

Ethics Complaint against Democrat Councilwoman – Part Three

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On June 13, 2023, Chief Hector Carrillo of the Bayard Police filed a formal complaint with the State of New Mexico Ethics Committee against City Councilwoman Frances Gonzales. The impetus for this was the pending charge of False Reporting, but there had been other incidences.*

The first incidence was on July 30, 2022 at the Cobre Consolidated School District's Summerfest. Annette Acosta, the school official and the event coordinator, had received a complaint from Sami Morales. Morales explained she had been walking by the city council tent when she overheard Councilwoman Gonzales state she was very unhappy that the Republican party tent was so close to her party's tent.

The Democrat tent was about two to three tents down, and Morales didn't know what the problem was. Councilor Gonzales according to Morales racially profiled her by saying, "Republican are racists and don't like people like us." Morales responded in Spanish, "We Republicans are for the working people." That started the argument.

Acosta requested Law Enforcement to stand by while she spoke with Gonzales advising her of that she needed to stay civil or leave. Councilwoman Gonzales agreed that no more problems would occur. Gonzales did state that she had an ongoing dispute with the members of the Republican Party.

Later at the Bayard Council Meeting, August 8, 2022, Sami Morales said that Council Gonzales's behavior did not reflect well on the city of Bayard especially by an elected official. She came to the meeting to get an apology. Councilor Gonzales did apologize for her actions.**

On January 30, 2023, Louis Gomez, the Animal Control Officer (ACO) for the City of Bayard, reported that the City Clerk Marlana Valenzuela had called him because of Councilwoman Gonzales. The councilwoman had requested Gomez to go to her residence, pick up her dogs, and transport them to the Town and Country Veterinary Clinic in Silver City. This wasn't a service Gomez or the City of Bayard provided to their citizens. Councilwoman Gomez was in the hospital at the time.

At a Workforce luncheon, City Clerk Marlana Valenzuela reported the following: "Councilwoman Gonzales displayed hostility towards people doing the registration because she thought they were Republicans. Since it was a luncheon, Gonzales wanted to know who was paying for it. When she found out it was Rebecca Dow, Councilwoman Gonzales stated there was no way Dow was going to be paying for our lunches and insisted on paying for our tickets.

She made all of us very uncomfortable. As we walked away I did apologize to the ladies. Her actions were very disappointing to the staff that was helping move the meeting along."

On June, 13, 2023 Police Chief Carrillo wrote to the State Ethics Committee that he found Gonzales's actions to be unethical and unprofessional as an elected official. He wanted the committee to find Gonzales accountable and do what was necessary to correct her misconduct.

Chief Carillo had been sent to the Ethics Committee by the state's Attorney General (AG). The Ethics Committee sent it back to Carillo on July 13th because they did not have jurisdiction. It was send back to the AG.

District Attorney Michael Renteria was sent the complaint for a recommendation for proceedings to remove Councilwoman Gonzales from elected office be commenced pursuant to NMSA 1978 S 10-4-1 et.seq as amended.

In January, Chief Carillo met with the Attorney General's office about the complaint. They said they would get back to him after the legislative sessions was over.

*Ethics Complaint and attached documents obtained through IPRA.

**Bayard Council Minutes, Lynn Janes, Grant County Beat