

Caleb May's responses to some of the specific allegations in the Library's recent filing are as follows:

Allegation:

"...Plaintiff did not know how to use the Library catalog system, run the circulation desk, or perform jobs of Library employees." (P.4 of 22)

Response:

This statement is false as I do know how to run the catalog system, the circulation desk and perform duties of library employees—even though none of these tasks are a part of my regular duties as library director and I only performed these tasks infrequently. It is also quite bizarre that these "concerns" were not brought to the board years ago if true.

Allegation:

"Plaintiff also had issues updating the catalog system and the library's collection of items." (P.4 of 22)

Response:

Again, this is a false statement and these tasks are not a part of my usual duties as library director.

Allegation:

"When Library staff attended conferences, individuals not associated with the Library also voiced concern to Library staff about Plaintiff's abilities as the Director of the Library." (p.4 of 22)

Response:

I can't speak directly to this, but it seems very unusual. I can't imagine library staff from other libraries 1) having any opinion regarding my "abilities as the Director," and 2) mentioning such opinions to members of my staff unsolicited.

Allegation:

"...Plaintiff could not perform as an effectual leader and was often indecisive." (p.4 of 22)

Response:

My leadership style involves seeking input from team members before making a final decision. I rarely make snap decisions and I feel that making a good decision the first time rather than making a bad snap decision that has to be reversed later is a better course of action.

Allegation:

"...showing favoritism to certain employees, not having control over certain employees' actions, not listening to employees' concerns, miscommunication, and dishonesty." (p.4 of 22)

Response:

I have always been fair to all employees and don't show favorites. It was my job to guide the work of employees and make appropriate corrections when needed, not to "control" anyone—we're all adults. I always listened to all employee concerns—when "concerns" are trivial or nitpicky of others sometimes the best course of action is to not take action. I have always striven to be direct and clear in my communication and whenever someone has alerted me to the fact that they didn't understand something I have always provided appropriate clarification. I am a very honest person and never intentionally lie or mislead anyone.

Allegation:

"During employee evaluations, Plaintiff discussed his views on current political affairs and the COVID-19 pandemic." (p.4 of 22)

Response:

Employee evaluations had not occurred during the time that we were closed to the public until the last week of May at which point several evaluations were conducted. Obviously, an important part of these evaluations was what work employees had been conducting during the work from home phase of COVID-19. All employees evaluated had questions of me regarding the current orders from the Governor and local government, so I had to discuss "current political affairs" in answering these questions.

Allegation:

"Plaintiff was also critical of employees outside of their presence and he often pitted employees against each other." (p.4 of 22)

Response:

The only time that I discussed or was "critical" of employees was in confidential conversations with my assistant director (who acts as our HR manager. I never "pitted employees against each other," at times I did, however, encourage employees who were having inter-personal difficulties to talk with each other and work things out.

Allegation:

"...Plaintiff brought his children to the library and expected Library staff to babysit them." (p.4 of 22)

Response:

This is not the case. In every instance where there was a library program that involved one or more of our children we followed the same practice of all parents—the only difference being that since I am a library employee and present in the building when programs occur, at times my wife would drop a child off for a program and run an errand knowing that if there were any issues the library staff knew that I was the parent in the building to be notified.

Allegation:

“On one occasion, Plaintiff and his spouse left the library for the day without realizing that they had forgotten one of their children at the Library.” (p.4 of 22)

Response:

On the occasion in question, one of our six children had not followed as we were walking out of the library. This was quickly discovered as we were loading our van and the missing child was retrieved before we “left” the library.

Allegation:

“...Plaintiff allowed his spouse to use his key fob to gain access to the Library through the staff-only entrance.” (p.5 of 22)

Response:

My wife never accessed the staff-only entrance to the library with my key fob without my knowledge and presence.

Allegation:

“Plaintiff’s spouse would come to the Library, monitor the staff, and then recommend to Plaintiff that he discipline them for failing to perform their job duties.” (p.5 of 22)

Response:

My wife is a library patron and on occasion she did mention to me both positive and negative feedback regarding her user experience. Never once did I “discipline” a staff member based upon any of these comments. It is possible that I may have mentioned positive and negative feedback to a staff member based upon my wife’s input as I would with feedback from any library patron.

Allegation:

“Plaintiff’s spouse would also interrupt Library meetings.” (p. 5 of 22)

Response:

Very rarely a call from my wife came in during a meeting. These instances were always very brief and only acted upon in case of an emergency.

Allegation:

“On one occasion, plaintiff discussed a groin issue with a female employee...[s]he perceived this discussion to concern Plaintiff’s penis.” (p.5 of 22)

Response:

In August of 2019 I had a testicular infection that required medical attention. In a confidential conversation with the assistant director (who acts as our HR person), I mentioned in general terms that I had a painful issue in my groin area. If any terms were

used, they would have been medical ones and I am absolutely certain that my “penis” was never mentioned. If (the assistant director) felt that this was inappropriate, she should have indicated that at the time and should have reported it to the board. (The assistant director) was present at my annual job performance meeting before the board less than two months after this event and did not mention anything to the trustees.

