

12:11pm

Marty: I'm going on the record now with Rhonda Wiley and I have read her the introductory material and this interview is being recorded so that I can prepare the most accurate report possible. Today's date and time are 7/29/2026 and it's approximately 12:11 PM. Please state your name and position with the county.

Rhonda Wylie: I'm Rhonda Wiley and Grant County Assessor.

Marty: And Rhonda, how long have you worked in that role as the Assessor?

Rhonda Wylie: This, I'm ending my 8th year.

Marty: OK, and that's an elected position?

Rhonda Wylie: Correct.

Marty: Have you observed or experienced any conduct by Commissioner Poling in the county government workplace that you think may have been unlawful, questionable, intimidating, or inappropriate?

Rhonda Wylie: Not so much me as my employees. Three of my employees have been targeted.

Marty: OK, and please describe that, those situations.

Rhonda Wylie: Well, Emily Barnes, she was approached by campaigning again for Ed Hartman. And then Delaney's was because she left one office that he is very, very much a particular fan of, and when she left, he was not happy that she left that office to come to my office. So she was targeted for that.

Marty: And how do you think she was targeted?

Rhonda Wylie: And they tried to fire her by something that the Treasurer herself made a mistake in and was trying to blame Delaney.

Marty: OK, and what was that mistake?

Rhonda Wylie: Something to do with what you turn into the bank on deposits 'cause she worked at the Treasurer's office. And April is the only one that is allowed to do that, the actual Treasurer.

Marty: Right, it's something statutorily that the Treasurer has to do.

Rhonda Wylie: Yes, and they were trying to blame Delaney on it to get her fired for leaving the Treasurer's office, and that was after she was already employed in my office.

Marty: OK, so what, it would have been something that occurred maybe after she gave notice and before....

Rhonda Wylie: Correct....

Marty: going to your office....

Rhonda Wylie: correct.

Marty: OK, and did anything come about where they tried to get her fired?

Rhonda Wylie: No, because the only person that can fire her is me. And then he started with Cami. Cami's grandfather was dying, she was taking care of him in her life, he just passed away and was working from home.

Marty: And who's Cami?

Rhonda Wylie: Cami is another employee, Cami Savage, and that's the third one he targeted. And that was just recent. And the only reason why I know is because our HR department came to me and informed me that he was pursuing to get her fired. Physically, has he come to me? No, I just know from other employees telling me.

Marty: So what business would he have trying to get your employees terminated as the County Commissioner?

Rhonda Wylie: Emily is because he's, he's both..... she got upset about him coming and campaigning on office hours and on government and he was bad. That's the start of our office. Once he got mad at Emily over that, then it didn't take anything.

Marty: Then it's just let's go after people in the Assessor's office.....

Rhonda Wylie: Uh huh...

Marty: that's how it's come about....

Rhonda Wylie: Yep, and this has all been since her campaign with, I think it was April, that's when he came.

Marty: So it's been the last few months

Rhonda Wylie:that he has targeted my employees, and the newest one is Cami. And

Marty: what's the allegation involving Cami? That she took leave?

Rhonda Wylie: It's because he thinks that she took Shane's side over Chuck's side. Because she put Ron Stewart, actually, it's because she put Ron Stewart's

Marty:campaign sign in her yard.....

Rhonda Wylie:that's when it started.

Marty: Doesn't she have a right to do that?

Rhonda Wylie: I would think so, yes, yes, yes, I would say so.

Marty: And so what was his allegation -- that she was taking too much time off? ...

Rhonda Wylie: because she was working from home, and nobody should be working from home--- when I approved it.

Marty: Yes, and you, it's your employee and you can make adjustments based on what their duties are.

Rhonda Wylie: She was on FMLA, and so, you know, her time and she wasn't getting the whole documented time to get paid for, but that keeps her job, and he had not a clue that she was on FMLA.

Marty: And it's really none of his business.

Rhonda Wylie: No, no.

Marty: So, but you haven't had any personal interactions, he hasn't come up to you directly?

Rhonda Wylie: No...

Marty: ... it's all through targeting your employees.

Rhonda Wylie: Uh huh.

Marty: How many employees do you have in the Assessor's office?

Rhonda Wylie: There's 8, 9, including me.

Marty: OK, so it's a pretty small crew.

Rhonda Wylie: It would devastate...

Marty: the department if somebody got fired because he was running around and... Um, so do you know whether or not Commissioner Poling, you referenced the situation involving Emily Barnes; other than that, has he had any direct communications with people in your department that you thought that was inappropriate?

