

12:00pm

Marty: So we're going to start an interview with Tiffany Griffith here today, and I am, my name is Martha Lemert, and I am investigating the matter at the request of the Commissioner Shane Middlesworth, and Commissioner Ron Stewart. Written complaints have been filed with county human resources concerning Commissioner Chuck Poling and the manner in which he interacts with others in the county government workspace. And as such, in consultation with the county legal department, I've been asked to investigate those written complaints and other related allegations involving Commissioner Poling. You are one of approximately 17 county employees currently identified as having information that may be relevant to this investigation. Information provided by you and others may become public at some point, including if the allegations involving Commissioner Poling are determined to be credible or if disclosure is otherwise advisable or required by law. As part of this investigation, Commissioner Poling will be given an opportunity to be interviewed and to respond to the allegations. You are not the subject of this investigation; Commissioner Poling is the subject of this investigation, and you are being interviewed as a potential witness. The county asks you to be honest, candid, cooperative, and transparent in the information that you provide. Your employer is prohibited by law from retaliating against you for providing testimony, information, or evidence in connection with this investigation. If after this interview you think you're experiencing retaliation, please notify the county human relations department, and they will contact the county legal department. Commissioner Poling will be instructed not to contact you regarding your testimony today. If Commissioner Poling contacts you regarding your testimony, please notify the county human resources department, who will then account, notify the county legal department. This interview is being conducted during normal business hours. If you are working for the county, you will be paid your normal wages for this time. Testimony, when possible, it's helpful for you to be as specific as possible regarding dates, times, locations, individuals present, and what occurred. It is also understandable if you do not remember every detail today. If at some point in the future more information comes to mind or more relevant information you think of it, you can contact me by email or phone and I'll take that information. This interview is being recorded so I can prepare the most accurate report possible. Today's date and time are 1.31 or July 31 of 2026, and it's about a little after noon. Can you state your name and whether you have a position with the county currently?

Tiffany Griffith: Yes, my name is Tiffany Griffith. I am currently not employed by the county.

Marty: OK, have you ever worked for the county?

Tiffany Griffith: Yes.

Marty: In what capacity?

Tiffany Griffith: I began in 2013 in the Treasurer's office. I was the first deputy Treasurer where I proceeded to work. Total length in time for the county was 10 years, 11 months. At that time of ending my relationship with the county, I was the Treasurer of Grant County.

Marty: OK, and were you elected to that position?

Tiffany Griffith: Yes.

Marty: When were you first elected?

Tiffany Griffith: So I was first appointed by my peers through a caucus in April of 2018. I went through an election in 2020, and then I went through the primary election in 2024, finally

making a decision to leave before the general election. So my final time in Grant County was June, I believe it was June 14th of 2024, June 16th, right around there.

Marty: OK, when did you, why did you make a decision to, after you'd won the primary, to step down?

Tiffany Griffith: There were a handful of factors. We have just gone through a situation with a gentleman called Malcolm Tanner. He caused quite a bit of chaos for elected officials, department heads, employees of the county. And through that situation, it just made me realize that we weren't really safe. And that was my first experience really going through something where I didn't feel safe in my position. I didn't feel like I was protected in the county. But then, at the near the primaries, how do I put this, Chuck Poling was gaining traction on his run for County Commissioner, and I have history with Chuck Poling. He may not be aware of it because of my married name at this time. My maiden name was Glasser, G-L-A-S-S-E-R. Once I realized his traction was becoming serious with getting a position as Commissioner, I didn't want to include myself in being in any type of situation where I would have to spend elongated times with him or, or have any type of repertoire or have to report to him for any measure.

Marty: Why not?

