Deposition of:

## **Traci Theis**

February 17, 2020

CITY OF MADEIRA

V.

## PHILIP DOUGLAS OPPENHEIMER

Cause No. A1802415



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| 1  | COURT OF CO             | MMON PLEAS   |  |  |
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| 2  | HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO   |  |  |  |
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| 5  |                         |  |  |  |
| 6  | CITY OF MADEIRA,        | )  |  |  |
| 7  | Plaintiff,              | )<br>) Case No.  |  |  |
| 8  | vs.                     | ) A1802415   |  |  |
| 9  | PHILIP DOUGLAS OPPENHEI | MER, )   |  |  |
| 10 | Defendant.              | )  |  |  |
| 11 |                         | /  |  |  |
| 12 |                         |  |  |  |
| 13 |                         |  |  |  |
| 14 |                         |  |  |  |
| 15 | Deposition of:          | TRACI THEIS  |  |  |
| 16 | Pursuant to:            | Notice   |  |  |
| 17 | Date and Time:          | Monday, February 17, 2020<br>1:59 p.m.                 |  |  |
| 18 | Place:                  | Finney Law Firm, LLC<br>1077 Celestial Street          |  |  |
| 19 |                         | Suite 10<br>Cincinnati, Ohio 45202                     |  |  |
| 20 | Reporter:               | Tracy L. Allen, RPR, RMR Notary Public - State of Ohio |  |  |
| 21 |                         | notary rabite beate or office                          |  |  |
| 22 |                         |  |  |  |
| 23 |                         |  |  |  |
| 24 |                         |  |  |  |
| 25 |                         |  |  |  |

| 1  | APPEARANCES OF COUNSEL:                               |
|----|---|
| 2  |   |
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| 15 |   |
| 16 | Also present:   |
| 17 | Philip Douglas Oppenheimer                            |
| 18 |   |
| 19 |   |
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- 2 a witness herein, having been duly sworn, was
- 3 examined and deposed as follows:
- 4 EXAMINATION
- 5 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 6 O. Good afternoon, Ms. Theis.
- 7 A. Good afternoon.
- 8 Q. I introduced myself when we just met
- 9 a few minutes ago. I'm Curt Hartman. I'm
- 10 representing Mr. Oppenheimer in a lawsuit
- 11 that's been filed against him by the City of
- 12 Madeira.
- We're here to take your deposition,
- 14 trying to figure out what you know and answer
- 15 my questions. I don't anticipate being all
- 16 that long, but I want to check before we get
- 17 going, have you ever had your deposition taken
- 18 previously?
- 19 A. I think we -- that's what we were
- 20 talking about. I think I had it taken when I
- 21 was a teenager working at The Beach Waterpark.
- 22 Q. Okay.
- MR. ROBERTS: Hold on a second.
- 24 Are you recording this?
- MR. OPPENHEIMER: No.

- 1 MR. ROBERTS: Okay.
- 2 MR. OPPENHEIMER: Did you think I
- 3 was?
- 4 MR. HARTMAN: No. I just asked a
- 5 question.
- Go ahead.
- 7 MR. OPPENHEIMER: No.
- 8 MR. HARTMAN: But it's permissible
- 9 to record since the notice included audio
- 10 recording.
- 11 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 12 Q. Okay. Let me just kind of go
- 13 through some of the ground rules with you in
- 14 terms of a deposition. I'm sure your attorney
- 15 went over them a little bit.
- Since we're having a court reporter
- 17 here transcribing everything that's being
- 18 spoken here today, we need to first try to make
- 19 sure only one of us is speaking at a time. So
- 20 if you try to make sure I'm finishing my
- 21 question, I'll try to make sure I let you
- 22 finish your answer before I start the next
- 23 question.
- 24 Because she is transcribing what we
- 25 say, any responses need to -- ensure you have

- 1 affirmative yes or no answer as opposed to a
- 2 grunt noise or shaking of the head. I'll try
- 3 to pick it up if you do it. It's natural to do
- 4 it, but don't feel bad about that. I or the
- 5 court reporter will probably pick up if you do
- 6 it.
- 7 If you don't understand a question
- 8 I'm asking, feel free to ask me to clarify. I
- 9 can do that for you.
- 10 If you need to take a break, feel
- 11 free to ask for a break. I would ask if a
- 12 question is pending, that you answer the
- 13 question before we take a break. Like I said,
- 14 I do not anticipate being all that long.
- 15 And there's always a few ground
- 16 rules that I always tend to forget before -- as
- 17 I'm going through this, but we'll figure them
- 18 out as we go through here today.
- 19 For the record, could you state your
- 20 name and your address, please?
- 21 A. Traci Theis, 6945 Pineneedle Lane,
- 22 Cincinnati, Ohio 45243.
- Q. And you live in the City of Madeira?
- 24 A. Yes, I do.
- Q. And you're on the Madeira City

- 1 Council?
- 2 A. I am.
- 3 Q. How long have you served on the
- 4 Madeira City Council?
- 5 A. Let's see. December of 2013.
- 6 O. To the present?
- 7 A. To the present.
- 8 Q. Correct.
- 9 A. Correct. My term ends 2021.
- 10 Q. And it's my understanding that the
- 11 mayor of the City of Madeira is selected from
- 12 amongst the council members?
- 13 A. Correct.
- Q. And you did serve as mayor during a
- 15 certain period of time?
- 16 A. I did.
- 17 Q. What period of time was that?
- 18 A. 2017. So December 1st of 2017 to
- 19 November 30th, unless there's a 31st in
- 20 November.
- 21 Q. No.
- 22 A. -- 30th of 2019.
- Q. And the mayor is a voting member of
- 24 council; is that correct?
- 25 A. Correct.

- 1 Q. Does the mayor usually not vote
- 2 unless there's a tie, or does the mayor
- 3 generally always vote?
- 4 A. The mayor always votes, unless they
- 5 recuse themselves for some kind of conflict of
- 6 interest or -- just like any other council
- 7 member. It's just another council member.
- Q. All right. As I indicated, we're
- 9 here to talk about the lawsuit that the City of
- 10 Madeira has filed against Mr. Oppenheimer.
- 11 You're generally familiar with that
- 12 lawsuit --
- 13 A. Correct.
- 0. -- attempting to have him declared a
- 15 vexatious litigator?
- 16 A. Correct.
- 17 Q. When did you first become aware that
- 18 the lawsuit had been filed against Mr.
- 19 Oppenheimer?
- 20 A. I don't recall the exact date.
- Q. Okay. I'm going to hand you what is
- 22 being marked as Exhibit 1.
- 23 (Defendant's Exhibit 1 was marked for
- identification.)
- 25 BY MR. HARTMAN:

- 1 Q. And I'll represent to you this is a
- 2 copy of the original complaint that was
- 3 filed --
- 4 A. Okay.
- 5 O. -- on behalf of the City of Madeira
- 6 with the Hamilton County Common Pleas Court.
- 7 It indicates it was electronically
- 8 filed on May 11th, 2018 at 4:51 p.m.
- 9 A. Okay.
- 10 Q. Were you aware that it was being
- 11 filed before it was actually filed?
- 12 A. I know that we explored filing it
- 13 and we rely on our legal counsel. You know,
- 14 most of -- most of our council people are,
- 15 basically, volunteers in the community and we
- 16 rely on legal.
- 17 So we had a proclamation and we
- 18 talked about it at council. I don't recall the
- 19 exact date. So I'm sure it's before this was
- 20 filed.
- 21 And we, basically, gave legal
- 22 counsel the authority to explore the lawsuit.
- 23 And that was during regular council session.
- MR. ROBERTS: Traci, listen to the
- 25 question. Just answer the question.

