out by saying, dirty politics in Lula and called out his name. Bramlett stated Grizzle started in on Forrester and stated you could have chickens in residential property. He stated that was true but it's the number of chickens and you can't have a pen sitting on the right-of-way. Investigator asked Bramlett if that was written down and he stated yes. He stated Grizzle could have chickens on the agricultural part. Bramlett stated Grizzle said he could not talk to his councilman. He stated he was available 24/7 but Grizzle didn't call him or come see him and they lived close to each other.

Bramlett stated when Forrester went out on code violations, he gave the violator a verbal warning and a certain number of days to correct the violation. He stated during that time span, if the person started correcting the problem, he could extend the time. Bramlett stated personally, he didn't think Forrester was out of line. He stated that was his personal opinion but he wasn't there when it went

Bramlett stated Grizzle's wife commented in the meeting about someone taking pictures of her property. He stated he told her he didn't have any pictures of her property. Investigator asked Bramlett where the complaint came from on Grizzle. He stated Bergin must have sent him out there. Bramlett stated there was a committee meeting with him, the mayor, Bergin, and one other councilmember whom he thought might have been Shockley. He stated he asked in that meeting if Grizzle's property was residential or agricultural. Bramlett stated he asked Bergin why it had not been checked out if another resident had been cited and paid a fine for a similar violation. Investigator asked Bramlett if anyone had reported Grizzle to him. He stated no. Bramlett stated according to their city charter anyone including a councilmember could make a report to code enforcement.

Investigator asked Bramlett if he had ever taken any pictures or video. He stated he had not. Bramlett stated the only pictures he had were the ones of Shockley's property. He stated the mayor and Patti got out every Saturday and rode the whole city of Lula and looked for violations. Bramlett stated he wasn't aware of them taking pictures of any other properties. He stated he had been told that he and Wood rode around and took pictures but that was a lie. Bramlett stated that came out in the meeting where Grizzle complained. He stated he was friends with Wood before he ran for city council. Bramlett stated no one was going to tell him with whom he could be friends. He stated when he was elected to the council, Wood introduced him to someone and said "this is my new councilman". Bramlett stated he corrected him and told him he was a councilman of his district. He stated he didn't play favorites.

Investigator asked Bramlett if someone had reported that he took pictures of Grizzle's property or he and Wood had taken pictures, would it be true. He stated that was a lie. Bramlett stated he had never been in Wood's vehicle and Wood had only been in his vehicle one time which was before he was a councilman.

Investigator asked Bramlett if he was aware of any other properties in Lula that were in violation concerning animals. He stated he wasn't aware of any because he hasn't had a chance to ride around Lula. Investigator asked Bramlett his thoughts about Grizzle stating he had had his chickens in that exact spot for 20+ years. He stated he didn't care, forget about the chickens. Bramlett stated the pen he built was in violation, the swimming pool was in violation, and his fence was on the city water line.

Investigator asked Bramlett if the code violations he had talked about were written down. He stated there was an amendment to their charter that he thought addressed code violations. Bramlett stated he had asked Bergin for a copy of their codes. He told him they were working on them. Investigator asked Bramlett if there were any provisions for being grandfathered in. He stated Bergin told him there was no such thing as being grandfathered in.

ID Data:

Gene Bramlett

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

not do anything else until the inspector told him what was wrong, if there was anything wrong. Van Tassel stated he was told the inspector would be at his residence early the next day. He stated he waited all morning until noon and the inspector never showed up at his residence. Van Tassel stated he had to leave and run errands for his company and when he got back to his residence the inspector had been there and signed off as the work being final. He stated he felt that he had been strong-armed into getting a permit.

Van Tassel stated he felt the city should give him his money back. Investigator asked Van Tassel if he thought someone complained on him or Forrester just showed up at his residence. He stated he felt Forrester just showed up. Van Tassel stated Grizzle told him Wood and others were riding around taking pictures because they were not getting work to do in Lula. He stated Kenneth Griffin, who is friends with Forrester, told him Forrester would never come out unless someone had complained.

Van Tassel stated at the workshop meeting, he asked Bergin if he could get his money back. He stated he told him he would look into it.

ID Data:

Tim Van Tassel

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

4:51 PM

Investigator received the following response from Bergin:

Tim Allen	1998 to 2004 Mayor
Milton Turner	1996 to 2018 Mayor and Council Member
Dennis Bergin	2004 to present / City Manager
Jim Greer	2018 to 2022 / Mayor
Mordecai Wilson	2000 to 2022 / Council Member
Garnet Smith	2014 to present / Council Member

6:16 PM

Investigator met Juanita Denise Shockley at Napoli's Pizza, 6018 Athens Street, Lula. Investigator explained the purpose of the contact. Shockley stated essentially the following.

Shockley stated she had no firsthand knowledge about the complaint Grizzle made against Forrester. She stated the first time she heard anything about it was during a meeting, Monday, July 18. Shockley stated she was forwarded a copy of the letter that was sent to the city attorney on July 15 by Bergin.

Investigator advised Shockley he had been told someone reported her to code enforcement. She stated they had a council meeting on June 13. Shockley stated she had stopped by city hall to get her papers before the meeting that evening. She stated Bergin pulled her aside and told her she had been reported for a code violation. Shockley stated during the conversation she asked who reported her and she was told it was Bramlett. She stated it was her understanding Bramlett came into the office and jumped on Forrester for not doing his job and he should have already written her a

Shockley stated she lived on Shockley Road and it was not a heavily traveled road. She stated while she talked to Bramlett and Thomas, Thomas told her the property had been like that for six months. Shockley stated that told her he had been looking at her property for a long time. She stated she felt like since they worked together there should have been some type of common courtesy where they came to her and expressed their concern instead of the manner in which they approached it to keep it from becoming awkward. Shockley stated the Sunday prior, she saw Patti at a gas station and her story was totally different from everything she had been told. She stated Patti told her there was a washer and dryer that had not been hauled off. Shockley stated Patti told her she had taken a picture of the washer and dryer and sent it to Wood because he had a friend who needed money and she thought she (Shockley) wouldn't mind. She stated during her conversation with Bramlett and Thomas, that explanation was never offered. Shockley stated Patti told her at least she got her yard cleaned up. She stated Patti told her the article in the paper didn't get much attention. Shockley stated Patti told her when she took the picture, that was the first time she had been down her road. She stated she thought that was odd because her husband had told her it had been there for six months.

Investigator asked Shockley if Forrester visited her property. She stated he rode out to her property before the Monday when she found out about it. Shockley stated he took pictures also. She stated after the meeting on Monday, she talked to Forrester and she told him she didn't have any hard feelings toward him because he had a job to do. Shockley stated Forrester told her there was more to it and he said he was thinking about getting legal representation for himself. She stated Forrester told her it was probably better they didn't have any more conversation about it at that time.

Shockley stated Bergin told her Bramlett and Thomas got really upset about the article in the newspaper and in their eyes, they thought Forrester had gone to the newspaper. She stated Bramlett, Thomas, and Patti went to city hall and they were going to Bergin about Forrester and confront him but Forrester was out to lunch. Shockley stated she told the office personnel that Wood was the one who talked to the paper; he told her he had. She stated her husband caught Conner, the person who wrote the article, on their property on Saturday after the council meeting taking pictures. Shockley stated her husband called the law but he left before they got there.

Shockley stated one of her neighbors, Eddie Medlock, told her Forrester had been ugly to him. She stated she didn't really know any of the details, if Forrester was defending himself; he had never come across that way towards her. Shockley stated she didn't know how he was with other people. She stated Medlock's shop burned several years ago and he had a lot of stuff to clean up. Shockley stated she didn't know if he had received a fine but she knew Forrester had been to his property several times. Shockley stated she was told Patti had been caught going through some of Forrester's court records when his office was at city hall. She stated they moved Forrester to another building to prevent her from going through his records. Shockley stated it was her understanding from various employees, Patti tried to tell them how to do their jobs.

Shockley stated she had called Attorney Homans and told him about the pictures and who had sent them. Investigator showed Shockley a copy of Grizzle's formal complaint. She stated she knew he had filed a formal complaint but she hadn't read it. Shockley read the complaint. She stated Bramlett had complained about Grizzle's chickens during a Street Committee meeting on July 5. Shockley stated she, Bramlett, Bergin, and Thomas were in attendance. She stated Bergin said that

Investigator sent an email to Smith at lulaga7@outlook.com that read: Mr. Smith, As you probably know, I've been hired to conduct an internal investigation concerning the complaint filed by Robert Grizzle against Doug Forrester. I would like to meet you sometime Thursday, August 4. Can you advise me when you might be available or call me on my cell phone number listed below to set up a time to meet? Thank you.

9:35 AM

Investigator dialed telephone number [REDACTED] to talk to Felton Wood. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

9:37 AM

Investigator dialed telephone number [REDACTED] to talk to Garnett Smith. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

9:39 AM

Investigator sent a text message to [REDACTED] that read: Please call Mike Rundles, private investigator, ref investigation in Lula.

9:40 AM

Investigator sent a text message to [REDACTED] that read: Please call Mike Rundles, private investigator, ref investigation in Lula.

10:43 AM

Investigator received a telephone call from [REDACTED]. The caller identified himself as Wood. Investigator explained the purpose of the contact. Wood stated essentially the following.

Wood stated he didn't think Bergin should have the power to tell the Marshal (Forrester) what to do. He stated he was with someone who had problems with Forrester and he handed the phone to Robert Williams. Williams stated he had called and complained on his neighbors for having too many cars at their residence and they blocked the road. He stated Forrester investigated the complaint and issued a citation; however, he told them who had complained on them. Williams stated he wanted to talk to Investigator and he would be available on his next off days which were August 18 and 19. Williams provided his contact information: Robert Williams, [REDACTED], Lula; [REDACTED]. He stated as a result of Forrester telling who had made the complaint, he received threats on Facebook.

Wood stated he was going to call his lawyer, Lance Crawford, and have him meet with him and Investigator and record their conversation. He stated he was going to provide information that Investigator and the city needed to act on. Wood stated he didn't mind having a city marshal in Lula and the city needed to work out him having arrest powers. He stated the City of Lula would be better off without the city manager, Bergin. Wood stated Bergin had opened the mail addressed to the mayor. He stated Thomas and Patti took pictures of Shockley's property and sent them to him and they sent them to Bramlett too. Wood stated Bergin had stolen from White County and he was banned from the county in 2003. He stated Bergin got kicked out of Flowery Branch and Winder.

Investigator explained the purpose of the interview. Wood stated he had no knowledge of the complaint from Grizzle against Forrester until he watched it (council meeting) on Facebook.

Investigator advised Wood there were comments made during the council meeting that he and Bramlett rode around town together and took pictures of the Grizzle property. Wood stated that was false. He stated he was aware of complaints that were made about him and Bramlett riding around together but he hasn't ridden with Bramlett nor has he taken pictures.

Investigator asked Wood if he had taken any pictures of Shockley's property. He stated no. Investigator asked Wood if any pictures had been sent to him. He stated yes. Investigator asked Wood who sent them. He stated Patti Thomas and the mayor, Joe Thomas sent them. Investigator asked Wood what the pictures depicted. He stated they showed a dilapidated building and junk beside the road and a washing machine and dryer. Wood stated he called Shockley and asked her what was going on. He told her he had pictures of her stuff that had been sent to him from Patti. Wood stated he sent the pictures to Shockley. Investigator asked Wood why they sent the pictures to him instead of making a complaint, if it was warranted. He stated he didn't know but they knew he pushed issues around town with the city council. Wood stated he wanted Lula cleaned up such as abandoned houses, debris laying around that caused snakes, etc. He stated Lula passed an ordinance and they had a code enforcement officer who did a terrific job. Investigator asked Wood if he sent the pictures to anyone else. He stated no; he only sent them to Shockley and he told her who sent them to him.