Tiffany Griffith: When I was 13, my dad, Bill Glasser, worked for Grant County Sheriff's Department. At that time, my father had some interactions with Chuck Poling where he was, something had happened at the Sheriff's Department. There had been a tip that came in through the Chicago, whether it was the FBI or ATF, but there was a, an alert that had come in from that area that Chuck Poling had threatened to murder my father. He also had threatened to put bombs on every door and opening of our home while we were inside and blow our house up and murder all of us. We had a police escort gather me and my siblings from our schools and take us home, where we proceeded to have 24/7 police watch on our home for quite some time, until things had calmed down and that had been alleviated. I don't believe that Mr. Poling ever had any charges filed against him for that, but as a child, that causes some trauma. And so as an adult, you obviously have that with you, and there's just no safety involved in that. You don't feel safe around that person. I've always tried to be very respectful when I did have to have any interactions with Mr. Poling, but I also was very cautious around him. Again, I don't believe he knew who I was because of my married name, but I didn't want to give him any ammunition to retaliate or manipulate a situation or intimidate based off of, of the historical relationships that there were previous to me.

Marty: How old are you now?

Tiffany Griffith: I'm 38, I'll be 39 in November.

Marty: So this was some time ago, about 25 years ago. Umm, do you know whether or not the, the situation involving the bomb threats, umm, you said that there was no arrests ever made. Do you know whether or not it was ever investigated?

Tiffany Griffith: I don't know. OK. Umm, I can tell you at that time Otis Archie was the sheriff, umm, Michael Ross was the captain who was involved, umm, they both have previously passed away, so they're no longer with us. I mean, I could follow up with my dad to see if there was ever an investigation, but I don't know.

Marty: And how long did that situation last where you had a 24/7 watch on your house?

Tiffany Griffith: I want to say that it was probably a week, maybe 2.

Marty: OK, do you know what, what, if, if, if, I mean I know you were a child at the time, but do you know what precipitated that, those, that situation?

Tiffany Griffith: I don't remember if my father had pulled him over or if dad was investigating him for something, but dad was directly involved with some kind of infraction that Chuck had caused.

Marty: And have you had, you know, when you were Treasurer at the county, did you have any interactions with Chuck Bowling?

Tiffany Griffith: Again, I tried to keep those as minimal as possible with having that information. I mean, Chuck at that time was on the council, County Council, so if there were times where I had to appear, I would try to make sure that I would just send a written letter of things that I needed to request, or if I had to appear in person, I would try and make it as quick as possible so I didn't have to have any type of interaction.

Marty: How did you talk to anybody about your, your, your thoughts about resigning after the, around the primary or after the primary?

Tiffany Griffith: As far as like my decision?

Marty: Yeah.

Tiffany Griffith: I didn't speak to anyone about it until I had finally made a decision. At that point, I kept Darren Reese, who was the county chair at that time, involved in, in what that looked like.

Marty: Is Darren Reese still the county chair?

Tiffany Griffith: No.

Marty: Who is the current county chair?

Tiffany Griffith: Nick McKinley, I believe.

Marty: Did you explain to Darren Reese your reasons for wanting to resign?

Tiffany Griffith: No. As far as that goes, I tried not to explain my history because I didn't want that to get out again for fear of retaliation. At that point, I had just explained that I felt like it was just my time to go. I only had four years left, and at that end of four years, I wasn't guaranteed a position anywhere else, and I had been sought out from a company who is looking for someone, and so I used those, which were true, I used those as my explanation. I didn't, didn't go any further.

Marty: So how much advance notice did you give Darren Reese?

Tiffany Griffith: Oh, I gave him about a 30 day notice, if not more.

Marty: Do you have any other experience or have any other interactions with Commissioner Poling either as a county employee or a citizen?

Tiffany Griffith: So after I left the county, I worked, I went and worked for a company called Insurance Management Group. They're here in Marion. My position and role that I was hired for was an account executive for the employer benefits. At that time that I took that position, I was aware that Grant County was a client of Insurance Management Group, but I did not know to what extent that I would play in Grant County's account until I arrived at IMG. At that point, my role was to help service the policies that our clients had enrolled in or had available for their employees. I worked very much behind the scenes, didn't really have a lot of insight to