- 1 THE WITNESS: Okay. Sorry.
- 2 MR. ROBERTS: No worries.
- 3 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 4 Q. When you say we explored filing it,
- 5 we rely on legal counsel, we gave legal counsel
- 6 authority to explore the lawsuit; who is we?
- 7 A. Council.
- 8 Q. The seven members of council?
- 9 A. Uh-huh.
- 10 Q. Collectively?
- 11 A. Uh-huh.
- 12 Q. Is that a yes?
- 13 A. Yes.
- 14 (Defendant's Exhibit 2 was marked for
- identification.)
- 16 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 17 Q. I'm going to hand you what's been
- 18 marked as Exhibit 2.
- 19 And do you recognize these as being
- 20 the official minutes of the Madeira City
- 21 Council Meeting from April 23, 2018?
- 22 A. That's what it says, yes.
- Q. Okay. If you would, go to page 6 of
- 24 6 in the top left. There's an indication of a
- 25 signature of Christine Doyle as clerk of

- 1 council at the bottom.
- Do you see that signature?
- 3 A. I do.
- 4 O. Do you recognize that as her
- 5 signature?
- 6 A. I can't tell you what her
- 7 signature -- I mean, I assume that's her
- 8 signature, yes. She signed it.
- 9 Q. Okay.
- 10 A. I don't have her signature
- 11 memorized.
- 12 Q. Now, if I can go to the first page,
- 13 and it says under item Roman numeral IV,
- 14 Acceptance of the Agenda and Minutes. There's
- 15 an indication of category 1 under there,
- 16 Changes to the agenda. It says Mr. Fox asked
- 17 to add Proclamation 18-01 to New Business.
- 18 Do you see that?
- 19 A. Yes.
- Q. When Mr. Fox asked that during that
- 21 council meeting to add Proclamation 18-01 to
- 22 new business, did you know what Proclamation
- 23 18-01 was?
- 24 A. I don't recall.
- Q. Do you recall if anybody asked

- 1 Mr. Fox, what is Proclamation 18-01?
- 2 A. I don't recall.
- 4 identification.)
- 5 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 6 Q. I'm going to hand you what's been
- 7 marked as Exhibit 3.
- 8 A. Okay.
- 9 Q. Do you recognize this as being
- 10 Proclamation 18-01?
- 11 A. Yeah.
- 12 Q. And that is your signature at the
- 13 bottom?
- 14 A. It is. I can guarantee you that's
- 15 my signature.
- 16 O. Say again.
- 17 A. I can guarantee you that is my
- 18 signature.
- 19 Q. That is your signature. And it also
- 20 has, it looks like, on the bottom of the first
- 21 page on to the second page, signatures of the
- 22 other members of council?
- 23 A. Yeah. It appears to be that way,
- 24 yes.
- Q. And it looks like seven total

- 1 signatures. That's the number of --
- 2 A. Yes.
- 3 Q. Seven signatures?
- 4 A. Seven signatures.
- 5 O. And those seven members of council?
- 6 A. Those were seven members of council
- 7 at the time.
- 8 Q. Very good.
- 9 When did you first see this
- 10 proclamation in printed form?
- 11 A. I don't recall.
- 12 Q. Did you see it before the meeting of
- 13 April 23rd, 2018, or did you first see it at
- 14 the meeting of April 23rd, 2018?
- 15 A. I -- I -- I can't speculate because
- 16 I think I saw it at that meeting.
- 17 Q. You did see it at the meeting?
- 18 A. I can't -- I can't remember.
- No. I didn't. I don't -- I don't
- 20 recall. Sorry.
- Q. You don't recall when you first saw
- 22 this proclamation?
- 23 A. I don't.
- Q. When did you first become aware of
- 25 the potential of filing a vexatious lawsuit --

- 1 litigator lawsuit against Mr. Oppenheimer?
- 2 A. I don't have a date for you. I
- 3 can't --
- 4 O. Did it first come up at the meeting
- 5 or were you aware of it prior to the meeting of
- 6 April 23, 2018?
- 7 A. I don't -- I don't recall. I really
- 8 don't remember if it came first or what came
- 9 first.
- 10 Q. When you went into the executive
- 11 session on April 23, 2018, did you know it was
- 12 to talk about filing a vexatious litigation
- 13 lawsuit against Mr. Oppenheimer?
- 14 A. Are these the minutes?
- 15 Q. You're looking at Exhibit 2. Yes,
- 16 those are the minutes. If you look, I think,
- 17 at the bottom of page 5 --
- 18 A. It will tell you exactly why we went
- 19 into executive session on here because we
- announce why we go.
- 21 Q. If you look at the bottom of page 5
- 22 of 6 of Exhibit 2, that being the minutes from
- 23 April 23, 2018, it says Proclamation 18-01.
- 24 Mr. Fox said the Proclamation is related to
- 25 pending or imminent litigation and advised

- 1 Council to adjourn into Executive --
- 2 correction -- advise Council adjourn into
- 3 Executive Session to discuss.
- 4 Then it says a Motion to adjourn
- 5 into Executive Session for the purpose of
- 6 discussing pending litigation and to discuss
- 7 the sale or purchase of property for public
- 8 purposes.
- 9 A. Well, it's right there. We
- 10 discussed pending litigation, purchase or sale
- 11 of property, and public purposes.
- 12 Q. What pending -- what litigation was
- 13 pending at the time?
- 14 A. We had a lot.
- 15 Q. What did they --
- 16 A. So I don't --
- 17 Q. Okay. You said you had a lot. Do
- 18 you know?
- 19 THE WITNESS: Isn't that protected?
- 20 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- Q. You had a lot of pending litigation
- 22 you just testified to.
- What litigation was pending at the
- 24 time?
- MR. ROBERTS: Pending litigation is

- 1 a public record.
- 2 A. I'm not sure what was pending in
- 3 2018.
- 4 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 5 Q. Well, you just testified under oath
- 6 that you had a lot of pending litigation.
- 7 Can you tell me any of the pending
- 8 litigation --
- 9 A. No, I can't.
- 10 O. -- at the time?
- 11 A. I don't know. So there is always
- 12 litigation that is out there. So 2018,
- 13 April 2018, I can't -- I can't speculate
- 14 without having records in front of me. I'm
- 15 sorry. But if he said pending litigation, it
- 16 was something that was open at that time.
- 17 (Defendant's Exhibit 4 was marked for
- identification.)
- 19 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- Q. I'm going to hand you what's been
- 21 marked as Exhibit 4.
- This is a filing from the Hamilton
- 23 County Common Pleas courts. And those are the
- 24 administrative appeal. It indicates that a
- 25 C. Scott Gehring is suing Madeira Planning

