



September 22, 2015

Mayor, Mayor Pro-tem and Councilmembers
City of Moreno Valley

Esteemed City Council:

Our office represents the Moreno Valley Management Association (MVMA), a group of 77 professional and mid-level managers employed by the City of Moreno Valley. The MVMA membership has always held the best interests of the City in high regard, and it is in this spirit that we communicate with you today.

The MVMA is concerned with the blurring of the line between policy creation and administration. The City is most effective when the City Council conducts its business in full cooperation with the City Manager's office with respect to administering the City's affairs. To do otherwise inevitably leads to problems of infinite variety, including but not limited to, decreased employee morale, which often impacts performance and increased exposure to liability and lawsuits.

The issue at hand is the Council's recent appointment of Vivian Moreno as an administrative volunteer. It has been brought to the Association's attention that Ms. Moreno, has on numerous occasions, made public comments about our members that have been both defamatory and damaging. They are aware of the fact that Ms. Moreno has specifically targeted one employee who works in the City Manager's office, It appears that Ms. Moreno's "vendetta" against staff commenced at Council meetings, but has continued, unabated, in her role as a volunteer. Her continuing disdain for City employees - one who she often identifies by name - is having a detrimental effect on employees citywide. It is also generating hostility within the work environment as a level which, if left unchecked, may take the form of legal complaint.

Members of the Association have identified these disruptive activities on Ms. Moreno's part:

- She has utilized her *Thirty Miles of Corruption* website to launch personal assaults and attacks against the City, Council Members and staff to disseminate meritless and baseless information.
- In her capacity as "volunteer," Ms. Moreno has repeatedly and regularly attacked on of our members on the Internet. Although the information she has published has been corrected by the City Manager's office, she has continue to



attempt to damage our members' professional reputations (as noted in the comments section of the Press Enterprise article entitled *Activist's Hiring Questioned by Imran Ghorri and the June 23, 2015 City Council meeting*).

- During a televised City Council Study Session on February 13, 2015, Ms. Moreno publicly accused the City's MVTV-3 staff members of unlawfully altering the video record of the City Council's January 27th meeting. In a subsequent meeting Ms. Moreno admitted she had not personally seen the video before leveling her accusation, causing all City employees to believe that the primary reason for the comments was to discredit the professionalism of the City staff. These actions undermine the legitimacy of the City's actions in the eyes of the public and demonstrate a reckless disregard for the employees' reputations.
- Employees at all levels are aware of Ms. Moreno's attacks. Ms. Moreno's recent threat to "evaluate" the City's management-level employees has created an increasing concern that those employees MVMA members who have devoted careers to making Moreno Valley a better place to live, work, play, and shop. The resulting demoralization is not good for City staff OR for the interests of the public.
- At this time, the MVMA is considering legal to defend our members against the slanderous comments in the workplace. They are also researching a possible complaint over cyber-bullying. The Association would like to remind you that no employee should be subjected to bullying and/or intimidation on the job.

The MVMA requests that the Council take immediate action to protect our members against continuing attacks on their characters at the workplace. According to City Administrative Policy 503, "Volunteer Policy", the authority to manage volunteers rests wholly with the City Manager. The Policy states that volunteers are required to abide by the same supervision, rules of conduct, and ethical standards as those which govern career employees. Section 8.20 Standards of Conduct of the City Personnel Rules & Regulations, states "City employees are prohibited from engaging in any conduct which could reflect unfavorably upon the City. The standards are intended to govern the actions of all City employees during their course of employment.... Employees who violate these standards shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions."

The Rules also states that "Employees shall always conduct themselves in a manner which reflects credit to the City and creates positive morale among City employees." The MVMA respectfully request that the Council requires this "volunteer" to abide by these Rules of appropriate civil behavior.



Our clients have advised us that, prior to becoming a volunteer for the City of Moreno Valley, Ms. Moreno was appointed to serve as "Aide to the Mayor." Now, however, it is clear that Ms. Moreno's comments and actions violate Section X of City Policy, Standard of Conduct for Volunteers, as she fails to conduct herself "in a manner which reflects credit to the City and creates positive morale among City employees." For this reason, we would like to request that the Council immediately revoke this appointment.

In summary, our clients believe that Ms. Moreno's presence in City Hall interferes with the daily conduct of business in this workplace. Her negativity, her personal attacks on specific employees, and her divisive statements about the City's goals, about our City Council members, and about our staff, has created a hostile work environment. We urge you, as the City's elected leaders, to play your role as leaders by removing her our workplace. Hopefully, this will enable our members to return to the focus for which they were hired: provide outstanding service, on a daily basis, to the residents of Moreno Valley. Thus, the Association strongly suggests that the Council:

- Recognize that this volunteer presence in City Hall is not in the City's best interest;
- Remove and replace this volunteer from our workplace; and
- Maintain a collaborative working relationship with the City Manager, who is charged with maintaining effectiveness of the operations of the City.

The MVMA wants you to know that its members have always, and will always, conduct themselves in a professional manner. We continue to support the partnership between the City Council and the City Manager's office, and support the application of the City's Personnel Rules to all participants. We recognize that the MVMA's comments have not been solicited by the Council, but we hope it is taken in the spirit by which it is offered: the spirit of partnership and support for our City's well-being.

Respectfully,

CEA

Cc: Michelle Dawson, City Manager
Thomas DeSantis, Assistant City Manager
Chris Paxton, Administrative Services Director
MVMA Board Representatives