decisions that were being made or, or kind of the intricacies. I was just like the background, to make sure that if like HR representatives needed help or had questions that needed to be turned over to like carriers or whatever that I, I helped to initiate that. When I got to Insurance Management Group, I was made aware that Grant County would be one of my, would be a part of my book of business, so I would help to service them. It had been a few months after I'd started there, and Mr. Poling had found out that I was the account manager, to which point he had reached out to IMG to notify them that if I was not removed off of their account, that they would pull their business. He said that because I had previous information regarding Grant County, especially with their financials, that it could hinder somehow. I don't believe for one second that it would, but because of the fact that he came to my current employer and demanded for me to be removed off of that account, I essentially was reprimanded, not, not because of anything that I did, but because he had threatened to leave IMG and move their employer benefits elsewhere. I subsequently was removed off of that account, where it wasn't maybe a week, a few months later that he ended up pulling the, the account of employer benefits and went with another company regardless. I feel like, in, in my humble opinion, I do feel at some point that was retaliation because I chose not to support Chuck Poling. Yeah, there's no way for me to prove that, but

Marty: what, I mean..... you, you haven't had any conversations with him directly, but that's just his, ... that had been his history in town? Do you have knowledge of other situations where he's done things like this?

Tiffany Griffith: I mean, you could ask any, any of his previous employees who have had interactions with him, any of his clients through his sewer business who have had any interactions with him. You've got 17 other individuals at the county who have had interactions, you know, there's, there's video footage of him at Commissioners meetings where he is becoming irate when people don't fall in line with his agenda, but Mr. Poling is very good at not crossing that line. He will have other people help him do his bidding so that his hands always remain clean.

Marty: Can you give me an example of that?

Tiffany Griffith: Examples of being such as I don't know all the specifics, so I don't even know if I should share it. But Darren Reese, specifically, he wanted to get Darren Reese out of the role of chairman, and he had a group of individuals and antagonized Darren. I believe that one meeting someone had did something to Darren's car. Chuck explained that it wasn't him, but he was out when around the vehicle at the time of that. Again, I'm not sure that you could even use that, but there's that example.

Marty: And Darren was the county Republican chair?

Tiffany Griffith: Uh huh. Yeah.

Marty: Had Chuck Poling made it clear he wanted Darren out?

Tiffany Griffith: Oh yeah, absolutely, absolutely.

Marty: And is the person that's currently in that position. I think you said Nick something, is he one of Chuck's friends?

Tiffany Griffith: I couldn't tell you. I've not gotten to know Nick after I removed myself from the county. Seeing how everything transpired, I have basically resigned from any political affiliation.

Marty: Have you had any other, I mean, did you keep your job at IMG...

Tiffany Griffith: Uh huh....

Marty: or are you still working there?

Tiffany Griffith: Yep, I'm still employed there. I no longer work in the employer benefits sector. As of September 2025, I transitioned over to Medicare and individual benefits advisor.

Marty: OK, umm, has, have you had any other interactions with Commissioner Poling that you think were inappropriate or intimidating or unlawful?

Tiffany Griffith: Not that I believe was unlawful. Intimidation, I think, is always a play of his. There was a Commissioner's meeting where, I was the Treasurer and we were presenting a new vendor called Invoice Cloud. It would offer us a lot of more access for the taxpayers and constituents of the counties to be able to have other options when paying their property taxes. It was a little more expensive as far as the processing fee for taxpayers to maintain, but the benefits outweighed the increased cost to them. I wish I could tell you what month this was; I know it was recorded. Chuck Poling had no insight into how our operations ran at that point. I had been tenured at that office, starting from the very bottom role, moving my way up through several positions before I even got Treasurer. I made it my, not mission, but I made sure to continuously educate myself so that I could help be a great conduit for the taxpayers. And during that meeting, Chuck made it very.... he made a point to basically state that he was completely opposed to any changes. He didn't appreciate that we were costing the taxpayers more money. I wouldn't say that he became irate, but he became belligerent to the point where it was almost like we couldn't speak to him anymore about the situation. Thankfully, I had two other, three other individuals at that time on the council who were willing to see the benefits of that, and so they voted for a motion to move that into implementation. But Chuck was not happy about that, and he really put his foot down and really snot-rolled and I mean, was even scoffing in that meeting that he was just opposed to it because it was going to cost the taxpayers more money, which, looking forward at how he removed the employer benefits from a local company that was helping his employees at the county business and costing them more money in the long run, it just seems kind of silly that he would scoff at something to help. But I mean...