- 1 Commission and the City of Madeira. It was
- 2 Filed on January 18, 2017.
- 3 Are you familiar with this lawsuit?
- 4 A. Yes, I am.
- 5 Q. Was that pending on April 23, 2018?
- 6 A. It could have been. I don't know
- 7 when it was dropped.
- 8 THE WITNESS: Is there something in
- 9 here that says when it was --
- 10 MR. ROBERTS: Don't worry about it.
- 11 Just answer his question.
- 12 THE WITNESS: Okay.
- 13 A. I don't know.
- 14 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 15 Q. Who is Scott Gehring?
- 16 A. He's a council member.
- 17 Q. Do you know how this lawsuit or this
- 18 administrative appeal got resolved?
- 19 A. I'm pretty sure that Scott re --
- 20 took it out, but I'm not sure exactly. You
- 21 know, I think he withdrew it.
- 22 Q. Okay. So back to the meeting of
- 23 April 23, 2018; you cannot tell me any of the
- 24 pending litigation, though you've identified
- 25 there was a lot of pending litigation at the

- 1 time?
- 2 A. Well, I will say that I'm not sure
- 3 if there was a lot of pending litigation.
- 4 There always seems to be something that we
- 5 discuss under pending litigation.
- 6 O. It talks about to discuss the
- 7 purchase or sale of property for public
- 8 purposes that was discussed in this meeting.
- 9 A. Okay.
- 10 Q. Was it for the purchase or the sale
- 11 of property?
- 12 A. I don't know. I don't know what we
- 13 were talking about at that point. This is over
- 14 a year ago.
- 15 Q. When you went into the executive
- 16 session, what was the -- you would -- strike
- 17 that.
- You would agree with me, according
- 19 to the official minutes, that the motion to
- 20 adjourn into executive session only identified
- 21 the discussion of pending litigation and did
- 22 not include imminent litigation, correct?
- 23 A. I assume so.
- 24 O. And during this executive session,
- 25 the general topic included the filing of a

- 1 vexatious litigation lawsuit against
- 2 Mr. Oppenheimer, correct?
- 3 A. I'm not -- I'm not sure if that -- I
- 4 know we were on the floor.
- 5 O. Excuse me. You were on the floor?
- 6 A. We were on the floor when we
- 7 accepted the proclamation. We weren't in
- 8 executive session.
- 9 Q. Well, you came out and adopted it
- 10 after the executive session. If you go on to
- 11 page 6, you return from executive session, then
- 12 there's a motion to accept Proclamation 18-01.
- Do you see that on page 6?
- 14 A. Yes, I do. I see that, yes.
- 15 Q. So Mr. Fox comes in that evening,
- 16 says I want to add a Proclamation 18-01 --
- 17 A. Okay.
- 18 Q. -- to the agenda. Then announces
- 19 the proclamation is related to pending or
- 20 imminent litigation and advise counsel to
- 21 adjourn into the executive session.
- 22 A. Okay.
- 23 Q. And then you come out of executive
- 24 session and the council adopts Proclamation
- 25 18-01.

- 1 Do you see that?
- 2 A. I do. So I assume we discussed it,
- 3 yes.
- 4 O. Was Proclamation 18-01 that is
- 5 Exhibit 3 presented to you in the executive
- 6 session?
- 7 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Asked and
- answered.
- 9 Go ahead, Traci.
- 10 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 11 Q. You can answer.
- MR. ROBERTS: You can go ahead.
- 13 A. I don't know. I don't know if it
- 14 was typed up after or before.
- 15 Obviously, Scott Gehring signed it,
- 16 so -- he wasn't there, so some people signed it
- 17 after.
- 18 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 19 Q. Well, you said -- you signed it, it
- 20 says, in witness whereof -- I'm looking at
- 21 Exhibit 3. In witness whereof, I have hereunto
- 22 issued this Proclamation this 23rd day of
- 23 April 2018.
- 24 Do you see that?
- 25 A. I do see that.

- 1 Q. Did you sign it on the 23rd day of
- 2 April 2018?
- 3 A. I can't say that I did. I don't
- 4 know.
- 5 Q. So you may have backdated it
- 6 after -- when you signed it?
- 7 MR. ROBERTS: Objection.
- 8 Go ahead. You can answer.
- 9 A. I don't know. I assume it was in
- 10 typed form after and we signed it. I probably
- 11 delivered it on the 23rd.
- 12 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 13 Q. Well, when you came out of executive
- 14 session and you voted -- strike that.
- 15 If you look at page 6 of the minutes
- 16 that is Exhibit 2, it indicates that you voted
- 17 yes to accept Proclamation 18-01, correct?
- 18 A. Correct, on August 23rd.
- 19 Q. Correct. If the document that is
- 20 Exhibit 3 was not typed up and presented to
- 21 you, what were you voting on then?
- 22 A. This proclamation.
- 23 Q. So it was typed up when you voted on
- 24 it?
- 25 A. It wasn't probably in this form.

- 1 Q. What form would it have been in?
- 2 A. Well, either -- I mean, there wasn't
- 3 like a signature page or anything like that.
- 4 There was probably the wording of it.
- 5 MR. ROBERTS: Traci, don't quess.
- Just tell him what you remember.
- 7 A. Okay. I don't remember.
- 8 MR. ROBERTS: If you remember,
- great. If you don't, that's --
- 10 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 11 Q. Do you recall coming out of the
- 12 executive session and Mr. Fox reading
- 13 Proclamation 18-01 in its entirety?
- 14 A. I do not remember August -- April --
- MR. OPPENHEIMER: Do you want to
- 16 play the recording?
- MR. HARTMAN: Hang on.
- 18 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 19 Q. Go ahead.
- 20 A. I don't remember. I don't remember
- 21 who read it; if it was me, if it was Fox.
- Q. But it was read publicly?
- A. Yes, it was.
- Q. What were they reading from?
- 25 A. I don't know. I don't know.

- 1 MR. ROBERTS: That's --
- 2 Q. Were they reading --
- 3 MR. ROBERTS: Hold on. Hold on.
- 4 Just because he asks you a
- 5 question -- you tell him what you recall
- 6 factually. If you can't recall, you
- 7 can't recall. That's it.
- 8 A. I don't know.
- 9 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 10 Q. Somebody was reading, though, from a
- 11 sheet of paper?
- 12 A. I don't know. I assume.
- Q. If you will, go to Exhibit 3.
- So by voting for Proclamation 18
- 15 (sic) that is Exhibit 3, you agree with the
- 16 propositions that are in there, the whereas
- 17 clauses?
- 18 A. Yes.
- 19 Q. If you can look at the second
- 20 whereas clause, can you read that out loud for
- 21 me?
- 22 A. Whereas, Mr. Oppenheimer continues
- 23 to make accusations of fraud, corruption, and
- 24 collusion against the City of Madeira's public
- 25 servants including the City Manager, Tax

- 1 Commissioner, Clerk of Council, Council
- 2 Members, and Law Director. This continues to
- 3 take place despite clear and unequivocal
- 4 judicial declarations and findings that his
- 5 accusations are false and without merit.
- 6 MR. ROBERTS: She's trying to take
- down what you say, so when you read
- 8 really fast, it's kind of difficult.
- 9 She's pretty good, though. I think
- 10 she picked that all up.
- 11 THE WITNESS: Okay.
- 12 MR. ROBERTS: Just be mindful when
- 13 you're doing that.
- 14 THE WITNESS: All right.
- MR. ROBERTS: Okay.
- 16 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 17 O. What does that have to do with
- 18 whether or not Mr. Oppenheimer is a vexatious
- 19 litigator?
- 20 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Legal
- 21 conclusion.
- You can go ahead and answer, Traci.
- 23 A. What do you mean?
- 24 He does -- he makes false statements
- 25 without merit about all of us.