Investigator asked Wood if he had ever said anything derogatory about Shockley on Facebook. He stated no; the only thing he put on Facebook was about dilapidated parks and she sat on that committee. Wood stated he had been trying for six months to get the parks fixed up. He stated he had investors from Texas and Lula who wanted to go in together and fix up the concession stands in the parks. Wood stated Shockley told him she wasn't going to vote on anything.

Wood stated he wanted to know where the grant money was to fix the parks.

Investigator asked Wood where he got his information about the council going to be served with civil papers concerning a traffic accident that happened prior to the new mayor and councilmembers being elected and advising Shockley in advance. He stated he didn't know; he didn't recall anything about it.

Investigator asked Wood if he knew of any past history that might have led up to Grizzle filing his complaint against Forrester. He stated Grizzle had so much information on Bergin in Flowery Branch. Wood stated Grizzle commented in the council meeting that Bergin came and visited him often.

Investigator asked Wood if he built a room for a black/male who was homeless and he hired him to do the work; the cost was about \$6800. He stated he didn't recall it.

Investigator asked Wood if he was aware Grizzle had chickens at this property. He stated he had seen them from the road; they were on the right-of-way. Wood stated he had lived in Lula, most recently for about three to four years, and to the best of his knowledge the chickens had been there

Felton Wood
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Attorney Lance Crawford

Investigator asked Wood, with the agreement of Mr. Crawford, to send him the pictures he received from Patti. Wood tried to find the pictures while Investigator waited; however, after several minutes he was unable to find them. He stated he would send the pictures to Investigator later that evening.

Investigator asked Wood if he had any disagreement with Grizzle in the past over any type of grass cutting. He stated no; he lived five houses down from him and his son was four houses down from him.

3:47 PM

Investigator dialed telephone number [REDACTED] to talk to Thomas. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for him to return the call.

3:49 PM

Investigator dialed telephone number [REDACTED] to talk to Smith. The call went straight to voicemail. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

4:14 PM

Investigator talked to Thomas. He agreed to meet Investigator at city hall.

4:20 PM

Investigator met Thomas at city hall. Investigator explained the purpose of the meeting. He stated essentially the following.

Investigator asked Thomas if he had any knowledge about the complaint Grizzle filed against Forrester. He stated his first knowledge of the complaint was when Grizzle presented it in the council meeting. Investigator advised Thomas there was a complaint about Grizzle having a truck parked on the right-of-way, having chickens at his residence, and having a pool all in violation of their codes. Investigator asked Thomas if he had ever had his picture taken at the truck. He stated he had taken his wife's picture at the truck but he didn't think his picture had been taken at it. Thomas stated the truck had been parked in the same location since the fall of 2021. Investigator asked Thomas if there was an issue with the truck, why wasn't it addressed last year. He stated he didn't know there was an issue with truck and he didn't have an issue with the truck. Thomas stated he didn't know if it was a code violation. He stated he considered it decorative yard art. Thomas stated he wasn't familiar with the code; the code could say it was a violation not to have a tag on it or being inoperative but he didn't know for sure. He stated Grizzle told him if he had to, he could make it operatable. Investigator asked Thomas whose responsibility it was to know if it was a code violation. He stated it was the code enforcement officers responsibility.

thought he would turn her in but he didn't. Wood stated things in Lula needed to be cleaned up and the old click needed to stop.

Investigator asked Wood if he and Patti had any conversations and/or texts about the pictures she sent him. He stated they communicated via Facebook messenger.

Wood stated Conner, with a newspaper in Gainesville, contacted him about the parks in Lula. He stated he met Conner under the assumption he was looking at the parks in Lula. Wood stated Conner asked him about Shockley. He stated he provided him a copy of the pictures he was sent. Wood stated Conner published an article about dirty politics in Lula and he didn't mention anything about the parks which he supposedly was interested in.

ID Data:

Felton Wood

(see previous)

7:57 PM

Investigator received another telephone call from Wood. He stated he got a chipper and he was going to clean out his property. Wood stated Thomas, Shockley, and Patti knew what he was doing. He stated Bergin came and opened his son's mailbox. He stated he wrote a letter to Thomas and addressed the issue. Investigator asked Wood why Bergin opened the mailbox. He stated he wanted to know who was at that address and who was getting mail there. Wood stated he thought Bergin wanted to write them up for trimming the trees and cleaning everything up. He stated if there was an ordinance that stated he couldn't trim on his property and his son's property, Forrester should have come to see them. Wood stated Bergin also opened mail at city hall addressed to Thomas. He stated Thomas got upset about it and asked Bergin why he opened his mail. Wood stated Bergin told Thomas he had always done it in the past.

Wood stated he heard from a city councilman that Forrester said he had to treat councilmembers differently than other citizens in Lula. He stated he asked all the councilmembers, at a meeting, if they were above the law and they stated no. Wood stated maybe that was why Patti and Thomas went and took pictures of Shockley's property. He stated Patti wanted the job over the parks and downtown development but she didn't get the job. Wood stated Patti started to run for city council but she dropped out because people claimed it was a conflict of interest and that pissed her and Thomas off. He stated Thomas decided to run for mayor. Wood stated he told Thomas if he won, he was supposed to get rid of Bergin. He stated Thomas told him he would but he hadn't done anything about it. Wood stated Thomas ran his mouth to him, Bramlett, and everyone else about what he was going to do but he doesn't do it.

Wood stated Patti wrote a letter and asked him to post it. He stated the letter addressed the need for Thomas to be a full-time mayor. Wood sent Investigator a copy of the letter.

ID Data:

Felton Wood

(see previous)

Investigator asked Bergin if Grizzle worked with him and the city concerning a city water line that was on his property. He stated the water line had been there long before Grizzle's property was developed. Investigator advised Bergin a question had been raised as to whether the water line was on city property or Grizzle's property. Bergin stated Grizzle put up a fence and he (Bergin) cautioned him about its location and Grizzle contended the water line was on his property. He stated Grizzle was cooperative. Bergin told him if the water line broke they would have to come in and they would take whatever was in the way, out of the way, and make the needed repair. He stated there would be no way to show exactly whether or not the water line was on Grizzle's property without a survey. Investigator asked Bergin while he was at Grizzle's property concerning the water line issue, did he see the chickens. He stated he didn't remember. Investigator asked Bergin if Grizzle's fence was on his property or on the right-of-way. He stated his contention was that it's on the right-of-way. Bergin stated the matter had been addressed with Grizzle and he had moved the fence at one time but he contended the fence was still on the right-of-way. He stated without a survey there would be no way to know for sure.

Investigator asked Bergin if he gave any guidance to Forrester concerning the complaint filed by Bramlett against Grizzle. He stated he didn't think Forrester talked to him about it in advance but he may have mentioned it in passing. Bergin stated he may have talked to him about whether or not it was a nuisance. He stated he didn't get involved in the matter until after the fact. Investigator asked Bergin if he thought Forrester would've looked up and determined whether there was a code violation or not. He stated he thought he would. Investigator asked Bergin if that meant Forrester knew there was a code violation concerning the chickens prior to him going to the Grizzle residence. He stated he may have researched the nuisance ordinance but Investigator would have to ask Forrester. Bergin stated the nuisance ordinance could be a catchall at times and covered a dog barking, a bad smell, etc. He stated Forrester had been put in a position where it was difficult for him to do his job. Investigator asked Bergin to explain what he meant. He stated his (Bergin) job in management was to manage their day-to-day operations and he got his guidance from the council and what they had adopted over the years through ordinances, laws, etc. He stated he had told them, if there was a problem, to bring it to him and he would make sure it was handled. Bergin stated his job on the operation side was to make sure people followed through, Forrester being an example. He stated what had happened lately, the new councilmembers were not sure of their responsibilities and what they should do. Bergin stated he didn't want to discourage their involvement; however, they have micromanaged several positions without going through him. He stated that didn't apply to all the councilmembers but some had been more prominent. Bergin stated he had talked to the councilmembers about that matter. Investigator asked Bergin to whom he was referring and he stated for the most part it had been Bramlett who had tried to micromanage positions. He stated Thomas had been guilty of the same thing at times. Bergin stated in fairness to Bramlett and Thomas they were learning. He stated they had been sent to school after they were elected to the positions to learn where their obligations fell and he also provided training to the new councilmembers and mayor where they went over ordinances, laws, etc. Bergin stated they had also been provided instructions by Attorney Homans. Investigator asked Bergin if the councilmembers had received training in ordinances. He stated yes and the ordinances were available for them to review at any time. Bergin stated the city was in the process of putting their ordinances online. He stated once they were online, they would be made accessible to the general public. Bergin stated they were about 6 to 8 months into the process which most likely would take about a year to a year and a half to accomplish. He stated if anyone wanted to look at them at the

Investigator reminded Bergin that during the council meeting where Grizzle made his complaint, his wife Loretta mentioned a 2009 ordinance and made a reference to a grandfather clause. He asked Bergin if he knew what that meant. Bergin stated it could have referred to the nuisance ordinance that had been updated, an old zoning ordinance, but he really didn't know. He stated there was no such thing as a grandfather clause when it came to local government. Bergin stated as an example, when they changed the zoning ordinance, if it no longer allowed a particular activity, they wouldn't make it retroactive. He stated if someone new came in, they would have to comply with the new ordinance.

Investigator asked Bergin if he was aware of any ordinance that would show Grizzle's chicken coop was in violation with regards to the right of way. He stated he would have to review the ordinances to make sure.

Investigator asked Bergin to explain what type of project they had with regards to Carter alley. He stated they had acquired five parcels and they were going to make additional parking for downtown and possibly build a structure there. Investigator asked Bergin if they would accept bids for the work. He stated when they got to that point, they would. Bergin stated they had done a conceptual design but no work had been started. He stated they were going to put out for bid the demolition but nothing had been done at the present time. Bergin stated there was one parcel they were going to have to condemn. Investigator asked Bergin if anyone had been promised they would get the bid/job. He stated no, you couldn't work that way.

Investigator asked Bergin, in his opinion, where the breakdown was with regards to communication. Investigator advised Bergin there were individuals who didn't think city hall was following the rules. Bergin stated perception was always the rule. He stated there were individuals who promoted things that were not true and he kept a list of things that were stated that were not true. Bergin stated unfortunately people who did those types of things were not held accountable.

Bergin stated there was a prison guard who had a traffic accident after he had dropped prisoners off. He stated the guard called him up and told him he had been rear-ended. Bergin stated he asked if anyone had been hurt and that was when he was told by the guard that he had already dropped the prisoners off. He stated he told the guard their policy was he had to be drug screened due to the accident. Bergin stated about 45 minutes after that, the guard called him and told him he had received a ticket for the accident. He stated he asked him how he got a ticket if he had been rear ended. Bergin stated that was when he found out the guard had lied about the accident. He stated the guard was taking a left-hand turn and someone hit him in the rear quarter panel, not the rear. Bergin stated there were no drug issues but the guard was dismissed because that wasn't the first time they had issues with him being forthcoming with information. He stated they had to replace the van he was driving because it was totaled and he had totaled another car previously. Bergin stated when the new council came on board, they were not sure they wanted to use prisoners. He stated they decided to continue it and they hired a guard and got a new van. Bergin stated Bramlett came in and told him (Bergin) he had been told the city was being sued and Hall County would never give them any more prisoners because their prisoners were suing the City of Lula for them getting hurt in the van and the guard had not been properly vetted. He stated he told Bramlett they were going to get to the truth of the matter and call Walt Davis, the Warden over the prisoners. He

Bramlett and Wood ride around town in a grey vehicle which she thought was Bramlett's because he has a small gray vehicle and they were taking pictures of stuff. Investigator asked Heath how many calls she had received with that particular complaint and she stated at least two.