Marty: , so, so, IMG is a local company, and who did he move the work to?

Tiffany Griffith: You would ask me that. It's out of the county, I wanna say Lapel and something. I'm not really entirely certain, Gregory Lapel, I'm not really entire, I'm not OK certain. Again, once I was removed off that account, I was no longer involved in any communications of what was happening.

Marty: And this meeting involved him when he was on council?

Tiffany Griffith: Yeah...

Marty:You were talking about...

Tiffany Griffith: ...we were talking about the Invoice Cloud. Yeah, he was on County Council with local county government. If you are wanting to spend any type of financial monies, you have to go get approval from the council, where you have to plead your case, give them the information of that. We, I believe I had a representative from Invoice Cloud, maybe I didn't, but yeah, he was on the panel with all of the other council members at that time. But outside of that interaction, again, I barely, rarely tried to not be around Chuck Poling.

Marty: OK. How much, if you're aware during your time as Treasurer, how much work was Chuck Poling's business doing with the county?

Tiffany Griffith: To be honest, I don't think that I can answer that because I don't know. I do know that he did do quite a bit of work, especially over at the jail, but I don't know specifically what. I don't know what he was being paid. My job and responsibilities as Treasurer was to safe keep the monies in the bank's account for those certified the funds. The auditor's office were the ones who would write the checks and make sure that the monies were in the appropriate funds. I was also the chief investing officer, so I helped to invest the funds. So my main oversight was collecting property taxes, maintaining the mobile homes, and keeping an eyesight on the bank accounts. I wasn't, I wasn't the main oversight for what they were spending it on.

Marty: Are you aware of ever, have you ever observed Commissioner Poling appear to be under the influence of any drugs or alcohol or anything in any of these encounters?

Tiffany Griffith: Again, I wouldn't even say that I would spend enough time near him or around him to be able to answer that.

Marty: Do you believe anybody has tried to intimidate you on behalf of Commissioner Poling?

Tiffany Griffith: I wouldn't say intimidate, I would say that there were individuals who would try to impress the idea of supporting Chuck Poling. You know, when Chuck Poling was starting to run, especially in a political campaign, you are always trying to be a big opponent for the people that you believe in, and so Chuck always had those individuals around who would really work to get people to see the benefit of having Chuck. For example, David Glickfield was one who was just, I wouldn't say he was forceful by any means, but he was one of the biggest proponents when Chuck was doing his campaign. He would always approach me and, you know, want me to be involved in situations of where it meant that I would garner support for Chuck, whether I would help with making calls to individuals or if I would participate in any type of political event where Chuck would be involved in, and I would respectfully decline. You know, David Glickfield, I don't know if he was aware of the past, but he would always tell me that Chuck's a changed man because he was a Christian now and he went to church and so he's not the same that he was before, and people would always use the excuse that, you know, anything that he's done in the past no longer exists. I think leading to the idea that Chuck had got a lot of his record expunged, but it was very.....

Marty: ... What, what, what, what are you familiar about in terms of his record?

Tiffany Griffith: When I tell you I'm sure there's a laundry list but I am someone who does not want to even know; the less I know the more ammunition it gives for him, so I don't, I couldn't tell you. I know that intimidation is probably one of those. Being physical is probably one, with individuals--I'm sure there's several items on there, but yeah, there he had quite a few people who were helping him to get to his position of power as he likes to believe.

Marty: Has he ever made any physical contact with you or entered your personal space in any way?

Tiffany Griffith: No, again I wouldn't allow it. I wouldn't allow myself to be in a room with him for more than I needed to be, and I would always excuse myself.

Marty: Has Commissioner Poling ever shut you in a room with himself or refused to let you leave in any way?

Tiffany Griffith: I would never let that happen.

Marty: OK. Do you think his conduct either as a council person or as a Commissioner impacted your ability to work other than what we've already talked about?

Tiffany Griffith: Outside of the fact that I didn't feel safe to be able to do my job, he was one of the proponents for why I left. So I wouldn't say that necessarily impact is the word that I would use, but I knew that he wouldn't allow me to continue to do the job that I wanted to do.....