- 1 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- Q. Okay. So you don't like what he
- 3 says?
- 4 MR. ROBERTS: Objection.
- 5 Go ahead.
- 6 A. I think he lies about us and says
- 7 that we're liars.
- 8 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 9 Q. Okay.
- 10 A. He attacks our integrity.
- 11 Q. And you don't like that?
- 12 A. Absolutely not. Nobody likes that.
- 13 Q. And that's kind of the gist as to
- 14 that second whereas clause that you just read?
- MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Misstates
- 16 the record.
- 17 Go ahead.
- 18 Same objection about legal
- 19 conclusion.
- Go ahead.
- 21 A. What was your question?
- 22 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 23 Q. You don't like him making all these
- 24 what you characterize as false lies about you,
- 25 et cetera, and other members of the city

- 1 government?
- 2 A. Well, me personally, I don't like
- 3 him attacking my integrity.
- 4 O. Okay. How has he attacked your
- 5 integrity, you personally?
- 6 A. Me personally. He has made false
- 7 statements about me, my family. He questions
- 8 my actions every time we would have some kind
- 9 of ruling.
- 10 He kind of leaves me alone now that
- 11 I'm not the mayor, but he constantly would, you
- 12 know, look for something that we were doing
- wrong.
- 14 O. And you did not like that?
- 15 A. You know, Mr. Hartman, I respect
- 16 Mr. Oppenheimer. I've known him since I was a
- 17 little girl.
- So I don't like what he does to the
- 19 city and I don't like what he does to our staff
- 20 and I don't like what he does to the council
- 21 members.
- 22 Q. Are there any other aspects of what
- 23 he does that's set forth in that second whereas
- 24 clause besides --
- 25 A. If you're trying to --

- 1 Q. -- besides what you just gave me?
- 2 A. No.
- 3 Q. I want to get down to the bottom of
- 4 the Proclamation 18-01 that you voted for, that
- 5 you signed the proclamation as mayor.
- 6 You indicate that the undersigned --
- 7 it indicates, the undersigned members of
- 8 Council do hereby proclaim our intention to
- 9 direct Law Director Brian W. Fox to explore the
- 10 filing of a civil action, pursuant to Ohio
- 11 Revised Code 2323.52, to have Mr. Philip
- 12 Douglas Oppenheimer declared a vexatious
- 13 litigator.
- 14 A. Correct.
- 15 Q. Do you see that?
- 16 A. Uh-huh.
- 17 Q. So at this stage, that is on
- 18 April 23rd, 2018, council was simply having
- 19 Mr. Fox explore the potential of a vexatious
- 20 litigation lawsuit?
- 21 A. My understanding is that Mr. Fox was
- 22 to explore it and then file it if -- but based
- 23 on legal advice, you know, like -- I'm not --
- 24 I'm --
- Q. His legal analysis?

- 1 A. His legal analysis. That was my
- 2 understanding.
- 3 Q. So not only was Mr. Fox supposed to
- 4 explore it, but if he felt there was legal
- 5 merit to it, Mr. Fox had the authority from
- 6 city council to file the lawsuit?
- 7 A. That was my understanding.
- 8 O. What was the basis of that
- 9 understanding?
- 10 A. My lack of knowing anything else. I
- 11 don't -- I'm not a lawyer by trade. I don't
- 12 know, but that was my understanding. My
- 13 personal understanding.
- 0. Right. But I'm trying to use the
- 15 language, looking at the language that --
- 16 A. And I'm telling you what I interpret
- 17 that to mean to me.
- 18 Q. Okay. Where do you get -- what
- 19 language indicates that he has the authority
- 20 then to proceed to file the lawsuit when it
- 21 says simply --
- 22 A. So Brian Fox --
- Q. Hang on.
- 24 A. Okay.
- 25 Q. You simply indicate it's the -- or

- 1 the council, and yet you voted for it -- this
- 2 proclamation says it's an intention to direct
- 3 him to explore the filing.
- 4 Where do we get from exploring the
- 5 filing of a lawsuit to actually the authority
- 6 to file that lawsuit?
- 7 A. You know, I'm just a mom. And I'm a
- 8 volunteer, basically, for the community. So I
- 9 rely on the law director for my legal advice
- 10 and legal counsel.
- 11 My personal interpretation was that
- 12 he was going to explore it. And if the legal
- 13 analysis said it was okay, he would file it.
- 14 That is my interpretation of what
- 15 this was about. That clause. I don't have any
- 16 legal training, therefore, I rely on the
- 17 experts.
- 18 Q. But I'm trying to figure out when
- 19 this really comes up for you to assess because
- 20 you say -- if you remember, Mr. Fox at the
- 21 beginning of the meeting wants to add the
- 22 proclamation to the agenda.
- 23 A. Correct.
- Q. You go into an executive session.
- 25 A. Correct.

- 1 Q. You tell me you don't even recall if
- 2 you even discussed the proclamation in
- 3 executive session --
- 4 A. It's a year ago.
- 5 Q. -- and then you come out -- and then
- 6 you come out and immediately adopt the
- 7 proclamation.
- 8 A. I don't know exactly what we
- 9 discussed.
- 10 Q. Okay. Would it be safe to say that
- 11 from your discussions -- and I don't want to
- 12 get into particulars, but generally speaking
- 13 from your discussions in the executive session
- 14 relative to Proclamation 18-01 and whether or
- 15 not Mr. Oppenheimer was or was not a vexatious
- 16 litigator, that your understanding was that we
- 17 were -- council was going to authorize the
- 18 proclamation and if Mr. Fox thought that there
- 19 was merit to it, he had the authority to file
- 20 the lawsuit?
- 21 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Asked and
- answered.
- Go ahead.
- 24 A. Whenever we take something on the
- 25 floor and we vote on it, you don't know how

- 1 people are going to vote. So you don't know if
- 2 it was going to be adopted at that point, so --
- 3 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 4 Q. No. I understand you're not going
- 5 to not adopt it, but that's not really my
- 6 question.
- 7 A. Okay.
- 8 Q. I'm just trying to figure out -- you
- 9 said your understanding was -- and I think --
- 10 A. I don't know --
- 11 Q. I think I understand what you're
- 12 getting at. I just, you know, just not --
- 13 maybe I'm not asking it the right way.
- I just look at the facts here in
- 15 this meeting from April 23, 2018. Mr. Fox
- 16 comes in, says I want to add Proclamation 18-01
- 17 to the agenda.
- 18 A. That's what the minutes say.
- 19 Q. Right. Nowhere in the minutes --
- 20 and if you want to take time to look through
- 21 the minutes, that is Exhibit 2, nowhere else in
- 22 the minutes does Proclamation 18-01 come up
- 23 until you get to the bottom of page 5 right
- 24 before the executive session where Mr. Fox says
- 25 the proclamation is relating to pending or