Rhonda Wylie: No, I mean, well, he has said a few things to Cami on the phone.

Marty: Like what?

Rhonda Wylie: Like, she, he can't believe that she put a Rod Stewart...

Marty: sign in her yard.

Rhonda Wylie: uh huh. Yeah.

Marty: He called her to talk to her about that? Was she on duty or off duty at that...

Rhonda Wylie: It was after work.

Marty: after work. And how did she respond, do you know?

Rhonda Wylie: No, I don't, I didn't, I was just at,

Marty: was, this before the primary election? OK.

Rhonda Wylie: Yeah, in the next few days, Ron Stewart got arrested for drinking and driving.

Marty: Oh?, OK,

Rhonda Wylie:which you shouldn't be, I mean, its wrong.....

Marty: Right, right. So, are you aware of Commissioner Poling ever threatening or intimidating people physically or professionally or reputationally, besides what you've talked about and trying to get someone fired....

Rhonda Wylie: I do know that he physically abused his first...I don't know what it is first now they're calling and she was a judge.....

Marty:Natalie Conn....

Rhonda Wylie: Natalie Conn...

Marty: ... Natalie Conn.

Rhonda Wylie: Uh huh.....

Marty: How do you know that?

Rhonda Wylie: It was all through the county that she was moving. She was on her last year of being a judge, so I'm sure it was because to keep.....

Marty: to get away from Chuck?

Rhonda Wylie: Uh huh, Yeah. I'm sure she had a restraining order, all that should be on record because he put her in the hospital.

Marty: Wow, OK.

Rhonda Wylie: Yeah, I do remember her having to go to the emergency room.

Marty: OK, and you, as you said, it was around the community that that happened.

Rhonda Wylie: It was around the county building...

Marty: the county building...

Rhonda Wylie: people talk...

Marty: 'cause she was, she was a judge in the county, off of county

Rhonda Wylie: Yes, she was a judge.....

Marty: ... Superior Court?

Rhonda Wylie: Yeah, she was actually one of our very first youngest judges, she was the youngest judge, I don't know about anymore, but she was our youngest judge ever to be elected. Yeah, I grew up with her.

Marty: Oh, OK.

Rhonda Wylie: Yeah, she is my class, we graduated together.

Marty: Are you still in contact with her at all?

Rhonda Wylie: No, no.

Marty: But you understand that she's moved out of town, down to Indy, and the move was because of Chuck.

Marty: OK. Have you ever heard Chuck Poling, besides this discussion he had with Emily Barnes, have you ever heard him talking about voting choices or who people should vote for.... you mentioned the Cami conversation....

Rhonda Wylie: he mentioned Ed Hartman, and numerous times.

Marty: OK, to other employees or other...

Rhonda Wylie: Yeah....

Marty: or other people at the county government?

Rhonda Wylie: Uh huh..... In my office.

Marty: In your office?

Rhonda Wylie: Uh huh.

Marty: OK, what did he...

Rhonda Wylie:He doesn't say it loud enough or he'll whisper it....

Marty: And what would he say?

Rhonda Wylie: He would say, if you vote for Ed Hartman, we'll get you raises, which he can't, that's the Council.

Marty: Right.

Rhonda Wylie: I mean, I know, and he should know that, I know. Well, he was a County Councilman, he knows...

Marty: the process.

Rhonda Wylie: ... Yeah... he was a Councilman before. I really had a lot of hopes for him 'cause I thought he was a passionate, he's passionate, but you can't intimidate, that's not passion, that's not passion. At first, I just thought he was passionate about his job, he, he was, you know, the things he did care about, I thought, oh, this might be good, you know, the first couple months might be good, and then it just, his true sides started coming out. I think he tried his best.

Marty: Did he do anything else after the first, in his first couple months, that upset people in the county government?

Rhonda Wylie: People didn't like not being, having plants, which was no big deal to me, other than that, no 'cause that was a big ordeal. I mean, it was, it was unruly about the plants, it was ridiculous how people got so upset about that.

Marty: Well, people got upset, and what, what was done about that? Everybody had to move, remove all their plants?

Rhonda Wylie: Yeah. Uh huh. He had the maintenance guys come in, which if he didn't, he, they threw them away for that or they took them to your car themselves.

Marty: OK, how did that impact morale?

Rhonda Wylie: Horrible, horrible.

Marty: In terms of outside of work, have you had any interactions with Commissioner Poling that you thought was inappropriate?