Marty: Just come in and do your job, right, without

Tiffany Griffith: correct.....

Marty:having to be concerned about...

Tiffany Griffith: ... I mean, Chuck's biggest statement was that he's the second most powerful man in the county, second to the sheriff, and he is not. Knowing the laws and what his actual job duties and responsibilities as a Commissioner, they don't line up to how he is behaving in that role currently. And so, based on what I've seen, I made the right move, but it was a very heartbreaking move because I loved my position and I loved the county that I served and the team that I had...

Marty: and you wanted to finish out the four years...

Tiffany Griffith: ... absolutely....., but I would have done it.

Marty: Did you have a reasonable fear of him?

Tiffany Griffith: 100%. I mean, knowing the history of what I went through and always feeling like I had to look over my shoulder, especially once he got on council for fear that he would find out who I was; if he already knew or didn't, I was always fearful that somehow that information would play into how I was treated by him, the decisions that he made, the decisions that he would vote for, so I always felt like I was always questioning how, how safe I was in that environment.

Marty: Do you think he ever had you spied on or followed in any way ...

Tiffany Griffith: ...100% But there's no way that I could even prove that. He has his way of keeping tracks on anyone, especially if they're vocal about not being in support, which I was vocal that I was not going to support Chuck, but not in a derogatory way. It was just a like "No thank you, I'm not gonna be there." So knowing that I wouldn't support him—absolutely--and I feel like that's why I was retaliated against once I went to IMG.

Marty: Did, do you know whether he put that in writing to IMG?

Tiffany Griffith: Absolutely...

Marty: He did? Did he send an email or something?

Tiffany Griffith: Oh, I'm sure.... Shane was also involved in that situation, so I mean Shane could speak to that. I know they had conversations with Trent Daly, Michelle Bunker; I'm sure that there is emails about it; there, I'm absolutely certain that there would be some type of writing.

Marty: OK, now have you provided any written statements or complaints to anyone regarding Commissioner Poling or his any of his conduct?

Tiffany Griffith: No, as a matter of fact, Beth Winters reached out to me this past Saturday, which I was on vacation, to just let me know. Actually she wanted to know why I had left the county. Again, I hadn't ever spoken to anybody about it, but knowing that there was some turmoil within the county, I alluded to what she was needing information from me. That's

where she informed me that there was this investigation going on and she felt like there could be something out of that that could help with this investigation. Again, I don't know the impact that I have on this or if any of it even matters, but here I am.

Marty: Yeah. Do you know of him behaving in an appropriate way or way that you would consider to be intimidating or unlawful with anyone that's currently a county employee?

Tiffany Griffith: Yes.

Marty: And describe that for me.

Tiffany Griffith: I know that he has been in situations of where he is bringing county employees into closed rooms where there's no security cameras or people to watch him to have conversations. I know that he has taken individuals floor by floor to campaign for other individuals who are running for election, telling employees that if they vote a certain way that they would be able to get raises; if they don't vote, that it's a shame because he served in the military for them to be able to vote, and basically intimidate them into voting, whether that be for his individual that he was...

Marty: showing around...

Tiffany Griffith: promoting or otherwise. I know that he has raised his voice, got in the face of individuals who question him. I know that he has put his hands on individuals to, whether he is just, I don't know the word or the action that I'm looking for, but trying to just garner their attention or to forcefully move them into spaces where he could speak to them. Regardless, you shouldn't ever put your hands on anyone. He has made threats to individuals in the county. A primary example, there was a situation of where an individual was leaving from one office, their employment, moving to another department within the county.

Marty: Was that one of the treasury employees that you worked with?

Tiffany Griffith: I did not have any oversight into this employee, but I'm very well, well aware of the situation where this employee was moving from one role into another office into a different role, and he was threatening to take measures to keep them from having that job, even though the handbook specifically states nothing about transferring from one office to another....

Marty: within the county.