- 1 imminent litigation and advise council adjourn
- 2 into executive session to discuss.
- 3 A. Okay.
- 4 O. Okay. That's the only place I see
- 5 in the minutes when it first comes up.
- And you go into the executive
- 7 session and come out and adopt Proclamation
- 8 18-01. And I'm just trying to understand your
- 9 understanding of 18-01, which was not only to
- 10 have him explore -- that is Mr. Fox explore --
- 11 A. I told you my understanding.
- 12 O. But was it from your discussions in
- 13 the executive session, or when else would you
- 14 have discussed it and arrived at that
- 15 understanding?
- 16 A. My understanding -- yeah. I mean,
- 17 obviously we went into executive session and we
- 18 talked about this and we came out and adopted
- 19 it.
- 20 Q. All right. And based upon that,
- 21 your understanding not only was he going to
- 22 explore it, but if he --
- 23 A. That is my personal understanding of
- 24 what that meant.
- Q. That based upon that, you come out,

- 1 you adopt, that your understanding was not only
- 2 was he going to explore it, but if he felt
- 3 there was merit to it, he could go ahead and
- 4 file the lawsuit?
- 5 A. Correct.
- 6 O. I would just note, I think the next
- 7 council meeting -- by the time the next council
- 8 meeting happens, the lawsuit had already been
- 9 filed. So I just want to make sure what
- 10 triggered -- it was May 14th is when I believe
- 11 the next council meeting would be.
- 12 A. Okay.
- 13 Q. I'm just trying to figure out what
- 14 triggered the filing of the lawsuit. I
- 15 understand exploring it.
- And so because the issue again,
- 17 though, came up recently, did it not, at
- 18 council about the authorization of the lawsuit?
- 19 Is that -- in August of this past year?
- 20 A. You're going to have to give me
- 21 something else.
- Q. Okay. Let me give you a document.
- 23 See if this helps refresh your recollection.
- A. I was over two years of meetings.
- 25 You got to --

- 1 (Defendant's Exhibit 5 was marked for
- identification.)
- 3 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 4 O. I'm handing you what's been marked
- 5 as Exhibit 5. And it indicates it's at the
- 6 Regular Meeting of Madeira City Council,
- 7 August 12th, 2019. That it indicates a Motion
- 8 Clarifying City Council's Authorization --
- 9 MR. ROBERTS: Which bullet point are
- 10 you reading from, Counsel?
- 11 MR. HARTMAN: Please?
- 12 MR. ROBERTS: Which of these bullet
- points are you reading from?
- MR. HARTMAN: No. I'm reading from
- 15 the title.
- MR. ROBERTS: Okay.
- 17 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 18 Q. Motion Clarifying City Council's
- 19 Authorization Regarding the Vexatious Litigator
- 20 Filing, and Advising of Council's Intentions
- 21 Should That Action Require an Appeal or
- 22 Refiling.
- 23 A. Okay.
- Q. Does that refresh your recollection
- 25 from what happened four months ago or so, five

- 1 months ago?
- 2 A. Okay.
- 3 Q. Does that refresh your recollection
- 4 as to what happened four or five months ago on
- 5 this matter?
- 6 A. I don't know what I had for
- 7 breakfast yesterday, so -- sure. A little bit.
- 8 If it's got my signature on it.
- 9 Q. When you're saying you have
- 10 absolutely no recollection about anything that
- 11 happens at past council meetings, are you a
- 12 council member that just flushes everything out
- of your memory at the end of a council meeting?
- MR. ROBERTS: Objection.
- 15 You don't need to answer that.
- 16 That's a ridiculous question.
- 17 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 18 Q. Do you flush everything out of your
- 19 mind at the end of council meetings?
- 20 MR. ROBERTS: Go ahead and answer
- 21 that.
- 22 A. Sure.
- 23 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. Not everything, but -- I mean,

- 1 there's so much time that passes between each
- 2 council meeting that you can't remember every
- 3 detail.
- 4 So you're telling me that we did
- 5 this, I recall this.
- 6 O. You recall it. That's all. I'm not
- 7 asking for details right now. I'm just
- 8 asking -- you recall this fact, right?
- 9 Correct?
- 10 A. Yes. It's familiar.
- 11 (Defendant's Exhibit 6 was marked for
- identification.)
- 13 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 0. Hand you what's been marked as
- 15 Exhibit 6. Maybe this will help you remember
- 16 what happened at a council meeting four to five
- months ago.
- 18 A. That's why we have minutes.
- 19 Q. So I've handed you what's been
- 20 marked as Exhibit 6. And I would indicate were
- 21 the minutes taken from the website for
- 22 August 12th, 2019.
- You were at this meeting?
- 24 A. I was present.
- Q. And this motion comes up, I think,

- 1 on page 5 of 7.
- 2 Middle of the page there's a motion
- 3 to go into executive session for the purpose of
- 4 discussing pending litigation.
- 5 Do you see that?
- 6 A. I do see that.
- 7 Q. What pending litigation was going to
- 8 be discussed in the executive session?
- 9 A. I don't know. Whatever was pending
- 10 at that point.
- 11 Q. Was this lawsuit -- vexatious
- 12 litigator lawsuit -- read the minutes if you
- 13 have to to help refresh your recollection.
- 14 A. The date is right here on the
- 15 lawsuit, so yes, this one was pending, right?
- 16 O. The question is, was that -- was
- 17 this lawsuit the subject of discussion --
- 18 A. I don't know what pending litigation
- 19 we discussed.
- 20 O. You have no recollection of that
- 21 executive session?
- 22 A. We discuss a lot of things in
- 23 executive session. So for you to ask me what
- 24 specific thing we did at that moment, I have no
- 25 idea.

- 1 Q. So reviewing the minutes you cannot
- 2 tell me what pending litigation was discussed
- 3 in the executive session?
- 4 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Asked and
- 5 answered a couple times.
- Go ahead.
- 7 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 8 Q. If you can, take a minute to review
- 9 following Section XIV, Litigation Clarification
- 10 on page 5.
- Do you see that on page 5?
- 12 A. Right here, yeah.
- 13 Q. It indicates first that you come out
- 14 with a motion to come out of executive session?
- 15 A. Uh-huh.
- 16 Q. Do you know how you voted on that
- 17 motion to come out of executive session?
- 18 MR. ROBERTS: How Traci voted?
- 19 A. How I voted?
- 20 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 21 Q. Yes.
- 22 A. I voted yes to come out of executive
- 23 session.
- Q. How do you know that if it's not in
- 25 the minutes?

