



**ST. JOSEPH
PROBATE COURT**

Jason A. Cichowicz, Judge

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Investigation Meeting with Len Zappia

8/12/2024

Jennifer M. Coffman, Director of Human Resources

Present: Kortney Mullins, Jennifer Coffman, Clint Zalas, Len Zappia

On Monday, 8/12/2024, I, Jennifer Coffman, Director of Human Resources for the St. Joseph Probate Court, attended the interview of Len Zappia by Attorney Clint Zalas and Kortney Mullins. The meeting took place in Ms. Mullins' office on the 7th floor of the County-City Building. The following is a summary of the interview and Len Zappia's statements, based on my notes.

On Friday at 8:01am, Len Zappia received a text from his sister Cindy. It was a picture of an article, and it looked like Loris Zappia, Len's brother, had gotten the article online at 10:33pm on Thursday night.

Loris Zappia and Len Zappia do not communicate, and haven't since mid-January. Len's father-in-law is not well, so when he heard his wife's phone receiving several texts at 3:00am or 4:00am on Friday morning, he checked it. The texts were from Loris Zappia. The texts contained Facebook posts of the articles.

The text Len received from his sister was upsetting. He reiterated that his sister is a good person several times. The text read as though she was disappointed in Len, assuming that Len had a part in the article being published. Len told his niece to tell her mother that he had nothing to do with the article. Len didn't actually read the article until 1:00pm on Friday.

At 8:30 or 8:45am, Len saw Loris' partner driving away. Len got out of his car and saw Loris' cars. He went to Loris' front door and rang the doorbell. Loris then opened the door and lunged at Len. Len fell down, Loris spat on Len a couple of times while yelling and screaming in a complete rage. Len left and went to work.

When he got to his office, Len sent an email to Loris detailing the altercation. Loris sent a text to his brother, Mike, and decided to read the article. Again, he stated that he had nothing to do with the article.

Mr. Zalas asked Len if he sustained injury, and after hesitating, Len said "I don't know." Mr. Zalas asked if it was more emotional, and Len stated "sure."

Len went on to detail the relationship he had and now has with his brother. He lives across the street from Loris, and used to talk to him every day, twice per day. On Martin Luther King Jr.

Day, Len was in Florida and got a call. Loris and Mike Misch, an attorney at the law firm Loris worked at, had a big fight. Len was told that they were throwing things and the secretaries ran to get other attorneys. Loris told Len he was going to run for [Probate Court] Judge. Len stated, "don't do that, you're upset. We have other plans for you. Come to Florida and stay with us."

Loris was very upset. He told Len that he was blocking his number because Len was going to try to talk Loris out of it. Pete Agostino, who is a mentor to Loris, spent hours trying to calm Loris down in one of their homes.

Loris decided to run for Judge. Then the rumor was that Len was going to run as a Republican. Pete Agostino talked him out of it. Loris called Len and said "I appreciate what you did," and then blocked his number again.

There has never been another time in their lives that Len and Loris haven't spoken. They moved in across the street from each other 20 years ago, and Loris helped Len raise his son.

Later in the day, Cindy's husband (Len and Loris' brother-in-law) was at Loris' house. Len walked to his mailbox, and Loris came outside. Loris charged into the street yelling. Loris yells at their brother-in-law, "Get the fuck in the house." Loris then rips off his shirt and followed Len into Len's home. Loris pushed Len while they were in Len's kitchen. Len did not fall. Len told Loris to leave. Len stated that he might have told Loris he was going to call the police. Loris left. Len did not call the police.

Len stated that he wants nothing to do with politics; he just wants to retire and be done. He stated that he has not donated anything to Judge Cichowicz and he is not involved. Mike Misch does not speak to Len. He does not attend meetings with or respond to Len's professional communication.

Len went on to say that Loris yelled, "Misch owns you, Jason owns you." Len reiterated that he just wants to be left alone and retire.

Len made Judge Cichowicz and Mike Misch aware because they have families. He stated that no direct threats were made to Mr. Misch or Judge Cichowicz, but Loris' behavior caused him to make them aware. Loris was so angry, spitting and foaming at the mouth.

Mr. Zalas asked Len if he feared for his safety. Len responded, "I do, but I can take care of myself."

Mr. Zalas asked if Loris is known to be violent. Len stated that it is only when the topic of the article comes up. Len believes that is what Loris and Mike Misch fought about as well.

Mr. Zalas asked Len if any official report was made. Len said no, but he will have to call the police and make a report if it happens again.

Mr. Zalas asked if Loris was foaming at the mouth and spit came out or if he spit on Len on purpose. Len stated that Loris definitely spit on Len on purpose.

Len thinks that Loris realized it went too far and that's why he went back to his house.

Mr. Zalas asked if Loris is on medication. Len is unsure, but stated that it wouldn't surprise him,

especially after what happened with Mike Misch. It was shocking to Len that Loris would leave that firm. Pete Agostino was his mentor, like a father. Loris and Mike Misch were also tight. Len used to go to the office and BS with them often. They were all tight.

Mr. Zalas asked Len what he wants to happen from all of this. Len responded, "Nothing." Len stated that he wishes Loris would apologize and recognize that he has nothing to do with the article, Jason or Mike. Mike doesn't ever respond to him. Len stated that he should have run for Probate Court Judge as a Republican and then just dropped out.

When questioned further about the safety of himself and others, Len stated that he told Jason that Jason should let Mike know. Len believes there is no threat to Mike Misch, it was just trash talking about them owning Len.

He was asked if neighbors heard it, and Len indicated that they had to have heard it. There was also a landscaper outside and at one point Len mentioned there were children outside playing (he mentioned this in the context of disbelief that his brother would behave this way).

Len stated that he does not fear for his own safety on County property. Len does not think Loris would do anything to Mike Misch or Judge Cichowicz, and said that Jason actually helped Loris out a lot in the past. He does not think Loris will do anything on JJC property. He does not believe Loris has anything against Judge Cichowicz personally, he is just mad at him by association with Mike Misch.