Rhonda Wylie: No. but a little nervous about the retaliation once he hears this, but

Marty: yeah, I, I mean... has Commissioner Poling ever, you think he's ever had you followed or spied on you?

Rhonda Wylie: Not that I'm aware of, but I do know he watches our office a lot on the camera.

Marty: On the camera? There's cameras set up in your office?

Rhonda Wylie: Yes, the cameras--there's cameras set up all through the county building, and no, none of the offices have, like, I don't have access to my office, I mean, I don't, I shouldn't have it from any other office, but I would think I should have...

Marty: you can't even access the camera from your office?

Rhonda Wylie: ...nope.....

Marty: but he, he can....

Rhonda Wylie: and he does it from home.

Marty: OK, how do, how do you know that he does it from home?

Rhonda Wylie: 'Cause he's made comments to other people, and it's gotten back to us, I mean, it's all hearsay.....

Marty: but the suspicion is, is that he's reviewing cameras frequently, on....

Rhonda Wylie: ... yep...

Marty: remotely.

Rhonda Wylie: ... which they have the right, they're the commissioners, they're head of the building.

Marty: OK. Have you ever heard him discuss a desire to have his wife hired by the county?

Rhonda Wylie: She was, I thought she was hired by the county? No, no, I don't know, I, I'm, I just didn't, listen to that guy.

Marty: Yeah, that's fine, that's fine. Are you aware of him voicing a desire to have any other relatives, friends, or associates hired by the county?

Rhonda Wylie: And I do know that he has hired a lot. Just like the, almost all the maintenance men came from Chuck, Chuck, which you know, like Shadow, I think he's an excellent employee, so I don't think he's hired all right people, , but they've all known Chuck, that's how they've gotten hired, but you pretty much, at the county building, you gotta know somebody to get it.

Marty: Yeah. Did you, have you ever observed him, Commissioner Poling, appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol at any point during any interactions?

Marty: No.? OK.

Marty: Do you think anyone's tried to intimidate or coerce you or people in your department on behalf of Commissioner Poling, like a surrogate?

Rhonda Wylie: No, OK, no. I mean, he's had, like, that incident with Emily, he had three people with him. To me, that's a little bit too much, but no.

Marty: Who did he have with him during that?

Rhonda Wylie: They had Ed Hartman, and two of the maintenance guys, and Sammy and Mike. I don't know their last names, but Ed Hartman came in my office, which is not, not...

Marty: so, your off... Yeah, employees are only supposed to be in there, and ...

Rhonda Wylie:he's, and he, him and Chuck were the only ones that come in the office, maintenance guys, well, no, Sammy, I think came in the office too, but I think Mike stayed behind the counter the entire time.

Marty: But typically the policy is non-employees...

Rhonda Wylie: only employees can come in--- that Ed Hartman should never have.....

Marty: he was merely a candidate at that point.

Rhonda Wylie: He was campaigning, that's what he was doing. He was campaigning.

Marty: Was this during work hours?

Rhonda Wylie: Yes.

Marty: In terms of, has Commissioner Poling ever made any physical contact with you personally? Has he ever entered your personal space in a way that was inappropriate?

Rhonda Wylie: No.

Marty: Are you aware of any videos, recordings, or documents relating to any of these incidents that we've talked about with the voting, or...

Rhonda Wylie: No.

Rhonda Wylie: Other than the video that....

Marty: yeah, the video that exists. Has Commissioner Poling ever shut you in a room with himself or made you feel like you couldn't leave?

Rhonda Wylie: No, but I do know that incident at the courthouse with Pam.

Marty: OK, tell me about that.

Rhonda Wylie: There was videos out on that, and they were in each other's, they both were in each other's faces, like Pam was in his face and he was in... and Pam is who?

Rhonda Wylie: Pam is the County Clerk...

Marty: the County Clerk...

Rhonda Wylie: Yes, the, I saw the video....

Marty: It was there, yeah...

Rhonda Wylie: and it was leaked by the, I mean, it was requested, it went out legally, like it was supposed to...Yeah.

Marty: Do you think Commissioner Poling's conduct at the county government has impacted your office's ability to work?

Rhonda Wylie: I don't feel like, OK, we have fun at work, and we really have to watch what we say now, so yeah, I feel like it's impacted a little bit, not a lot, because my employee, like Emily, I really thought I could have lost Emily. Emily enjoys her job, and, the people are staying.

Marty: Right, and, and you know, you're trying to protect the people that are working for you.