- 1 A. Because I'm not in executive session
- 2 anymore.
- 3 Q. But you know you voted yes on that
- 4 motion?
- 5 A. Otherwise, I'd still be in executive
- 6 session.
- 7 Q. How can the public determine who
- 8 voted on that motion to come out of executive
- 9 session?
- 10 A. I don't know.
- 11 Q. Do you see a roll call vote or any
- 12 vote indicated on that motion in these minutes?
- 13 A. Obviously, if they voted no to come
- 14 out of executive session, they'd still be in
- 15 executive session.
- 16 O. That's not the question.
- 17 Do you see any vote indicated on
- 18 that motion to come out of executive session?
- 19 A. No, I do not.
- 20 O. Then under item 1 it indicates
- 21 Motion Clarifying City Council's Authorization
- 22 Regarding the Vexatious Litigator Filing, and
- 23 Advising of Council's Intentions should the
- 24 Action Require an Appeal or Refiling.
- Do you see that heading?

- 1 A. I do.
- Q. Then there's a long paragraph. Take
- 3 your time to read the entire paragraph
- 4 indicating what Mr. Fox explained.
- 5 Let me know when you're done
- 6 reading, please.
- 7 A. Okay.
- 8 Q. Did that help refresh your
- 9 recollection as to what was discussed during
- 10 the executive session?
- 11 A. I'll tell you what it reflects is I
- 12 remember being in the courtroom and -- yes.
- 13 And then -- because you were there.
- 14 O. You're talking in the courtroom, not
- 15 in the executive session?
- 16 A. Yeah. So this rings a bell, yes.
- 17 Q. And it helps refresh your
- 18 recollection as to what was discussed,
- 19 generally speaking, in the executive session
- 20 that night?
- 21 A. Not all of it, but some of it, yeah.
- Q. And part of the conversation
- 23 concerned this pending lawsuit against
- 24 Mr. Oppenheimer?
- 25 A. Yeah. I'm pretty sure the election

- 1 one was still hanging out there, too, but I
- 2 don't know the dates.
- 3 Q. When you say the election one --
- 4 A. The lawsuit that Mr. Oppenheimer
- 5 filed about the election.
- 6 O. The one challenging --
- 7 A. Special --
- 8 Q. -- challenging the certification to
- 9 the board of elections --
- 10 A. Special elections, yeah.
- I don't know if it was still out
- 12 there then or not, but --
- 13 Q. Now, if you look at Mr. Fox's
- 14 statement, in the second sentence it says --
- 15 partway through the sentence, it says, Council
- 16 is undertaking this motion to make plain for
- 17 the Court that the past authorization, prior to
- 18 the commencement of the suit, was in place, and
- 19 that going forward Council's also authorizing
- 20 actions to be taken relative to that case.
- 21 Do you see that?
- 22 A. I do.
- Q. Do you agree with the proposition in
- 24 that statement that the past authorization
- 25 prior to the commencement of the suit was in

- 1 place?
- 2 A. I do.
- 3 Q. Okay. When did council give that
- 4 authorization?
- 5 A. I told you. My feeling is that we
- 6 gave it to him in that proclamation. That is
- 7 my personal feeling.
- Q. Okay. That's your feeling, but can
- 9 you can point to anything where council as a
- 10 whole authorized it, other than that
- 11 Proclamation 18-01?
- 12 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Asked and
- answered.
- Go ahead.
- 15 A. I told you, that's my understanding
- 16 of what we were doing.
- 17 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 18 Q. Okay. Now, it indicates that you
- 19 read the following motion later on here.
- 20 Do you see that?
- 21 A. Yes.
- Q. Do you recall reading that motion?
- 23 A. It says that I read it, so I
- 24 probably read it.
- Q. I didn't ask you what it says. I

- 1 said, do you recall reading the motion?
- 2 A. No, I do not. Not specifically.
- 3 Q. Go over to page 6. Third bullet
- 4 down. And it says, Council moves to clarify
- 5 that this Motion was made in response to a
- 6 specific decision issued by the Court in Case
- 7 No. A1802415 (a decision which considers
- 8 neither the authorization provided by City
- 9 Council in 2018 nor the City Manager's
- 10 authorization in connection therewith).
- 11 Do you see that portion --
- 12 A. I do see that.
- 13 Q. -- portion of the bullet point I
- 14 read?
- 15 It references the authorization
- 16 provided by city council in 2018.
- 17 When did the city council authorize
- 18 the lawsuit in 2018 as indicated there?
- 19 A. I told you. In the proclamation
- 20 that was my feeling that we had authorized it.
- Q. Do you recall in this executive
- 22 session, that is August 12th, 2019, who else
- 23 was in the executive session?
- A. On August 12th?
- 25 Q. Yes.

- 1 A. Whoever was present at -- so --
- 2 O. So --
- 3 A. One, two, three, four, five, six,
- 4 seven.
- 5 O. The seven council members?
- 6 A. Plus Brian Fox, plus Tom Moeller,
- 7 plus Lori.
- Q. Lori Thompson, the assistant city
- 9 manager?
- 10 A. Uh-huh.
- 11 Q. Mr. Schaefer, the police chief?
- 12 A. No.
- 13 Q. The clerk of council --
- 14 A. No.
- 15 Q. -- Ms. Doyle?
- 16 A. No.
- 17 Q. Okay. Is that generally who was
- 18 always in executive sessions?
- 19 A. Yeah.
- 20 Q. I didn't hear you.
- 21 A. Yes.
- 0. Okay. Who invited or authorized
- 23 Mr. Moeller to come into the executive session?
- A. We always -- we can invite whoever
- 25 we want and we always invite Mr. Moeller.

- 1 Q. Who invited Ms. Thompson into the
- 2 executive session?
- 3 A. We always invite Ms. Thompson.
- 4 0. So council makes the decision to
- 5 invite them into?
- 6 A. Uh-huh. Council can invite whoever
- 7 they want into executive session.
- 8 Q. Can you show me where in the minutes
- 9 here that council authorized and made the
- 10 decision to invite Mr. Moeller and Ms. Thompson
- 11 into the executive session?
- 12 A. It's not the minutes. It's just a
- 13 standing invitation.
- 14 (Defendant's Exhibit 7 was marked for
- identification.)
- 16 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 17 Q. Hand you what's been marked as
- 18 Exhibit 7. I will represent to you these are
- 19 the codified ordinances of the City of Madeira,
- 20 Chapter 30, as taken from the Madeira
- 21 government web page.
- 22 Again, turn to page 5. Top right
- 23 corner is the number. And I'm looking third
- 24 paragraph down. It starts with a number 2 in
- 25 parens.

- 1 It states, Executive sessions shall
- 2 be limited to Council members, except that
- 3 those public officials or other persons who are
- 4 necessary or helpful for the discussion of the
- 5 subject matter of the executive session may be
- 6 included upon invitation of the Council members
- 7 requesting the executive session with the
- 8 consent of a majority of Council.
- 9 Do you see that?
- 10 A. I do see that.
- 11 Q. So I was asking you with respect to
- 12 the executive session held on August 12th,
- 13 2019, where is the indication of a consent of a
- 14 majority of council that Mr. Fox, Mr. Moeller,
- or Ms. Thompson joined the council members in
- 16 the executive session?
- 17 A. We had --
- 18 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Asked and
- answered.
- Go ahead.
- 21 A. We have a standing invitation for
- 22 them.
- 23 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- Q. Where is that documented, that
- 25 standing invitation?