Investigator asked Heath if she would contact Amy by phone. Heath dialed a telephone number and talked to an individual she identified as Amy. Investigator talked to Amy using Heath's speakerphone. Investigator explained the purpose of the investigation and advised her information had been received that two individuals rode around town in a gray SUV and took pictures of various property. Investigator asked Amy if she had taken the calls concerning that matter. She stated she had not taken any calls about a gray SUV. Amy asked Investigator if he was referring to Grizzle's property or other properties in Lula. She stated she personally saw a gray SUV where a man got out of the vehicle and appeared to take pictures of some property. Amy stated the individual was Felton Wood and he was an occupant of the vehicle driven by Gene Bramlett. Investigator asked the location of the property. She stated it was a house across from the ballfield. Heath stated there was a lot of growth around that particular residence. She stated she would be able to look up the address of the property. Amy advised her last name was Cole. Investigator asked Cole if she could remember when she saw Wood and Bramlett. She stated it was within one to two months ago around lunchtime.

Heath looked up the address referenced by Cole. The address was [REDACTED]. Heath stated the property was owned by Charles Briggs' mother and she passed away. She stated Briggs and Rondia Morrow lived at the residence and they had to go to court about the property. Heath stated on July 14, 2022, Forrester talked to Morrow at the residence about code violations there.

ID Data:

Teresa Heath
Assistant City Clerk
City of Lula

Amy Cole
Assistant City Clerk
Part-time
City of Lula

12:02 PM

Bergin asked Investigator if he knew how much longer the investigation would take. Investigator advised Bergin he had two more interviews and he hoped to complete them by the end of the week. Investigator stated once the interviews were completed, he would prepare a detailed report and provide the findings to Attorney Homans.

Investigator interviewed Doug Forrester at his office. Investigator asked Forrester if he had received a complaint concerning the property at [REDACTED]. Forrester checked his records to refresh his memory. He stated if he was not mistaken, that was the day Bramlett and Wood rode around town and Wood took pictures of the property. Forrester stated Wood send him the pictures and called him about the property and during the conversation he told him he and Bramlett were riding around town. Forrester stated he was advised previously by Bergin about complaints

Bramlett asked Investigator if he had talked to the mayor and if he confirmed that he had sent pictures of the Shockley property to him. Investigator advised Bramlett he had talked to the mayor and he confirmed he and Patti took pictures at Shockley's property. Bramlett stated he wanted to make sure Investigator knew he didn't send code enforcement to Grizzle's. He stated he only asked a question about his property and whether it was agricultural or residential and why he had not been checked out because another citizen had received a ticket for having horses on his property.

Investigator asked Bramlett if he was familiar with any abandoned property across from the baseball field. He stated he didn't know anything about it. Investigator advised Bramlett the property was at the corner of Cobb Street and had a fence around it. He stated he knew Thomas and Patti rode around town, wrote addresses down, and provided them to Forrester. Bramlett stated Thomas had showed him the list he had made which included Wood's address. Investigator asked Bramlett if he knew of anyone who had submitted a complaint about the property on Cobb Street. He stated he did not. Investigator asked Bramlett if someone had reported they saw him and Wood together, it would be incorrect. He stated it would be a lie.

ID Data:
Gene Bramlett
(see previous)

5:24 PM

Investigator received the following information from Bergin. Per our conversation see attached:

Also you brought up the issue of Carter Alley, and asked had there been any bids for this project, my reply was not yet, BUT for reference I had met with the Finance Committee in July and addressed the development of bids as you will see in the memo / agenda.

I understood DOUG to say he gave you or showed you the information on the building permits that you questioned.

There was one other thing worth mentioning regarding Mr. Wood, as you had brought him up in our conversation.

Were you aware that Mr. Wood had run for the Mayor's Post four years ago, and that he had to recuse himself due to his past history? I mention this because this added with all the other accusations Mr. Wood continues to promote, has probably something to do with his contempt for the city (or in this case me).

Let me know if there is anything else we can assist you with.

Dennis Bergin
City Manager
City of Lula

7:45 PM

Investigator returned Wood's telephone call. Investigator asked Wood if he was able to find the messages between him and Patti. He stated he wasn't able to find them. Investigator asked Wood if he was able to get the name of the company who reportedly had already received a bid to do work on Carter alley. He stated he had a telephone number and he would have to find it. Wood stated the driver of the company picked up a dumpster at [REDACTED] and that was who Investigator needed to talk to.

Wood stated he had talked to Keith Jones and he knew Investigator had tried to contact him. He stated he told Jones to return Investigator's call.

Investigator confirmed with Wood that he and Bramlett had never taken any pictures of the Grizzle property. He stated that was true. Investigator asked Wood if they had taken pictures of any other properties. He stated no.

Wood stated Thomas and Patti brought him a petition to put up for people to sign if they were in agreement with having a full-time mayor. He stated Thomas wanted to be the full-time mayor of Lula. Wood stated no one wanted him to be a full-time mayor. He stated Thomas was supposed to take some of the power away from Bergin but he hadn't done anything since he took office.

Investigator asked Wood why people would say they saw him and Bramlett ride around town together and they took pictures if it was not true. He stated he and Bramlett had been to the store together to get some cigarettes. Wood stated any pictures he took were of raggedy houses that needed to be torn down. Investigator asked Wood where he had taken pictures. He stated he had taken some on Rose Street. Investigator asked Wood if he had taken pictures of the house on Cobb Street. He stated he had taken pictures of the house. Investigator asked Wood what he did with the pictures and he stated he sent them to Forrester. Investigator asked Wood if he was by himself when he took the pictures. He stated yes.

ID Data:

Felton Wood

(see previous)

8:03 PM

Investigator dialed the telephone number for Jones. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

Date: 08/17/2022

8:11 PM

Investigator received a telephone call from Keith Jones. He asked Investigator what he needed from him. Investigator explained to Jones the purpose of the contacts. Jones wanted to know who hired Investigator. Investigator advised him he had been hired by the City of Lula. Jones stated he didn't know anything about the incident between Grizzle and Forrester. He stated the only information he knew was what Felton Wood had told him. Investigator advised Jones that Wood

City of Lula

2:23 PM

Investigator received a telephone call from Wood. He stated he wanted to send Investigator the rest of the letter Patti wrote about having a full-time mayor. Wood stated Thomas wasn't paid enough to be mayor and the position needed to be full-time.

Investigator advised Wood he had previously told him that he was denied a driveway permit by the City of Lula. He stated he had been denied a permit for a long time. Investigator advised Wood he had been at city hall and was provided two permits for driveways at his residence. Wood stated there was one for his driveway and one for his son's driveway. Investigator looked at the addresses and confirmed one was for Wood's residence and the other was for his son's residence. Investigator explained to Wood a permit had been issued for his driveway. Wood stated a permit was issued but they wouldn't give him a copy of it. He stated he wanted something to post at his residence to show he had a permit.

Investigator advised Wood when they had talked previously, he stated he and Bramlett had never been in a car together and had taken pictures of property in Lula. Investigator asked him if that was correct and he stated yes. Investigator advised Wood he had received information that he and Bramlett had been together and one of them had taken a picture of property in Lula. Investigator asked Wood if he sent the pictures of the residence on Cobb Street to Forrester. He stated yes. Investigator asked him if he was alone when he took the pictures and he stated yes.

ID Data:

Felton Wood
(see previous)

2:40 PM

Investigator contacted Heath. Investigator advised Heath he had a conversation with Wood about his driveway permit. In a conversation with Wood, he stated he didn't get a copy of the permit. Investigator asked Heath if they provided copies of permits to individuals. She stated they normally didn't provide copies because no one ever asked for them. Heath stated in regards to the permit on Wood's driveway, she had to make him write it out; he didn't want to do it. She stated Wood got mad and threw it in the window at her.

Investigator advised Heath one of permits had a name that wasn't legible. She stated the name was probably Rosa who is Wood's daughter. Heath stated Wood wouldn't put the permit in his name or his sons' name so he put Rosa's name on it. She stated Rosa wouldn't sign the permit because it wasn't hers so Maria, who is Wood's wife, signed it. Heath stated the other permit that had Randy Martin's name on it was issued but he sold his property to Wood's son.

Investigator asked Heath if she would contact Cole and asked her to call Investigator.

ID Data:

Teresa Heath
(see previous)

Jones, in his opinion, who was responsible for the city being lax. He stated it was the city council and Bergin's responsibility.

Jones stated Wood had a lot of frustrations with the city; some were valid and some were not. He stated in the city's defense, Wood obtained an attorney every time he had a problem. Jones stated he understood what Thomas, Grizzle, and Wood were up against. Investigator asked him to explain. He stated Lula was a small town that was beginning to expand, some residents were trying to clean up their town, and some residents had lived in Lula for a long time. Jones stated if someone complained about your property and you looked across the street and saw that another person's property was worse than yours, it would upset you. He stated a lot of people were upset with the inconsistent enforcement of code violations. Jones stated at one time they had a part-time code enforcement officer who was either a police officer in Cornelia or a code enforcement officer in Cornelia. He stated later, Forrester came on as the Marshal.

Jones stated he felt the issue with Grizzle should have been handled in a way that didn't result in him filing a complaint that resulted in an investigation. He stated he didn't think the city had been fair in their code enforcement efforts. Jones stated he felt the city council and city manager needed to think more about their citizens instead of telling the code enforcement officer to go write tickets. He stated if they continued in that manner, they would still continue to have problems. Investigator advised Jones it had to start somewhere. He stated he agreed but he didn't think it was fair, as an example, to cite someone over their grass being too tall and then a resident down the street had their grass too tall but they were not cited.

Jones stated he had had several conversations with Bramlett and Wood. He stated Wood had issues with the city, some he agreed with and some he didn't. Jones stated he didn't want to go into detail about their conversations but he felt Bramlett cared about the city. He stated he felt Bramlett wanted to be fair with everyone and he felt Wood had a good heart, but calling his attorney constantly wasn't something he would do.

Jones, as an example of the city not being fair, stated the city resurfaced part of his road which is Toombs Steet. He stated they stopped about 200 feet before it was completely resurfaced. Jones stated he inquired about why it was not completely finished. He stated he talked to Thomas, Bergin, and the council and they told him they didn't have the money to finish the job. Jones stated at one time they tried to claim Toombs Street was a private road.

Jones stated he had a friend, whose name he didn't want to mention, who told him Forrester was a fine man. He stated he respected this friend and he valued his opinion on people.

Investigator asked Jones if he was aware of any animosity between any of the councilmembers. He stated he had talked to Bramlett and Wood about the situation that involved Shockley. Jones stated he talked to Thomas prior to the interview with Investigator and he asked him if Bramlett was getting a fair shake as a councilmember. He stated his reply was, he didn't know. Jones stated they had councilmembers who had served for a long time and that was honorable.