Rhonda Wylie: Right, and nobody can fire my people but me too, but if they can intimidate them after work, and that's what I'm more worried about, and that's one reason why I didn't come out, because I was unopposed, and you have until a certain time in July to, for the Democrats to get an opponent, and I wouldn't comment on anything because I was afraid -- he had already warned that he was getting something for somebody from my office, or for my position, for the auditor's position, and a judge position. And he did get, and his money backing me, and they like me, so...they respect me. So his money isn't gonna go against me. Thank God.

Marty: Right. Do you think he's funding a bunch of other people? Do you know whether or not that's all being disclosed?

Rhonda Wylie: No, no, I don't, I doubt it is. It'll be under different organizations.

Marty: Do you---- how would you describe the impact he's had on the rest of the county government outside of your office?

Rhonda Wylie: Really, he put a wedge between the courthouse and the complex, I mean, there is, he has really made a tremendous wedge between, between that and us. The morale all the way through is, is just, you can almost cut certain offices, you walk in and you feel like you could cut the air....

Marty: the tension's so bad.

Rhonda Wylie: ... uh huh. Yep.

Marty: What offices would you describe as being the worst in that regard?

Rhonda Wylie: Second floor, the Auditor and the Treasurers ...

Marty: the Auditor and the Treasurers...

Rhonda Wylie: ... you walk through there, and it's horrible, you can feel it, you can feel it.

Marty: I, I understand, it is the Treasurer...

Rhonda Wylie:like I would say, for a while, but I don't know, maybe they've left, left the Recorder's office alone, I haven't seen Kathy post anything, so...

Marty: OK, has there been postings on social media about the environment at the county government, like, Facebook and stuff like that?

Rhonda Wylie: Yep.

Marty: OK, what's been the nature of those postings that you've seen?

Rhonda Wylie: People not liking Chuck, bad mouthing, for the most part, and then they'll have somebody from, like, our local news, will come in and say Chuck, so yeah, I mean, I don't know, I have no proof, but it just seems like whoever Chuck wants to campaign, that's who our news, 27 news and Ed Bounds backs.

Marty: OK. In their broadcasts and podcasts and whatever?

Rhonda Wylie: yes.

Marty: Are you, did you, at any point, try to advertise with Ed Bounds or anything like that?

Rhonda Wylie: You have to have certain levels for my position, so, like, I am unlimited, so the only person, unless you have the Level 3, the only person that could run against me would be an attorney, because they know the laws, but no, I don't.

Marty: OK, are you aware of anything else that, that you think is involving Chuck Poling that you think might be problematic to, to the government?

Rhonda Wylie: It's all hearsay, I mean, I used to know he was in drugs, like, younger, I mean, I don't have any proof or anything like that. I always heard he was in with all the drug dealers.

Marty: Are you aware of him...do you have any information about him ever actually using drugs or just in being involved in them?

Rhonda Wylie: I heard he was on cocaine when he hurt Natalie, but I don't know whether that was true; that was all hearsay.

Marty: Yeah. Is there anything else that you like to share that you know, anything else you think is relevant to this investigation?

Rhonda Wylie: I can't think of anything right now.

Marty: OK, are there any... Well, in your office, do you have any knowledge of any financial relationships Chuck has with his business with the county, or?

Rhonda Wylie: I mean, I do know we use him a lot for our sewage and drainage and stuff like that, and we probably should bid that out, but I don't know.

Marty: Right, are you aware of whether bids have been, been actually obtained for

Rhonda Wylie: anything over a certain amount has to be bid, and I don't know that. Like, I know my office's contracts and stuff all has to be bid out, but as far as the commissioners, no. But I do think one was supposed to be submitted out, I can't think, anything over \$400,000, I'm not sure, the HR could answer that.

Marty: Right, is there any, are there any other people you think might have relevant information?

Rhonda Wylie: If you, are you gonna talk to Pam Harris, I feel like she would have something.

Marty: OK, 'cause she had a dust up with him at the courthouse?

Rhonda Wylie: More than one; more than one, 'cause they were all public. I think there was at least two or three, and they all got, there was videos on all of them.

Marty: Alright, is there any other evidence or written statements or complaints that you have that you would want to share?

Rhonda Wylie: No, not that I can think of right now.

Marty: Well, I don't have anything else, I appreciate your time.

Rhonda Wylie: OK, thank you very much.

Rhonda Wylie: Thank you.... like I said, I don't know what I can do to help.

Marty: We'll, we'll go off the record at 12:33 PM.

12:33pm