- 1 A. I'm not sure.
- Q. Has it ever been documented, to your
- 3 knowledge?
- 4 A. To my knowledge, I don't know.
- 5 Q. Are you aware during your time on
- 6 counsel from December 2013 to the present, have
- 7 you ever been made -- or voted on a motion to
- 8 invite people into executive sessions?
- 9 A. We have asked people to come to
- 10 executive session beyond those people that are
- 11 there, yes.
- 12 Q. Okay. Such as?
- 13 A. Christine Parker has been in to
- 14 discuss her lease. We've had -- I can't think
- 15 of anybody else. That's the most recent.
- 16 O. Christine Parker to discuss her
- 17 lease?
- 18 A. She rents one of our city-owned
- 19 buildings.
- Q. When did that take place?
- 21 A. This was just recently. Like just a
- 22 couple weeks ago.
- 23 Q. So you went into executive session
- 24 to discuss a lease of public property?
- 25 A. Yes. Yes. She already had a lease.

- 1 She wanted clarification.
- 2 Q. Do you know what authority or basis
- 3 went into executive session to discuss that
- 4 lease?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. It's
- 7 totally irrelevant to the purpose of this
- 8 deposition.
- 9 I instruct you not to answer.
- 10 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 11 Q. Are you refusing to answer?
- 12 MR. ROBERTS: I think she did
- answer, but to the extent you ask another
- 14 question about it.
- 15 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 16 O. So when Ms. Parker went into the
- 17 executive session, was there a motion or a vote
- 18 to indicate that she was invited into the
- 19 executive session?
- 20 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Instruct
- 21 you not to answer.
- Go ahead.
- You don't take my instruction?
- 24 THE WITNESS: Oh, did you say not
- answer?

- 1 MR. ROBERTS: I did.
- THE WITNESS: Okay. Sorry.
- 3 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 4 Q. During your time on council since
- 5 December 2013 to the present, have you ever
- 6 been involved or had a motion or a vote to
- 7 expressly invite and authorize a person other
- 8 than council members to come into an executive
- 9 session?
- 10 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Asked and
- answered.
- 12 Go ahead.
- 13 THE WITNESS: You want me to answer
- 14 now?
- MR. ROBERTS: Yeah.
- 16 A. Okay. I don't know if we've had
- 17 like a -- a vote on that, but we have, in the
- 18 past, either the mayor or someone said can we
- 19 invite so-and-so into executive session.
- 20 And it has always been the
- 21 understanding that we can invite whoever we
- 22 want into executive session.
- 23 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- Q. Subject to the consent of the
- 25 majority of council.

- 1 Do you see that in your ordinance?
- 2 A. Yeah. So if somebody would object
- 3 to it, then we would have heard. It doesn't
- 4 say it has to be voted on.
- 5 MR. ROBERTS: Just answer the
- 6 question.
- 7 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 8 Q. But you would agree it's taking
- 9 official action to invite somebody into an
- 10 executive session, right?
- 11 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Misstates
- 12 facts.
- Go ahead.
- 14 A. What did you want me to --
- 15 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 16 O. That is an official action on behalf
- 17 of council to invite somebody into an executive
- 18 session.
- 19 MR. ROBERTS: Objection.
- 20 Go ahead.
- 21 A. We can invite whoever we want to
- 22 discuss something if we need more information.
- 23 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- Q. That wasn't my question.
- The question is you would agree it's

- 1 official action by council to invite somebody
- 2 into executive session?
- 3 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Calls for
- 4 legal conclusion.
- 5 Go ahead.
- 6 A. I don't know what you mean by
- 7 official act. I mean, what do you mean by
- 8 official act?
- 9 THE WITNESS: Do I have a legal --
- 10 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 11 Q. I'll clarify. You want me to
- 12 clarify?
- 13 It's an act of council to invite
- 14 somebody in. Would you agree with that
- 15 proposition?
- 16 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Calls for
- 17 a legal conclusion.
- 18 Go ahead.
- 19 A. I'm not sure. Any council member
- 20 can say, can we invite somebody in? So I'm not
- 21 sure what you mean by official action.
- 22 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- Q. Do you recall how you first heard
- 24 that the lawsuit had actually been filed
- 25 against Mr. Oppenheimer?

- 1 A. I do not recall.
- 2 Q. Do you recall when you received a
- 3 copy -- have you ever received a copy of the
- 4 complaint or the amended complaint filed in the
- 5 action?
- 6 A. I have a file of the complaint right
- 7 here. I don't know. I mean, I've seen it but
- 8 I don't know that I have a copy of it.
- 9 Q. What do you mean, you've seen it
- 10 previous?
- 11 A. I've probably, you know, either been
- 12 e-mailed it or -- I was the mayor at the time,
- 13 so I probably got it e-mailed to me.
- 0. What is your understanding as to
- 15 what it means for somebody to be a vexatious
- 16 litigator?
- 17 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Legal
- 18 conclusion.
- Go ahead.
- 20 A. That means that Mr. Oppenheimer
- 21 would have to get authorization from the court
- 22 to actually file a lawsuit.
- 23 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- Q. Okay. That's the result of somebody
- 25 being declared a vexatious litigator.

- 1 A. That's what you asked me, isn't it?
- Q. No. I asked you what it means for
- 3 somebody to be a vexatious litigator.
- 4 MR. ROBERTS: Objection.
- 5 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 6 Q. Your layman's understanding.
- 7 MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Legal
- 8 conclusion.
- 9 Go ahead.
- 10 A. I just told you.
- 11 You said if he's a vexatious
- 12 litigator --
- 13 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 14 O. No, I didn't say if.
- 15 A. -- what that means.
- 16 O. No. What does it mean for somebody
- 17 to be a vexatious litigator, not what's the
- 18 ramifications or the consequences?
- 19 A. Someone that files meritless
- 20 lawsuits against a party.
- Q. Okay. And by your voting for and
- 22 supporting Proclamation 18-01 and the filing of
- 23 this lawsuit, you believe Mr. Oppenheimer falls
- 24 within that group?
- 25 A. Yes, I do.

- 1 O. You're aware that one of the cases
- 2 underlying that claim of him being a vexatious
- 3 litigator concerned the historic properties,
- 4 the Muchmore House, I believe, and whether or
- 5 not the city could sell or dispose of certain
- 6 property on it.
- 7 Do you understand that?
- 8 A. Yeah. Historical asphalt.
- 9 Q. You were on council at the time,
- 10 correct?
- 11 A. I was.
- 12 Q. You have a general recollection of
- 13 that lawsuit?
- 14 A. T.do. T.do.
- 15 Q. What was your understanding as to
- 16 what the issue was in that lawsuit?
- 17 A. Well, first of all I want to state
- 18 that I am not a planning commission member. So
- 19 I don't have all the knowledge of zone.
- Q. No. I'm just asking your
- 21 understanding based upon --
- 22 A. My understanding was that, you know,
- 23 there was a piece of property that we were
- 24 going to -- it was the historic -- I call it
- 25 the historical asphalt. That there was a piece