ID Data:

Keith Jones

Williams stated about two or three years ago he put in for a new construction on his property. He stated he paid his fee and it took the city over a year to tell him no. William stated the reason cited was he had a mobile home on his property and after so many years it couldn't be moved and something else put in that spot. He stated he couldn't remember the exact reason.

ID Data:

Robert Williams

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: 08/22/2022

Investigator reviewed documents and interviews in this case in preparation for a meeting with the client.

Date: 08/23/2022

3:30 PM

Investigator met the client and provided a synopsis of the investigation and interviews. No other investigative actions were needed at that time.

END OF REPORT

(see previous)

5:57 PM

Investigator dialed the telephone number for Williams. He answered the telephone call. Investigator asked Williams if he was available to meet. He stated he had forgotten about meeting Investigator and he was about to leave to go out with his wife. Investigator asked Williams if he could provide any information he had at that time by phone. He stated essentially the following.

Williams stated he had lived in Lula for about 12 years. He stated he filed a complaint against his neighbor, about six or seven months ago, who filled up the cul-de-sac with their vehicles. Williams stated they had about eight vehicles and they constantly blocked the cul-de-sac and he was unable to turn around at times. He stated he had someone that cut his grass and they quit because they were unable to turn around due to the vehicles. Williams stated the code enforcement officer came out and his neighbor moved their vehicles into their yard. He stated his neighbor asked who complained and the code enforcement officer told it was him. Williams stated his neighbor messaged him less than 20 minutes after the code enforcement officer left and made some veiled threats. He stated there was no way the neighbor knew it was him because he had never spoken to the neighbor in the past; it had to have come from the code enforcement officer. Williams stated the neighbor started a little neighbor war and called the city on him and complained about a building on his property. He stated there was no way anyone would know about the building unless they came down his driveway which was a long driveway. Williams stated someone from the city came out to his residence and while he (Williams) one day checked his mail, he was told he never got a permit to build the shop that he had on his property which was on a concrete pad. He stated he told the guy there was no way he could have seen the building unless he came on his property plus the building was there when he purchased the property. Williams stated he was upset the code enforcement officer told his neighbor he was the one who had called on them and then they started making complaints about him.

William stated he didn't think the enforcement efforts were fair. He stated there was a residence on their road who had a lot of homeless who lived there and the city wouldn't do anything about it.

Investigator asked Williams the name of the neighbor who had all the vehicles. He stated the neighbor's name was Jennifer George. Investigator asked Williams if George told him the code enforcement officer told her who complained. He stated she messaged him and said calling the city of Lula because y'all have to use our driveway to turn around because y'all can't drive, we have a camera and she would be posting a private property sign not to use her driveway, etc. William stated the neighbor continued to park in the cul-de-sac and the city doesn't do anything about it. He stated there were five other neighbors and there was no way she would have known it was him unless the code enforcement officer told her. Investigator asked Williams if he knew the name of the city worker who came to his residence. He stated he didn't know his name but he had on a city uniform and he drove a city truck. Williams stated the worker told him he was checking meters.

Williams stated he had known Wood bring all his life and he came over and gave him an estimate for a roof repair. He stated he told Wood about the issue and that was when Wood told him he was trying to do something about it. Williams stated Wood asked him if he would talk to Investigator.

2:51 PM

Investigator received a telephone call from Cole. Investigator reviewed the information she previously provided about seeing Wood and Bramlett in a car on Cobb Street. Cole stated Wood had his back to the property when she saw him and Bramlett was in his car waiting on him.

ID Data:

Amy Cole

(see previous)

Date: 08/19/2022

9:15 AM

Investigator dialed telephone number [REDACTED] and talked to Robert Williams. Investigator asked Williams if he would be able to meet that day. Williams stated he had worked all night and asked Investigator to call him back later in the day.

12:57 PM

Investigator dialed the telephone number for Williams. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

2:27 PM

Investigator dialed the telephone number for Williams. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

5:00 PM

Investigator met Keith Jones at the Waffle House located on Highway 365 near Highway 52. Jones advised Investigator he had talked to Thomas and he let him know he was meeting Investigator to be interviewed in this case. He stated Thomas provided him basic information about the complaint filed by Grizzle and he told him to go ahead and talk to Investigator. Investigator advised Jones the purpose of the interview. Jones stated he was meeting Investigator as a citizen of Lula and not as an employee. He stated essentially the following.

Investigator asked Jones if he had any knowledge that pertained to the complaint filed by Grizzle against Forrester. He stated he didn't know anything that complaint. Investigator advised Jones he had received his name and telephone number from Wood. He stated Wood had a lot of issues with the city and he has had some issues as well.

Jones stated the city was not always consistent with code enforcement. He stated over the years that had been the number one complaint. Investigator asked Jones to elaborate on what he meant. He stated over the years the city had been very lax in regards to code enforcement. He stated there were several rundown pieces of property in town and for years there was not a lot done about it. Jones stated as far as the councilmembers and Bergin, they needed to understand this. He stated Grizzle kept his property clean. Jones stated he understood the complaint included Grizzle's truck, pool, and chickens. He stated he had chickens on his property too and if anyone questioned him about them it would upset him as well and they had been there for a long time. Investigator asked

had told him he had additional information about the City of Lula. Jones stated he went to a council meeting and expressed his concern about some safety issues and the lack of safety equipment which was needed. He stated he could site at least three incidents where safety was an issue. Jones stated he had talked to Bergin about it. He stated there were some management issues in Lula that needed to be addressed. Jones stated he preferred to meet Investigator in person and talk. He agreed to meet Investigator on Friday, August 19 at 5:00 p.m.

ID Data:

Keith Jones

Date: 08/18/2022

12:21 PM

Investigator received a telephone call from Garnet Smith. Investigator explained the purpose of the contacts. Smith stated, due to his schedule, it would be easier for him to talk to Investigator by phone instead of in person. He stated essentially the following.

Smith stated the only information he knew about Grizzle's complaint against Forrester was what he heard at the council meeting. He stated everyone heard the same thing.

Investigator asked Smith if he knew anything about people taking pictures of Shockley's property. He stated he heard about it at the meeting also. Smith then stated it may have come up at another meeting; he didn't remember. Investigator asked Smith if he knew who took the pictures. He stated it was hearsay, but he heard it was Thomas and his wife.

Investigator asked Smith how long he had been a councilmember. He stated he had been a councilmember for eight years. Investigator asked Smith, during his time as a councilmember, had anyone complained about Grizzle's chickens. He stated no, Grizzle was his neighbor. Investigator asked Smith if he knew whether or not Grizzle having chickens at his residence was a code violation. He stated to his knowledge he didn't think it was a code violation. Smith stated, from what he had been told by the city attorney, residents were allowed a certain number of chickens on their property. He stated his understanding of Georgia law there was no way to make Grizzle get rid of the chickens. Investigator asked Smith if he had fed Grizzle's chickens. He stated he had fed and watered them one time when Grizzle was on vacation.

Investigator asked Smith if he was aware of any issues with Forrester. He stated he had run into issues when he started writing citations but he felt that was expected for the job.

Investigator asked Smith if he was aware of any issues related to Felton Wood. He stated Wood had a history with the City of Lula and he was known to egg on things. Smith stated Wood was a troublemaker and he liked to stir things up.

ID Data:

Garnet Smith

Councilman

Date: 08/16/2022

11:25 AM

Investigator received the following information from Heath: Per your request, please find attached 3 driveway permits

- 1) in Rosa Wood name
- 1) in Felton Wood name
- 1) in Randy Martin name

This is all the paperwork on driveway permits you had referenced yesterday.

Teresa Heath, Assistant City Clerk
City of Lula
[REDACTED]

11:47 AM

Investigator requested the following additional information from Bergin:

I received the documents. Does demolition bids/process mean it was an explanation to the committee about how to proceed and how the process works? The project hasn't been opened for bids at this time, correct?

I talked to Doug about the property on Cobb Street and the VanTassel property.

I wasn't aware Wood ran for mayor, but I am familiar with some of his past history.

1:13 PM

Investigator received the following from Bergin:

I received the documents. Does demolition bids/process mean it was an explanation to the committee

The conversation had to do with the dates the city would control the property (est Oct 15) and planning in advance to obtain bids for demolition so we could begin once we control all of property.

about how to proceed and how the process works? **Yes, the idea was the council could take a position hopefully in Sept if the bids are back. We will have to see.**

The project hasn't been opened for bids at this time, correct? YES, the bids haven't been put out yet, hopefully before the end of the month or sooner, waiting on engineer to comment.

7:27 PM

Investigator missed a telephone call from Felton Wood.

concerning the property and the judge allowed them to put up a fence around it.

Forrester stated he opened a case on the property on July 13, 2022. He stated that was the day he made contact with the property owner. Forrester stated he talked to the property owner and wrote her a citation for a code violation. He identified the owner as Rhonda Morrow. Investigator made a copy of Forrester's file related to [REDACTED].

Investigator asked Forrester to tell what he remembered about Van Tassel. He stated on the day he dealt with Van Tassel, he rode through the neighborhood and saw new lumber on his front porch. Forrester stated he most likely called city hall and asked one of the clerks if there was a building permit for that particular address. He stated he was told there was no permit issued for that address. Forrester stated he told Van Tassel he needed to get a permit to build the porch. He stated he issued him a warning to come in and get a permit. Forrester stated Van Tassel's position was he was only making repairs and not building the porch. Forrester provided investigator a copy of his file on Van Tassel.

ID Data:
Doug Forrester
(see previous)

1:26 PM / 2:21 PM

Investigator dialed telephone number [REDACTED] to talk to Keith Jones. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

2:45 PM

Investigator dialed telephone number for Bramlett. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

2:47 PM

Investigator dialed the telephone number for Smith. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

3:58 PM

Investigator missed a return telephone call from Bramlett.

4:03 PM / 4:05 PM

Investigator dialed the telephone number for Bramlett. There was no answer.

4:15 PM

Investigator received a return telephone call from Bramlett. Investigator confirmed with Bramlett that he and Wood had not taken any pictures of the Grizzle property. Bramlett stated he had never ridden with Wood and taken any pictures anywhere. He stated he had never been in Wood's vehicle but Wood had been in his vehicle one time. Bramlett stated he and Wood went to the store together at Hwy. 365 and Hwy. 52. Investigator asked Bramlett if he and Wood had been together anywhere in Lula and took pictures. He stated no. Investigator asked Bramlett what type of vehicle he drove. He stated he had a red 1990 Ford F-150 and gray 2017 Buick Encore.

stated he asked Bramlett who made the accusation. Bergin stated Bramlett told him he would rather not say who it was that told him. He stated he told Bramlett when they called Davis, he would tell him the guard was vetted and he was post certified. Bergin stated he also told Bramlett the prisoners were dropped off prior to the accident and they were not in the van. He stated he expressed to Bramlett how frustrating it was to have rumors like that floating around and when he came to him, he wouldn't reveal from whom he received the information. Bergin stated Bramlett told him the information came from Wood.

Bergin stated on the day Loretta made her claim about someone taking pictures of her property and her grandchildren, Bramlett and Wood were riding around together taking pictures of property and there were complaints from three separate individuals about them. Investigator asked Bergin for the names of the individuals who claimed Bramlett and Wood were riding around together taking pictures of property. He stated the individuals had called city hall and made their reports. Bergin stated somebody had posted on Facebook, on August 6, "anyone notice a gray SUV driving slow past houses around Lula today taking pictures and video? If so, do you know why?" He stated the post was made by someone named Spencer Johnson.