Allegation:

“Against the desire of Library staff, Plaintiff also recited love poems to female employees while they performed their duties and responsibilities...Plaintiff commented on the apparel and outward appearance of Library staff...He also made an unwanted remark about a female employee’s long legs.” (p.5 of 22)

Response:

I am a fan of poetry and have committed several passages to memory. Occasionally in the spirit of spontaneity and camaraderie I have recited poetry in the presence of employees. While some of these poems may be considered “love poems” noting was meant in a romantic way and no employees ever complained to me. From time to time I have mentioned to various employees of both genders when they had an article of clothing that I liked that I liked it and thought that it looked good in an encouraging way. I never received any complaints about this. I do not recall ever commenting on anyone’s “long legs.” I have previously commented on the allegation that I frequently referred to the Audubon Owl Statue as the “horny hooters.” This was an inside joke amongst staff and was actually begun many years prior to my time at the library by another employee who is still on staff. I never used the comment with members of the public.

Allegation:

“Prior to one meeting [of the NAACP at the Library], Plaintiff approached (an African American employee) and asked her ‘What do y’all like to be called: Black, Negro, or African American.’”(p.5 of 22)

Response:

This conversation was several years ago when I was asked for the first time to speak to the NAACP. Having never addressed an African American audience in this type of setting before, I wanted to be prepared. I am not originally from the south and don’t use the phrase “y’all” and certainly would not have used it in this instance. I simply asked (the employee) if she preferred the terminology of “Black” or “African American,” I mentioned to her that when I was in grade school I was told that “Negro” was the proper word, but that I knew that had fallen out of favor long ago. If (the employee) felt that this conversation was inappropriate, she should have reported it back then as I have had several job evaluations since.

Allegation:

“On another occasion, Plaintiff went to a different African American employee’s office and, without provocation, started a conversation by stating, “well, unfortunately my family owned slaves.”(p. 5-6 of 22)

Response:

One of my hobbies is genealogy and family history research. On a couple of instances I have had conversations with an African American employee regarding race relations and in the course of these conversations I recall on one occasion mentioning that since many of my ancestors immigrated to the U.S. after the abolition of slavery, I didn’t think any of my ancestors owned slaves.

On another conversation I recall mentioning that contrary to my previous belief that none of my ancestors owned slaves, I had since discovered that some did. As I have mentioned before, the “nagger” joke is not mine and I did not tell it to library staff. My grandfather told a different joke that contained the phrase, “no, my wife’s not a big nagger, she’s a little white girl.” I mentioned this joke to (the assistant director) in a confidential conversation while I was grieving the recent death of my grandfather and how much things had changed regarding race relations since he was young. My grandfather passed in August of 2018. If this conversation was inappropriate, (the assistant director) should have reported it then. I have had two job evaluations with the trustees since then.

Allegation:

“Despite the workforce tension, Plaintiff approached an African American employee to discuss his Facebook posts...the employee indicated to Plaintiff that she did not wish to discuss the Facebook posts and would prefer to continue to work; however, Plaintiff interfered with her ability to perform her job duties and continued to discuss his Facebook posts.” (p. 6 of 22)

Response:

The morning after the issue regarding the Facebook posts was brought to my attention, I was making my rounds checking in on employees in the building (especially since we were still closed to the public due to COVID-19). As soon as I saw the African American employee in question, she rudely avoided me and ignored my presence, retreating to her office. When I followed her to inquire if I had done something to offend her and asked her if this had anything to do with posts on Facebook she yelled at me saying that I shouldn’t have to ask and that she couldn’t talk to me. The only “work” that it appeared she was doing that day was gossiping with other employees.

Allegation:

“...Plaintiff turned to (an African-American employee) and randomly stated to her and (another) employee that Henderson County’s ‘old money’ came from families who farmed cash crops with slaves.”(p.6 of 22)

Response:

The job evaluation in question was with a young employee who is very innovative regarding the planning of library programs and events. We were brainstorming possible future programs when I mentioned that Henderson County had really never had an honest and open discussion regarding the fact that at one time Henderson County was the third largest slave owning county in Kentucky and that perhaps a program bringing together African Americans and the descendants of former slave owners could be helpful. While I noticed (one African American employee) look down uncomfortably (I didn't know why as I was not aware of the full extent of the Facebook post issue at that time) the other employee stayed active and engaged in the conversation and didn't seem offended or phased at all.

In general, the comment that a staff member did not "go out in public" for fear of public comments about the Facebook issue is disingenuous as members of the public were strongly discouraged from leaving their homes unnecessarily anyway due to COVID at the time.

Similarly, statements regarding the use of the library being down due to the Facebook comments are nonsensical as we were closed due to COVID-19. The other allegations, such as the breastfeeding mother, the black history month program, and that I only listened to input from white male protestants I have refuted previously.