- 1 of property that we were going to switch with a
- 2 developer. And the objection, from my
- 3 understanding, is that Mr. Oppenheimer was
- 4 upset saying that that was historical property,
- 5 the asphalt.
- 6 Q. And that the charter provision
- 7 restricted or prohibited that distribution? Do
- 8 you recall the charter coming into play?
- 9 A. Yeah. The charter amendment that
- 10 Mr. Oppenheimer wrote.
- 11 Q. And that the voters of the City of
- 12 Madeira passed overwhelmingly, correct?
- 13 A. Yeah.
- 0. And so Mr. Oppenheimer, basically,
- 15 was saying I don't think they can -- the City
- 16 can dispose of this portion of the property
- 17 because the charter doesn't allow for it?
- 18 A. The charter amendment that he wrote,
- 19 yes.
- 20 (Defendant's Exhibit 8 was marked for
- 21 identification.)
- 22 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- Q. Handing you what's been marked
- 24 Exhibit 8. I'll represent to you this is a
- 25 filing taken from the Hamilton County Common

- 1 Pleas Court in the lawsuit we were just talking
- 2 about, the historic asphalt property.
- 3 This is actually the answer and
- 4 counterclaim that the City of Madeira and
- 5 Mr. Moeller filed.
- If you can go to page 5, I'm looking
- 7 at paragraph 13 of the counterclaim that was
- 8 filed by the City of Madeira.
- 9 A. Wait a minute. I'm not on the --
- 10 Q. Fifth page back. You're on the
- 11 exhibits. You're going too far.
- 12 A. My point is, I just looked at this.
- 13 I'm not even on council.
- 14 O. You were not on council then?
- 15 A. Wait a minute. On this one. On
- 16 Exhibit 1, I'm not on council.
- 17 Q. Exhibit 1 indicates it was passed on
- 18 October 22, 2012, which would be compatible
- 19 with when you --
- 20 A. When I'm not on council.
- 21 Q. -- were not on council.
- I'm looking at the counterclaim.
- 23 A. Oh, okay. Sorry. What page?
- 24 Q. Five.
- 25 A. Okay. Five.

- 1 Q. I'm looking at paragraph 13 of the
- 2 counterclaim that was filed by the City of
- 3 Madeira in this lawsuit over the authority of
- 4 the City of Madeira to take care of the
- 5 historic asphalt properties that you indicated.
- 6 A. Yeah.
- 7 Q. And paragraph 13 is, by the City of
- 8 Madeira says, A real and justiciable dispute
- 9 exists between the parties regarding the
- 10 rights, status, and other legal relations
- 11 arising from the foregoing facts. And that the
- 12 respondents -- that being the City of
- 13 Madeira and Mr. Moeller -- seek a declaratory
- 14 judgment regarding said rights.
- Do you see that in paragraph 13?
- 16 A. I do, yeah.
- 17 Q. So I'm lost from your understanding
- 18 as to why if the City of Madeira says a real
- 19 controversy or dispute exists regarding the
- 20 rights over these properties and that the City
- 21 of Madeira's saying we want to get a
- 22 declaration as to what these rights are, why is
- 23 it -- why would it be vexatious for Mr.
- 24 Oppenheimer to seek a similar right?
- MR. ROBERTS: Objection. Objection.

- 1 As counsel knows, it's formulated legal
- words. Calls for a legal conclusion.
- 3 Answer if you can. Go ahead.
- 4 THE WITNESS: I'm not really
- 5 understanding what he's asking anyway,
- 6 so --
- 7 BY MR. HARTMAN:
- 8 Q. Were you aware that the City of
- 9 Madeira filed a counterclaim saying, Court, we
- 10 want you to tell us what these rights are over
- 11 these properties?
- 12 A. Maybe -- I don't know. I don't
- 13 know. It's very confusing to me what all that
- 14 means.
- 15 Q. Have you been involved in litigation
- 16 before, personally or business-wise?
- 17 A. I am a CASA.
- 18 Q. Say again.
- 19 A. I'm a CASA.
- 20 Q. Okay.
- 21 A. So in dependency court is really the
- 22 extent.
- 23 Q. But in a personal capacity or as a
- 24 business owner you've not been involved in
- 25 litigation?

| 2  | Q. Congratulations to you on that.        |
|----|---|
| 3  | MR. HARTMAN: I'm going to take a          |
| 4  | brief break here.                         |
| 5  | (A recess was taken from 2:56 to 3:01.)   |
| 6  | MR. HARTMAN: We have no further           |
| 7  | questions. We will order a transcript.    |
| 8  | You do have the right to review this      |
| 9  | transcript for signature and to make any  |
| 10 | clerical or typographical errors that the |
| 11 | court reporter may have made.             |
| 12 | Do you wish to review the                 |
| 13 | transcript?                               |
| 14 | THE WITNESS: Okay.                        |
| 15 | MR. ROBERTS: We're going to take          |
| 16 | signature, yeah.                          |
| 17 | MR. HARTMAN: Okay.                        |
| 18 |   |
| 19 |   |
| 20 | TRACI THEIS                               |
| 21 |   |
| 22 |   |
| 23 | DEPOSITION ADJOURNED AT 3:02 P.M.         |
| 24 |   |
| 25 |   |

1

A. No. I was a teacher.

| 1  | CERTIFICATE  |
|----|--|
| 2  |  |
| 3  | STATE OF OHIO :  |
| 4  | : SS<br>COUNTY OF HAMILTON :                                       |
| 5  | I, Tracy L. Allen, RPR, RMR, the                                   |
| 6  | undersigned, a duly qualified and commissioned                     |
| 7  | notary public within and for the State of Ohio,                    |
| 8  | do certify that before the giving of her                           |
| 9  | deposition, TRACI THEIS was by me first duly                       |
| 10 | sworn to depose the truth, the whole truth and                     |
| 11 | nothing but the truth; that the foregoing is                       |
| 12 | the deposition given at said time and place by                     |
| 13 | TRACI THEIS; that I am neither a relative of                       |
| 14 | nor employee of any of the parties or their                        |
| 15 | counsel, and have no interest whatever in the                      |
| 16 | result of the action; and that I am not, nor is                    |
| 17 | the court reporting firm with which I am                           |
| 18 | affiliated, under a contract as defined in Ohio                    |
| 19 | Civil Rule 28(D).  |
| 20 | IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand                         |
| 21 | and official seal of office at Cincinnati, Ohio,                   |
| 22 | this 28th pay of February 2020                                     |
| 23 | say of war   |
| 24 | Tracy L. Allen, RPR, RMR   |
| 25 | Notary Public - State of Ohio My commission expires July 29, 2023. |

| 1  | ERRATA SHEET  |
|----|---|
| 2  | DEPOSITION OF: TRACI THEIS                              |
| 3  | TAKEN: FEBRUARY 17, 2020                                |
| 4  | Please make the following corrections to my transcript: |
| 5  | cranscript.   |
| 6  | Page Line Number Correction Made                        |
| 7  |   |
| 8  |   |
| 9  |   |
| 10 |   |
| 11 |   |
| 12 |   |
| 13 |   |
| 14 |   |
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| 20 |   |
| 21 |   |
| 22 |   |
| 23 | <u> </u>  |
| 24 |   |
| 25 | Witness Signature Date                                  |

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