Bergin advised Investigator, Shockley had been offered a position as a city clerk if she would step down from her counsel position. He stated it was because she wouldn't vote in favor of the mayor becoming a full-time position.

Investigator asked Bergin if Van Tassel got his money back as requested in one of the council meetings. He stated no; there was no question Van Tassel needed a permit to build his porch.

ID Data:
Dennis Bergin
City Manager
City of Lula

Bergin introduced Investigator to Teresa Heath. Investigator advised Heath that Bergin had mentioned there had been people who had called city hall and complained about people in a gray van taking pictures of property, and he thought one of the individuals was Amy. Heath stated Amy worked for the city part-time and she might have taken a call. She stated she had not taken the calls concerning the matter.

Investigator asked Heath if Felton Wood came to the city when he was putting in a driveway at his residence and he wanted to get a permit but she told him he didn't need one. She stated she did not tell him that. Investigator asked Heath to provide details of what she remembered about it. Heath stated Wood came to city hall more than a year ago and talked about him wanting to put a driveway at his residence and he talked about putting a driveway at the neighbor's residence. She stated his next-door neighbor sold his house to Wood's son. Heath stated he was told the neighbor had to get a permit for his own driveway and he had to get one for his driveway. She stated she thought Wood got a permit for his driveway. Heath stated she would try to find the records for the driveway and send them to Investigator.

Heath stated she had received calls from people who wouldn't give their name, state they had seen

present time all they had to do was make a request and they would provide them with a copy. Bergin stated most of the time he provided requested copies electronically.

Investigator asked Bergin, to his knowledge, had anyone made a complaint about Felton Wood's property. He stated Wood had a history and had moved several times throughout the city. Bergin stated Wood used to have rental properties and there had been complaints over the years. He stated he knew Wood had been before the judge on several occasions concerning code violations for his different addresses. He stated Wood had a mobile home and put it in his front yard and it remained there for almost a year before they could get him to move it.

Investigator asked Bergin to explain what happened when Wood wanted to build a driveway between his property and his son's property and he went out and marked where a pipe was to be installed. He stated, if he remembered correctly, they advised Wood he had to turn in a request to install the pipe. Bergin stated as a rule it was left up to the street committee to make decisions concerning driveway installations. He stated Wood wanted to join his driveway with his son's driveway and double its size but that wasn't something they allowed. Bergin stated it started with him trying to join his neighbor's driveway with his driveway. He stated he told Wood to have his neighbor come in and make a request. Bergin stated the neighbor never came in and eventually sold his house and Wood's son moved into the house.

Investigator asked Bergin if he looked in either Wood's or his son's mailbox after Wood had sent a letter to city hall where he complained about having a tree cut down. He stated that didn't ring a bell with him; he couldn't imagine why he would. Investigator asked Bergin if maybe he looked in the mailbox to see who lived there. He stated if the property wasn't marked and he needed to know who lived there, that would be the only reason why he would do it. Bergin stated Wood proposed either a six-inch or eight-inch pipe for his driveway but the problem was it wouldn't give the proper elevation. He stated he told him to put in a bigger pipe. Bergin stated that wasn't an unusual occurrence and to his knowledge Wood put in a larger pipe. He stated that was probably a couple of years ago.

Investigator asked Bergin if he was aware Wood requested a driveway permit from the city and an employee, Teresa, refused to issue him one and told him if anyone asked about it, she would tell them he had one. Bergin stated he wasn't familiar with that matter but Investigator could talk to Teresa about it.

Investigator asked Bergin if the city had grant money to fix the parks in Lula. He stated the city had received several grants, some of which were used to fix up the parks. Bergin stated the information concerning grants was accessible to the general public if they asked to see the information. He stated no one had ever asked any questions about grant expenditures. Investigator asked Bergin to explain their bid procedures. He stated anything at \$100,000 came in for bids but it was not uncommon to get bids on less expenditures. Bergin stated they had three bids to replace air-conditioners that were around \$15,000. He stated when they put things out for bids and they were returned, they qualify them. Bergin stated that didn't necessarily mean the lowest bidder was selected. He stated an example was they needed a sewer line and they put it out for bids and they received one bid from a company that had never built a sewer line. Bergin stated to qualify, they wanted something that was not just price only but someone with experience in that area.

Date: 08/10/2022

Investigator received a text from Wood concerning the lawsuit Investigator asked him about in their meeting on August 9. He stated Thomas did show him a piece of paper that was a lawsuit against him and it had made him mad. Wood stated it had all the names of the newly elected councilmembers on it but Bergin's name wasn't on it. He stated Bergin was the person who hired, what he (Wood) called a prisoner guard. Wood stated he called Bramlett and he told him he didn't know anything about it.

Date: 08/15/2022

9:57 AM

Investigator met Bergin at Lula City Hall for the purpose of interviewing him in this case. Investigator explained the purpose of the interview. Bergin asked Investigator if he had seen the video of the city council meeting where Grizzle complained about Forrester. Investigator advised Bergin he had seen the video. Bergin stated since the accusation had been made by Grizzle, the sooner they could resolve it would be better for the public. He stated essentially the following.

Investigator asked Bergin if he had prior knowledge that Grizzle was going to make a complaint against Forrester before the city council meeting. He stated a complaint was made and Forrester went to the Grizzle residence. Bergin stated Forrester told him basically how the conversation went between him and Grizzle. He stated he tried to stay out of it and let it take its course. Bergin stated Garnet Smith told him Grizzle had come to his house and complained about Forrester being on his property and what transpired. He stated he had not talked to Grizzle. Investigator asked Bergin if he told Forrester not to come to the meeting. He stated Forrester came to every other meeting; he may have told him not to come but he couldn't remember.

Investigator asked Bergin if Grizzle's property had been rezoned since he had lived in Lula. He stated Grizzle purchased an additional piece of property behind him which was always agricultural and the front piece was residential. Bergin stated there had been no rezoning since he (Bergin) had been working for the city which had been approximately 17 years.

Investigator asked Bergin if he knew how long Grizzle had chickens in their current location. Bergin stated according to Attorney Homans, Grizzle was allowed to have his chickens. He stated he would provide investigator a copy of the memo prepared by Attorney Homans. Investigator asked Bergin if Grizzle had chickens in their current location since he had been city manager. He stated he didn't know but why would he lie about it. Bergin stated he would provide Investigator a copy of the Nuisance Ordinance. Investigator asked Bergin why it wasn't addressed with Grizzle previously. He stated Forrester went out to residences after a complaint had been generated to see if they were in compliance. Bergin stated Bramlett had made the complaint and to his knowledge there had been no other previous complaints concerning Grizzle's chickens. He stated Bramlett went directly to Forrester with the complaint about the chickens, a truck, and the pool he had in his front yard. Bergin stated Grizzle contended the chicken coop had been there for several years.

Investigator asked Thomas if he told Grizzle after the council meeting, he didn't care about him moving the truck. He stated he told him it was his opinion it was okay. Thomas stated Grizzle told him at that time he was going to move it. He stated it was his opinion it was yard art and he didn't have a problem with it. Investigator asked Thomas who Forrester reported to. He stated he reported to Bergin; however, he felt the code enforcement should report to the mayor. Thomas stated the chain of command was established before he took office.

Investigator asked Thomas if he told Wood the councilmembers were going to be served with a lawsuit before the other council members knew about it. He stated when he got his papers, he showed them to Wood. Thomas stated that was a lapse in judgment on his part. Investigator asked Thomas the purpose in telling Wood about the papers. He stated it was for information purposes. Investigator asked Thomas if he told him as a friend or a concerned citizen. He stated he thought it was something he might be interested in knowing, just out of curiosity.

Investigator asked Thomas if he and/or his wife took pictures of Shockley's property. He stated no, they did not. Thomas stated they did take pictures of some appliances that were in her yard. He stated Wood had mentioned he was looking for some used appliances. Thomas stated he and his wife rode around town every week looking at property in Lula. He stated they did it every Sunday to see what the town looked like. Investigator asked Thomas who took the pictures. He stated his wife, Patti took them. Investigator asked Thomas if they had taken pictures of other property. He stated they had, especially looking at Christmas decorations but nothing similar to what they did at Shockley's.

Investigator advised Thomas there was a rumor he had a different motive for taking the pictures. He stated he had heard a rumor that he retaliated against Shockley because she disagreed with the suggestion he become full-time mayor of Lula. Thomas stated there was no political motive behind what they did.

Investigator asked Thomas if he knew how long Grizzle had chickens in their current location and if there had been an issue with them in the past. He stated it violated the code because the coop had to be 25 feet off the property line and his wasn't. Thomas stated it wasn't his place to address it. He stated they had a code enforcement officer and it was his job to check it out.

ID Data:

Joe Thomas

7:20 PM

Investigator received a telephone call from Wood. He talked again about the Shockley incident. Investigator asked Wood if he asked Patti and Thomas why they sent him the pictures. He stated they wouldn't give him an answer; however, he told her she sent the pictures to him and he didn't act on it but Bramlett did. Investigator asked Wood if Patti and Thomas sent the pictures to Bramlett and he stated yes. Wood was complimentary of Bramlett and his leadership for Lula. Investigator asked Wood if he told Patti and Thomas in the past he was looking for a used washer or dryer. He stated no; he could get those types of items every day. Wood stated Patti and Thomas knew he tried to push things in the right way concerning ordinances, etc. He stated maybe they

during that time. Investigator asked Wood if he knew of anyone who had complained about the chickens. He stated no. Wood stated he went to Hall County and found out about the right-of-way. Investigator asked Wood if anyone had complained to him about Grizzle's chickens. He stated Patti and Joe. Investigator asked Wood if anyone had complained to him about Grizzle's truck parked on the side of the road. He stated he didn't know he had a truck parked there until this mess and to his knowledge it was still parked there. Wood stated he hadn't complained about Grizzle's truck.

Investigator asked Wood if he had any other information he thought was relevant to the complaint filed by Grizzle against Forrester. He stated Bergin liked to stir up (unintelligible). Wood stated Forrester was a good guy. Wood stated after the council meeting being posted on Facebook, Forrester came down and looked at his driveway and did his investigation.

Investigator asked Wood to explain what happened when he went to get a permit for his driveway. He stated there was a tree on the city right-of-way and they would not cut the tree down. Wood stated the original pipe that was in the ground was a 4-inch pipe and it had been there since 1985/1987. He stated he had been trying to get a secondary driveway because he had a big truck and he couldn't get around the dangerous tree to make the turn into his driveway. Wood stated his son purchased a piece of property next door. He stated he wanted to fix his driveway and install him a driveway beside his. Wood stated he went to city hall and filled out an application and requested a permit to put a driveway in. He stated the clerk, Teresa, told him she would give him an application to fill out but they usually didn't give driveway permits but if anybody asked about it, she would tell them he got one. Wood stated Bergin came out to his property and marked where the driveway pipes needed to go. He stated he asked Bergin if he could put them together so he and his son could have a 40 ft. driveway to share. Wood stated Bergin told him no, they had to be separate. He stated he complied with Bergin's instructions.

Investigator asked Wood if there was any animosity between him and Grizzle from the past. He stated when he first met Grizzle, he lived on Barefoot Road, and he worked with Grizzle. Wood stated he had a hard time getting his money out of him for installing a roof. He stated he went to city hall and filled out paperwork to sue him but Grizzle finally paid him.