Tiffany Griffith:There's nothing in the handbook; it only speaks to if you are leaving the county, and your term of notice and what that needs to be. So I know that he is openly threatening employees with his power, saying that he'll keep them from getting in any job. Again, as a Commissioner, it's his role to oversee the building; his oversight is not over the employees. That is the department heads, any elected officials. He doesn't even have any oversight into the elected officials other than if they have a request that has anything to do with the building. He cannot make decisions on the employees or the elected officials; he has no say. And he has taken this power beyond what any Commissioner ever...

Marty:, ever has. Right, you never experienced that with any other Commissioners

Tiffany Griffith:No.....

Marty: or anything?

Tiffany Griffith: And when I tell you the almost 11, 'cause I was 30 days shy of 11 years, you know, and I was just explaining this to someone the other day. When I started there, I mean,

you didn't always get along with everyone, but that's life, that's personalities. The thing about the county is if someone was struggling, we would all band together, regardless of whatever floor we were on, and we would help each other out. The environment in which they are having to operate at their jobs on a daily basis, it is like the Wild West of where they are being told that they can't even go to a, to a certain floor, where they're not allowed to enter the offices of another floor, they're not allowed to help each other, they're not allowed to have any interactions with other departments, and it's just very, very sad that they are having to work in an atmosphere of literal fear and fear of having to face manipulation or intimidation or the unknown, what to expect.

Marty: Well, wouldn't, wouldn't---don't county offices need to be able to coordinate with each other? I mean, in order to run the business of the county.....

Tiffany Griffith:absolutely. Absolutely. You can't just rely on one office, I mean. Speaking of the Treasurer's office specifically, Yes, it's its own entity, but you have to work close hand to hand with the auditor's office, the assessor's office, you have to work with the surveyor's office, you have to work with the clerk's office, so you're all intermingled and intertwined. There's not a singular way of where you can put some kind of force in place that says you are no longer allowed to have any type of interaction with these departments, because then it stops you from being able to do your job effectively and efficiently.

Marty: And you think he's been giving, having orders like that issued out?

Tiffany Griffith: Yeah. Oh, on top of that, I know of a situation of where he specifically went to an office and spoke to the employees and told them-- if you have a complaint you are no longer to go to HR--you have to come directly to me because HR can't be trusted. Now, I don't know about you, but I know that's illegal. You can't tell someone that they're not allowed to go to HR, especially if they have complaints.

Marty: What department was that, do you, if you're aware?

Tiffany Griffith: The Treasurer's office.

Marty: Treasurer's office. And is this because people that are still working there are letting you know that?

Tiffany Griffith: There is, yes, there is information that's being provided.

Marty: OK. Had the individuals within Treasurer's office been communicating with you by text message, or has it just been phone calls?

Tiffany Griffith: It's through another source.

Marty: OK. Do you have any time or dates involved in terms of when that instruction was given to people?

Tiffany Griffith: I'm sure I could get it for you.

Marty: OK, I'd appreciate that, and if you know, just because from a documentation standpoint, you know, when was this, if somebody contemporaneously communicated regarding it, it makes it, you know, it just gives it more weight.

Tiffany Griffith: Yeah, yeah.

Marty: Are you aware of other activity currently at county government involving Commissioner Poling that you would deem to be intimidating, unlawful and inappropriate that we haven't talked about?

Tiffany Griffith: I'm sure from the moment he steps into the moment that he's no longer there, it would all be seen, but as far as having any exact evidence for you that I could provide, I don't think I could speak to any of that.

Marty: OK. Is there anything else that you'd like to share or anything else you think we need to know about that we haven't talked about? Are there any other people who might have relevant information that you're aware of?

Tiffany Griffith: I honestly, I'd simply don't know, not anything that would might, that might be helpful. I mean, again, anybody outside of his role as a Commissioner, his previous employees, clients, but again that just speaks to his character, it doesn't speak how he is operating. I mean it does, because that's just how he chooses to be. I know you're speaking with Shane and Ron, and they would have the most insight, and Beth and Felicity, 'cause they were they're right there with him, then all of the other individuals, but not anyone that I can think of.

Marty: Alright, well I don't have anything else for you. I appreciate your time here today, and we'll end the recording. It's about 12:45. Thank you.

12:45pm