Investigator asked Wood if there was any information he wanted to share. He stated Kim Martin had threatened Forrester in the past.

Investigator asked Wood if anyone had complained about his property. He stated only Grizzle during the council meeting. Wood stated Grizzle complained about his driveway and building materials in his yard. He stated Garnet Smith complained about a building he had his front yard which was about two years ago. Wood stated he had to move his building to his back yard.

Investigator asked Wood if there was anything said in the council meeting about him that he wanted to clarify/correct. He stated he didn't have any pictures on anyone's grandkids, their chickens, or anything. Wood stated there were no pictures on his phone of the Grizzle property or their grandkids; only the pictures he was sent from Patti and Thomas about Shockley's property.

ID Data:

Wood stated they needed code enforcement in Lula but code enforcement needed to quit putting it out who made the complaints. He stated he, his family, Thomas, Patti, and Bramlett cut the bushes off the city right of way. Wood stated Bergin came to his property and opened his mailbox. He stated Forrester came to his property about his driveway pipe. Wood stated he tried to get a permit to put in a driveway pipe on his property. He stated Teresa at city hall told him they didn't give out permits to put in driveway pipe. Wood stated she told him if anyone came and asked about it, they would tell them he had a permit. He stated Forrester came to his property; he stated Bergin came out and personally marked the pipes. Wood stated he had a disagreement with the city about a tree they needed to cut down on the right of way.

Wood stated he wanted to know where the grant money was for fixing up the parks in Lula. He stated Forrester needed to do his job and stop telling people who complained on them. Wood stated he was going to be at the next meeting with his lawyer to bring up issues against Grizzle who wanted to make Forrester and Bramlett look bad. He stated his lawyer was going to get a cease-and-desist order against Grizzle.

Wood stated the city hired people to do work for the city without getting three bids as required. He stated a city worker, Keith Jones, had information to tell Investigator about Bergin. Wood stated Jones' telephone number was [REDACTED].

Wood stated he and other people in Lula wanted a full-time mayor.

ID Data:

Felton Wood
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

6:17 PM

Investigator received a telephone call from Wood. He stated next Thursday he was going to show up and talk to the Hall County Commissioners about a complaint he filed. Wood stated his compliant was for Forrester to have arrest powers and for him to have a body camera to protect himself. He stated Forrester needed his own office and not have to report to Bergin.

Wood stated he and his lawyer would meet Investigator on Tuesday, August 9, 11:30 at Stevie B's in Gainesville.

Date: 08/09/2022

11:20 AM

Investigator met Wood and his lawyer, Lance Crawford, at Steve B's Pizza Buffet, [REDACTED], Gainesville.

The interview with Wood and Mr. Crawford was recorded by Investigator and Mr. Crawford at Wood's request. The recording will speak for itself; however, below are some highlights from the interview.

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was something he would have to look into because Grizzle had a piece of property that was agricultural and a piece of property that was residential.

Shockley stated Thomas and Patti were very outspoken against code enforcement.

Shockley sent Investigator a copy of two pictures she received from Wood.

ID Data:

Juanita Denise Shockley

Date: 07/23/2022

7:25 PM

Investigator received the following reply from Bergin that read: There was no amendment to the charter regarding code enforcement or marshal services. I'll let Mr. Homans explain the process we adopted for clarity.

Dennis Bergin

City Manager

City of Lula

Date: 07/26/2022

Investigator provided an update to the client. Additional investigative actions were requested.

Date: 08/03/2022

6:41 PM

Investigator dialed telephone number [REDACTED] to talk to Felton Wood. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

6:44 PM

Investigator dialed telephone number [REDACTED] to talk to Garnett Smith. There was no answer. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

8:36 PM

Investigator dialed the telephone number for Wood. There was no answer.

8:37 PM

Investigator dialed the telephone number for Smith. There was no answer.

Date: 08/04/2022

12:27 AM

violation. Shockley stated that particular information she had received from one of the office staff but she couldn't remember exactly which one.

Shockley stated she received two text messages from Felton Wood after the meeting. She stated he sent her pictures of her property which had been taken by the mayor's wife, Patti. Shockley stated Patti took the pictures and sent them to Wood. She stated she had heard from various sources that Patti and the mayor, Thomas, told Bramlett what they had seen at her residence and asked him to go to Forrester. Shockley stated Patti may have sent them to Wood and he went to Bramlett but it could possibly have been Patti and Thomas went to Bramlett. She stated Thomas told her personally, he should have handled it himself instead of letting Bramlett do it. Shockley stated after she received the text messages from Wood, she called him. She stated Wood told her he was upset about it, and he acted like he was upset they had taken the pictures. Shockley stated Wood asked her if she needed help cleaning up her property and she told him no, she was fine. She stated she thought Wood was the one who went to the newspaper and told them what was going on. Shockley stated Wood got mad at her during their conversation.

Shockley stated there was a called budget meeting on the Wednesday prior to the council meeting. She stated the purpose of the budget meeting was to consider whether or not Thomas should be full-time and not part-time. Shockley stated she voiced opposition against a full-time position for the mayor. She stated the pictures were taken over the weekend after the Wednesday meeting and prior to the council meeting. Shockley stated she felt like the pictures were taken because of her opposition to the full-time position. She stated she told them they were not going to intimidate her into agreeing with them about the position but they told her it was just bad timing. Investigator asked Shockley who attended the budget meeting. She stated the attendees were Attorney Homans, Bergin, Thomas, Bramlett, and Garnet Smith. Shockley stated Smith wasn't in favor of making the position full time and Bergin didn't offer an opinion. She stated Bramlett was in favor of it and he was the one pushing it.

Shockley stated the following Monday after the council meeting, Bramlett approached her and asked her if they could talk. She stated he told her he didn't know how it had gotten as far as it had with it being in the newspaper and how it wound up to that extent. Shockley stated she told Bramlett when other people knew things they shouldn't know, such as people like Wood knowing, that was how things got spread. She stated she told Bramlett she had found out things from Wood that she should have been told by the council first. Investigator asked Shockley if she could provide an example of what she was referring to. She stated all the council members and Thomas had been served with civil papers concerning an accident that had happened the previous year before she was elected to office. Shockley stated she found out about the papers from Wood before they were served on them. She stated Wood had called her and told her about them. Shockley stated she called Thomas to give him a heads up and told him she had received her information from Wood. She stated Thomas told her he might have let it slip and he had told Wood. Investigator asked Shockley if there was any connection between Wood, Thomas, and Bramlett. She stated Wood helped get them elected to office. Shockley stated she was running against Patti and she dropped out to support her husband, then Wood supported her (Shockley).

Shockley stated during the meeting she had with Bramlett, she had asked Thomas to be present also. She stated during the meeting, she expressed her concerns about what had happened.

4:22 PM

Investigator requested from Bergin a copy of the amendment to the charter recently approved that addressed code enforcement.

4:26 PM

Investigator interviewed Van Tassel at [REDACTED]. Investigator explained the purpose of the visit. Van Tassel stated essentially the following.

Van Tassel stated he and Grizzle had talked briefly before the workshop meeting. He stated Grizzle was pretty upset. Van Tassel stated he (Van Tassel) had been working on his porch about two weeks prior to Forrester coming to his residence. He stated he pulled some boards up but he left the original structure except for one post. Van Tassel stated Forrester came to his residence on June 11. He stated he had started putting new spindles on his porch when Forrester arrived. Van Tassel stated Forrester told him anytime he saw new lumber he had to stop. He stated he told Forrester that was fine and asked if he could help him. Van Tassel stated Forrester started taking photographs of everything. He stated Forrester told him he thought his spindles were too far apart. Van Tassel stated he asked Forrester how far apart they needed to be. He stated Forrester told him he didn't know. Van Tassel stated Forrester told him he thought he needed to pull a permit. He stated he told Forrester he didn't think he needed to because he was working on an existing structure and it had been there for 27 years. Van Tassel stated Forrester told him he could write him a warning. He stated he told Forrester he didn't have to write him a warning; just tell him what the spacing needed to be. Van Tassel stated he asked Forrester again how far apart the spindles needed to be and Forrester told him he didn't know. He stated they went back and forth about the spindles and how far apart they needed to be. Van Tassel stated he told Forrester they could go talk to Bergin. He stated Forrester told him maybe they would have to do that. Van Tassel stated Forrester told him again he could write him a ticket and he stated at that time he started to feel threatened by Forrester. He stated Forrester told him he seemed to be a nice guy and if he wanted to work with them, they would go talk to Bergin. Van Tassel stated he went to city hall and met with Bergin and Forrester. He stated no one was upset and Forrester showed Bergin the photographs he had taken. Van Tassel stated he asked Bergin how far apart the spindles needed to be. He stated Bergin told him he didn't know. Van Tassel stated he told Bergin he was the city manager and he should know how far apart they needed to be. He stated Bergin told him they were either four or four and a quarter and they needed to call the building inspector and have her look at them and decide if he needed to pull a permit. Van Tassel stated Bergin told him not to do anymore work on his porch. He stated he told Bergin there was nothing else to do except stain it.

Van Tassel stated he did his own research and found the spindles needed to be four inches apart. He stated he had them on six so he put a spindle in between each one and made them three inches apart. Van Tassel stated at the end of their conversation, Bergin said they would get in touch with the building inspector and they would let him know the next day if he needed to pull a permit. He stated he told Bergin that was fine and he would like to talk to the inspector too. Van Tassel stated the next day he received a telephone call from Forrester who told him he was going to have to pull a permit. He stated he told Forrester he would pull a permit. Van Tassel stated he went to City Hall and purchased a permit. He stated the lady who issued the permit told him he needed to post it and

down. Bramlett stated in the meeting, Grizzle said he was for code enforcement but he wasn't now, and it was in his opinion it was because he got caught. He stated when the investigation is completed, he was going to request the city attorney have the newspaper retract their comments about him. Bramlett stated that was all he had.

Investigator asked Bramlett the name of the councilmember he reported. He stated her name was Denise Shockley. Investigator asked Bramlett who sent him pictures of Shockley's property. He stated it was the mayor's wife. Bramlett stated he went straight to Forrester, showed him the pictures, showed him who sent them to him and told him he needed to check it out. He stated that was all he did. Investigator asked Bramlett when he received the pictures from the mayor's wife. He stated it was probably about a month before Forrester went to Grizzle's. Bramlett stated he got the pictures sent to him and the next morning he took them to Forrester. Investigator asked Bramlett the mayor's wife's name. He stated her name was Patti. Bramlett stated Patti and Joe (mayor) went and took the pictures. Investigator asked Bramlett how he knew Joe was with Patti. He stated they were always together and they told him they took the pictures. Investigator asked Bramlett if he still had the pictures. He stated he had deleted them. Bramlett stated somehow, the newspaper got a copy of the pictures but they weren't published.

Bramlett stated he and Shockley sat down and talked and he told her he wasn't sorry for reporting her; he was sorry it got blown out of proportion. He stated if it had been anyone else other than a councilmember no one would've heard anything about it. Bramlett stated he didn't think Forrester had to go to Bergin; he should go out and check for violations because that was his job. He stated Grizzle talked about having him recalled and if that was what the citizens wanted, so be it. Bramlett stated he didn't feel he had done anything wrong.

Investigator asked Bramlett to elaborate on his conversation with Forrester when he took him the pictures. He stated he told Forrester he got the pictures from Patti and he showed him her phone number at the top of the pictures. Bramlett stated when he got the pictures from Patti, he texted her back and asked her whose property it was. He stated she told him it was Shockley. Bramlett stated he showed Forrester the pictures and told him if there was a violation, he needed to do his job. He stated he felt the reason he was sent pictures was because they knew he would take them to Forrester. Bramlett stated he felt he had been thrown under the bus by City Manager Bergin, the mayor, and Patty. He stated it was his opinion that if you reported something to a code enforcement officer, it shouldn't be told who reported it. Bramlett stated Shockley asked Bergin who reported her and he told her it was Bramlett.

Bramlett stated Grizzle's chicken pen and swimming pool were on the city right-of-way. He stated from the centerline of the road, 50 feet over was the right-of-way. Bramlett stated Grizzle was in violation for that. Investigator asked Bramlett how Grizzle was able to build a house and the pool where it was. He stated that was before his time. Investigator asked Bramlett if it would be fair to say, Grizzle had been allowed to have his chickens and the pool. He stated yes. Bramlett stated it was his understanding in the state of Georgia you could have three pets on residential property. He stated he didn't mind his chickens being there but they needed to be on the agricultural part of his property. Investigator asked Bramlett why the issue of the pool wasn't addressed. He stated he didn't know.

someone's patsy and he wanted to see it run the way it should be where they followed up on complaints from citizens about reasonable stuff. He stated Bramlett had been on his property many times and he hadn't said anything about the chickens until their encounter concerning Wood.

Grizzle provided Investigator a newspaper that had an article titled: Lula citizen files complaint and threatens recall. Investigator asked Grizzle if he knew if there was a number of chickens you could have on residential property. He stated there wasn't a number in Hall County. Grizzle stated in the city of Commerce there was a limit of 12. Investigator asked Grizzle if there was a specific number in the city of Lula. He stated there was no written law. He went inside and had Loretta talk to Investigator.

Investigator advised Loretta that Grizzle had mentioned she had first-hand knowledge about seeing Bramlett and Wood taking video of her property. She stated essentially the following.

Loretta stated one day last month, the kids were at the swimming pool. She stated Bramlett drove up near her residence and he had his phone up. Loretta stated that was when she got angry. She stated if her granddaughter, who had been the victim of a kidnapping, had seen Bramlett she would have gone into her PTSD mode. Loretta stated he didn't sit there long as she started walking in his direction. She stated Wood had driven by her property with his phone hanging out of the window. Loretta stated that was before Bramlett. She stated she didn't have a problem with someone filming her house but when her grandkids were outside, she considered that stalking. Investigator asked Loretta if she thought the pictures had been posted anywhere. She stated she didn't have any knowledge of them being posted and that's why she said what she did in the council meeting.

Investigator asked Loretta how people in Lula would have known about her granddaughter's birthday party. She stated she had posted it on Facebook and Thomas, who is their mailman, delivered a package to her residence that day. Loretta stated Thomas' wife also befriended her on Facebook and had wished her granddaughter a happy birthday. Investigator asked Loretta if she felt the others involved would have known about her granddaughter's birthday. She stated she didn't think Bramlett, Wood, or Forrester would have known about it.

Investigator asked Loretta if she had any other information she thought was important for him to know. Loretta stated in 2009 the code ordinance went in and the chickens had been there for over 20 years. She stated she had read where an ordinance went in but it never stated how many chickens, unless they were a nuisance. Investigator asked Loretta if it was a Hall County ordinance. She stated it was.

While Loretta was trying to find what she read about the county ordinance, Grizzle came outside and stated he was banking on Investigator being impartial. He stated he knew the brotherhood but he knew law-enforcement officers who were impartial. Investigator advised Grizzle he was impartial and if he told him something, he could take it to the bank. Investigator advised Grizzle he would do a detailed report and provide it to the city attorney. He stated the information provided by him would be in his report; however, he wouldn't tell other people he interviewed what he had said. Grizzle stated that the letter he wrote concerning his complaint went through his attorney. Investigator advised Grizzle he didn't make recommendations; he reported the facts he obtained in the investigation.

a code enforcement officer in Commerce. In that situation, he thought the code enforcement officer was threatening. Grizzle stated he didn't think anyone should enact a law against a citizen they didn't follow themselves. He stated he felt like that was what Bramlett did. Investigator asked Grizzle again about the Facebook post referring to his granddaughter's birthday. He stated he knew Thomas knew about it. Investigator asked how he knew Thomas knew about it and he said his wife would have to tell Investigator. Investigator asked Grizzle if he thought that would filter down to Bramlett or Forrester. He stated everyone knew he would not be at his residence during the daytime; he was gone during the day for work. Grizzle stated it was not uncommon for the previous code enforcement officer, Calvin, to stop by his residence and talk even after he had asked him to move his truck. He stated he thought Forrester was there about the truck but then he said there was one other thing, those chickens. Grizzle stated Forrester told him they had looked and he had a unique piece of property, part agricultural and part residential. He stated Forrester told him they wanted him to move the chickens on the agricultural part. Grizzle stated he told Forrester he wasn't going to move his chickens. He stated he wasn't defiant but he wasn't going to move his chickens; he stated they had been there for over 20 years. Grizzle stated Forrester told him all they wanted him to do was to move them to the other side of the yard and he told him he wasn't going to move them. He stated he told Forrester he had worked in the poultry business since he was 17 years of age and he could go down the street and pick up thousands of chickens. Grizzle stated he told him they wouldn't be pretty like the ones he had. He stated to Investigator, he knew he had upset Bramlett about his best friend. Grizzle stated Bramlett stood in his driveway, before he was elected, and talked down about Wood and how he wanted his property cleaned up.

Investigator asked Grizzle what it was about the chickens that turned things south because he was in agreement to move his truck. He stated the pen was nice and clean, it didn't smell, and the chickens had been there for 20 something years. Grizzle stated they had been there during previous administrations. Investigator asked Grizzle to identify city officials who had been on his property and had seen the chickens. He stated the previous mayor Tim Allen, previous mayor Milton Turner, Bergin, previous mayor Jim Greer, previous councilman Mordecai Wilson, and a current councilman Smith who had helped feed his chickens. He stated Wilson used to be the councilman in his district. Grizzle stated that was the biggest thing that caused things to go south; the chickens had been there for over 20 years.

Grizzle stated there was nothing on the books that prevented him from having chickens on his property. He stated he told the council in the meeting where he voiced his concerns, to show them anything on the books prior to July 6, 2022 at 2 p.m. where one couldn't have chickens in the city limits of Lula. Grizzle stated in Hall County, where they lived, one is allowed to have chickens. He stated in Hall County they are supposed to be housed and they suggested 50 feet off of the right-of-way but that it was impossible for him because of the size of his property. He stated it was only a suggestion, not a rule.

Grizzle stated Forrester told him he had to move his chickens. He stated they were in the sun and they walked over to a shady area. Grizzle stated he told him he wasn't going to move the chickens and he stated that was when Forrester got more belligerent. He stated Forrester told him he could take him before a judge and he told him he couldn't. Grizzle told him if he thought he could, do it. He stated he told Forrester that was his first visit. Grizzle stated on the first and second visits you're given a warning, and on the third visit you can cite someone. Investigator asked where that

and there were sofas out in front of it. Grizzle stated it was the worst looking yard in Lula and there was only one other yard in Lula that came close to looking that bad. He stated he (councilman) was their best friend. Investigator asked Grizzle who lived at the residence with the white fence. He stated, Felton Wood. Grizzle stated Wood had never been cited and he had sofas in his yard, materials thrown out in his yard, and a box truck sitting in his yard. He stated Wood rode around with a councilman. Investigator asked for the name of the councilman and he stated it was Gene Bramlett. Grizzle stated they were filming people. Investigator asked Grizzle if he had seen them filming people and he stated his wife, Loretta, had. Grizzle stated they had custody of his 12-year-old granddaughter who had been kidnapped in the past from school. Investigator asked Grizzle if he had seen any of the videos that had been taken and he stated no. He stated Bramlett would drive by their residence and Wood would be filming. Grizzle stated their concern was they might be putting video of their granddaughter on the Internet. He stated Bramlett also rode around Lula with the code enforcement officer. Grizzle stated he should have been able to go to Bramlett concerning the issue with his chickens but he couldn't because he was the one who made the complaint.

Grizzle stated he supported having a code enforcement officer. He stated they used to have a code enforcement officer, Calvin, and a woman in between them. Grizzle stated Calvin, several years ago, told him people had been complaining about his truck and he needed to move it. He stated he told Calvin he would move it which he did and he took it to his place in Commerce. Grizzle stated Forrester asked him to move the truck and he told him he would. He stated he was in favor of code enforcement. Investigator asked Grizzle why he brought the truck back. He stated he brought it back for Christmas decorations, yard art. Investigator asked who had their pictures taken with his truck. He stated the current mayor, Joe Thomas and his wife. Grizzle stated Thomas told him after the council meeting, he didn't care about him moving the truck. He told Investigator he didn't have a problem moving the truck.

Investigator asked Grizzle what he thought was the motivation behind Wood's and Bramlett's complaint. He stated he thought Bramlett and Forrester were drunk with power. Grizzle stated he thought Forrester could be a good man but he thought Wood befriended Forrester and Bramlett. He stated again they were both drunk with power and he didn't think that was something that could be corrected; they needed to lose their jobs. Grizzle stated they couldn't handle their jobs. He stated he knew Forrester and Bramlett had committed serious violations. Investigator asked Grizzle if he thought Forrester came to his residence on his own or he was directed by someone to come to his residence. He stated he knew it was Bramlett who told him what to do. Grizzle stated the lady across the street had come over and sang to the chickens, another neighbor has a rental house and he knows he didn't complain, and councilmember Garnet Smith who lived close by had fed his chickens for him when he went on vacation. He stated it was privileged information but he knew Forrester went back to the council and told Bramlett he (Grizzle) knew it was him that complained. Grizzle stated he knew Bramlett went to another councilman's house and told him he thought Grizzle would come to his house that night.

Grizzle stated he was impressed that Bergin had an investigation on the matter and he was impressed Investigator had come to talk to him. He stated that told him they were taking it seriously which they should. Grizzle stated one of his neighbors, Van Tassel, was forced to get a building permit for resurfacing his deck. He stated he (Grizzle) was a licensed contractor and if

Forrester stated when he went to see Grizzle, he made the comment that he was threatening him. He stated he recorded his conversation with Grizzle that day. Forrester stated he requested Bergin have an investigation to clear his name. He stated Bergin told him they would wait and see if Grizzle filed a formal complaint. Forrester stated he had requested the city provide him a body camera and radio for his and their protection and for his safety. He stated the request for the body camera was denied and he got a radio about a month ago. Forrester stated he purchased out of his own money a dash camera and a pocket recorder to use in his work. He stated he made Bergin aware of the purchases.

Investigator advised Forrester he had listened to the taped recording between him and Grizzle and it was apparent Grizzle had no problem with removing his truck but he was upset about having to do something with his chickens. Investigator asked Forrester if Grizzle's comment about having chickens for 20+ years under three different City of Lula administration's and some of the them visiting his residence while the chickens were there was true. Forrester stated he wasn't able to verify the information but when he worked for the City of Lula, working in a code enforcement capacity for three years, he didn't remember ever dealing with Grizzle. He stated he thought he worked as a part-time code enforcer in 2014, 2015, and 2016. Investigator asked Forrester if anyone during the three years he worked for the City of Lula complained about Grizzle and his chickens. He stated to his knowledge he didn't remember anyone making a complaint about Grizzle.

Investigator asked Forrester to explain the code enforcement violation regarding chickens on a resident's property. He stated when the issue came up about Grizzle's chickens, he went on the Hall County GIS website to see how his property was zoned. Forrester stated the back portion of Grizzle's property was zoned agricultural and the front part of his property was zoned residential. He stated he had Bergin assist him with searching their records at city hall. Forrester stated he told Grizzle that he wasn't going to cite him, he was going to give him a verbal warning and give him 14 days to take care of the truck issue and he would give him 30 days to talk to someone at City Hall to see if they could get a resolution on the chicken issue and the zoning. Forrester stated he was pretty sure he mentioned to Grizzle that residential property could have up to three chickens on it. He stated he knew he had dealt with chickens when he worked in Lula previously and the number was three. Investigator asked Forrester if Grizzle's chickens were running loose on his property or were they in a pen. He stated the chickens were in a pen next to a fence and it was a clean looking area.

Investigator asked Forrester if there were other residents in Lula who had chickens. He stated he had previously cited Felipe Marban, [REDACTED], for building a barn without a permit. He stated he possibly had chickens; however, he wasn't for sure but he knew his property was zoned residential.

Forrester stated Bramlett and Woods rode around town the previous week and took pictures of property they wanted checked and sent them to him. He stated they were nuisance type violations.

Forrester provided Investigator a copy of the most recent files he had on Tim Williams and Felipe Marban for his review.

warning to the citizen concerning his truck. He stated the citizen told him if he had to get rid of his truck then he needed to look at Grizzle too. Forrester stated the citizen's wife took a picture of Grizzle's truck and he (the citizen) showed it to him on his phone. He stated the city had some encounters with Grizzle in the past and he knew most likely it would be a tough situation so he went to Bergin and told him about the complaint he had received concerning Grizzle's truck. Forrester stated he told Bergin he was going to sit on it for a while because of the way he had received the complaint from the citizen who provided the information. He stated the citizen who provided the information was ticked off because he had to go to court. Investigator asked Forrester the name of the citizen. He stated his name was Tim Williams. Forrester stated he never did follow up on the complaint but he did go by and take two photographs (previously mentioned) in anticipation of more than likely paying a visit to the Grizzle residence. He stated Bramlett made a similar complaint about Grizzle's truck but he didn't know where he got his information. Forrester stated Bramlett wanted him to address the complaint about the truck since it had the appearance of being inoperable, it didn't have a tag, and it sat on city right-of-way. He stated Bramlett also asked him if he had ever noticed chickens at Grizzle's. Forrester told him he had never noticed the chickens. He stated Bramlett commented that he had a lot of chickens. Forrester stated he didn't know how Bramlett saw the chickens but he must've checked and questioned whether he was zoned to have chickens. He stated Bramlett also mentioned a swimming pool at Grizzle's. He stated he didn't even address the above ground swimming pool when he went to Grizzle's residence. Forrester stated Bramlett lived down the road from Grizzle. He stated he did get some guidance from Bergin about what the regulations were concerning the swimming pool, etc. Forrester stated he didn't feel the need to address the swimming pool. He stated he asked Bergin to assist him in looking up Grizzle's property to see how it was zoned. Forrester stated it was determined Grizzle had two lots, one agricultural and the other residential. He stated there was another resident not far from Grizzle who had been cited for building a big barn. Forrester stated he took that citizen to court but the judge wouldn't rule on the zoning matter concerning animals he had on his property.

Investigator asked Forrester if he was at the meeting when Grizzle made his complaint. He stated he usually attended the meetings; however, he was advised by Bergin he did not need to be there because there might be some fireworks that night. Forrester stated apparently Bergin had gotten word that Grizzle was going to complain about him.

Forrester explained some of the history with Williams. He stated someone at city hall told him Williams had his truck for sale. He stated Williams wanted to use his truck for yard art, like Grizzle, but when he was cited, he took that to mean he needed to sell his truck.

Forrester stated sometime after Williams received a citation on another matter, he came to city hall and asked to speak with him privately. He stated Williams pulled out his phone and showed him a picture of Grizzle's truck. Forrester stated Williams said he made him get rid of his truck and he asked him if he had ever seen the truck in the picture. Forrester told him he had seen it. He stated he (Forrester) had already dealt with the resident directly across from Grizzle about a truck and he knew eventually he would have to deal with Grizzle. Forrester stated Williams said again, if they were going to make him get rid of his truck, he needed to make Grizzle get rid of his truck. He stated Williams told him he didn't know where the guy lived; his wife took the picture. Forrester stated he went to Bergin a couple of days later and told him about the complaint he got from

wasn't being ugly. Grizzle stated he knew it wasn't Forrester's fault. He stated if it took that to keep his chickens, so be it. Grizzle stated he knew political people.

7) Forrester stated he was there trying to do his job. Grizzle stated he knew it was bullshit. He stated if having code enforcement meant picking on people; he had his chickens for 27 years.

8) Forrester stated he could have taken a different approach and wrote him a citation and let him see the judge.

9) Grizzle told Forrester about a water meter / line that belonged to the city but was on his property. He stated he worked with the city and let them put it on his property.

10) Forrester advised Grizzle the approach he wanted to take and asked him to work with him. He stated he didn't want to do anymore that day than a verbal. He asked him if he gave him two weeks if that would help him with the truck issue. Grizzle agreed to do something with the truck. He stated the chickens were an issue and he asked Forrester what he proposed with them. Grizzle told Forrester he knew he was in a difficult way. He continued to talk and said he could have a sea of chickens on his agricultural side. Forrester stated if he could prove it was agricultural, that issue would go away. Grizzle stated it was agricultural when he bought it but they redistricted the property. Forrester advised Grizzle he would give him 30 days to work toward something out on the chickens.

11) Grizzle asked Forrester if Dennis Bergin told him to come to his residence; he was the city manager. Forrester stated to Grizzle they needed to back up and start over. He asked Grizzle if he was going to let him do his job or was he going to obstruct him from doing his job. He told Grizzle if he continued to obstruct him, it was going to be different. Grizzle stated he felt he was being threatened by an official. Forrester told him he was not threatening him. Grizzle told him he took that as a threat. He told Forrester he didn't have the right to come on his property without his permission. The conversation ended.

Date: 07/21/2022

12:29 PM

Investigator dialed telephone number 770-869-3801, Lula City Hall, to talk to Doug Forrester. The person who answered the telephone call transferred Investigator to Forrester's voicemail. Investigator left a message for him to return the telephone call.

2:15 PM

Investigator arrived at Lula City Hall, 6055 Main Street, Lula. Investigator asked to speak to Forrester. The clerk contacted Forrester and he wanted to know the nature of Investigator's visit. Investigator provided the information. Forrester advised the clerk he was at lunch and he would meet Investigator in approximately 20-25 minutes.

The clerk provided Investigator telephone numbers for the mayor and councilmembers: Mayor Joe Thomas, [REDACTED], Councilmember Denise Shockley, [REDACTED], Councilmember Gen Bramlett, [REDACTED], and Councilmember Garnet Smith, [REDACTED].

2:35 PM

Investigator arrived at [REDACTED] to talk to VanTassel. There was no one home.

Investigator conducted research and found a possible telephone number for Grizzle which was [REDACTED].

7:01 PM

Investigator dialed telephone number [REDACTED]. A male answered the telephone call and acknowledged he was Grizzle. Investigator explained the purpose of the contact. Grizzle stated he was having a procedure on his back on Thursday, July 21 and he most likely wouldn't be available for an interview until late in the evening. Investigator advised Grizzle he would rather meet him on Friday to ensure he had fully recovered from his procedure.

8:44 PM

Investigator sent an email to the provided email address of Gene Bramlett, Lula City Council Member that read: Mr. Bramlett, As you probably know, I've been hired to conduct an internal investigation concerning the complaint filed by Robert Grizzle against Doug Forrester. I would like to meet you sometime tomorrow, Thursday, July 21, in Lula. Can you advise me when you might be available or call me on my cell phone number listed below to set up a time to meet? Thank you.

Investigator reviewed a video recording of the Public Hearing & Lula City Council Work Session, dated July 11, 2022. Robert Grizzle spoke to the mayor and councilmembers. He stated he had lived at his present address, [REDACTED] for about 27 years. He outlined grievances he had concerning Doug Forrester, Code Enforcement Officer. Grizzle stated essentially the following.

- 1) He stated Forrester came to his house on his granddaughter's birthday.
- 2) He stated Forrester wanted him to leave them in the pool by themselves.
- 3) He stated he was for code enforcement but without government overrun.
- 4) He stated Forrester asked him to move a truck parked in front of his residence which he had no problem doing and he admitted was not in compliance (he directed that comment to and called his name, Gene Bramlett).
- 5) He stated Forrester had a problem with his chickens (he directed that comment to and called his name, Gene Bramlett). He stated chickens were allowed on residential property and his had been there for over 25 years and they had code enforcement for most of those years. He noted several counties and cities in GA that allowed chickens on residential property. He called the names of city officials who had been to his residence concerning code enforcement matters but none of them complained about his chickens. He stated his neighbors didn't have a problem with his chickens. He stated they had been there through three administrations in Lula and no one had a problem with his chickens.
- 6) He stated his next-door neighbor had the worst yard in Lula but code enforcement had not been to their property because they were friends of Councilman Bramlett.
- 7) He stated other residents had problems with Councilman Bramlett.
- 8) He stated he asked Forrester a question and he was threatened with obstruction of justice. He stated Forrester told him he didn't have to give him time to do anything; he could cite him and bring him before a judge. He stated he had dealt with code enforcement in other areas and people were allowed to correct the issue first.

insinuated that code enforcement was being implemented improperly and provided Inv. Rundles with a newspaper article about the complaint Grizzle filed and explained his comments during the July 6 Council meeting about the code enforcement complaint involving Denise's property.

Other witnesses addressed various situations within the City, and many witness statements regarding an issue directly contradict other witness statements regarding that issue, including who initiated the complaint against Grizzle. You should review the statements within the report regarding contradictions.

Grizzle's written complaint asserts that Doug was "threatening" and that Doug's actions constituted "conduct not becoming of an officer", which implicates a City personnel policy – "Abusive conduct toward a fellow employee, City official or member of the public" – and a Marshal's Office Standard of Conduct – "Employees shall be courteous and professional in their association with members of the public and other agency members".

I recommend finding no violation of either policy. Grizzle acknowledges that his comments about Doug were affected by his dislike for Gene and that he blames Gene "for starting everything" and labels Doug as Gene's "patsy". The details the Grizzles provide, Doug's recording of the interaction, and Doug's statement reveal that Doug's interaction with the Grizzles on July 6 does not violate the City's policies and that Doug acted professionally and properly.

The City has experienced or is experiencing growing pains associated with hiring a full-time code enforcement officer. Accusations and rumors abound about how and why code enforcement proceeds. A perception gleaned from the witness statements is that Gene and Felton spearhead most code enforcement. Felton's comments contradict other witnesses about many issues related to code enforcement and other City issues that Felton reported to the Investigator, but his role, if any, should be explained to each of the elected officials, Dennis, and Doug. Statements from witnesses other than Felton indicate that he is a friend to many of you and other witnesses and is an active and interested City resident. If he has been delegated any authority formally or informally, then that information should be shared.

You should review policies and other options to improve communication between Mayor, Council Members, and City employees so that rumors and innuendo are timely addressed.

cc: Dennis Bergin

Joey
