

TO:

Anne Morgan, City Attorney

Ethics Review Commission Brian Molloy, Chief Investigator Delia Garza, Mayor Pro Tem

FROM:

Jannette Goodall, City Clerk

DATE:

September 3, 2020

SUBJECT:

Sworn Complaint

The attached sworn complaint was received on September 3, 2020 in the Office of the City Clerk. It was filed by Brian Molloy, Chief of Investigations at Office of the City Auditor against Delia Garza, Mayor Pro Tem. You are receiving a copy of the complaint because you were identified by the complainant as someone who may have been involved or aware of the alleged inappropriate conduct.

Per City Code, Chapter 2-7-41(D), this letter serves as the Office of the City Clerk's acknowledgement that the complaint was received and as notice to all those named above, as required in the code.

Attachment

ETHICS REVIEW COMMISSION CHAPTER 2-7 CITY CODE COMPLAINT



NAME OF PERSON(S) FILING COMPLAINT: Brian Molloy, Chief of Investigations at Office of the City Auditor

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 1088, Austin TX, 78767-1088

PHONE NUMBER: (512) 974-2805

EMAIL ADDRESS: brian.molloy@austintexas.gov

PLEASE FILE A SEPARATE COMPLAINT FORM FOR EACH PERSON COMPLAINED AGAINST.

NAME OF PERSON COMPLAINED AGAINST: Delia Garza, Mayor Pro Tem

CITY OFFICE, DEPARTMENT, COMMISSION: City Council

MAILING ADDRESS: 301 W. 2nd Street, Austin TX 78701

PHONE NUMBER [IF KNOWN]: (512) 978-2102

EMAIL ADDRESS [IF KNOWN]: delia.garza@austintexas.gov

The Ethics Review Commission has jurisdiction to hear complaints alleging violation(s) of the following provisions:

- City Code, Chapter 2-1, Section 2-1-24 (City Boards, Conflict of Interest and Recusal)
- City Code, Chapter 2-2 (Campaign Finance)
- City Code, Chapter 2-7 (Ethics and Financial Disclosure), except for Article 6 (Antilobbying and Procurement)
- City Code, Chapter 4-8 (Regulation of Lobbyists)
- City Charter, Article III, Section 8 (Limits on Campaign Contributions and Expenditures)

PLEASE LIST EACH ALLEGED VIOLATION OF THE ABOVE CITY CODE AND CHARTER PROVISIONS SEPARATELY ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES.

SECTION OF CHARTER OR ORDINANCE VIOLATED: City Code 2-7-62(I)
DATE OF ALLEGED VIOLATION: October 2018 - Present
ACTIONS ALLEGED TO BE A VIOLATION: We found evidence indicating that Delia Garza. Mayor Pro Tem of the City Council, used her position to secure a special privilege for herself when she spent City funds from her office budget for personal expenses related to her license to practice law.
WITNESSES OR EVIDENCE THAT WOULD BE PRESENTED:(see attached report and exhibits)
CONTACT INFORMATION OF ANY PERSON(S), OTHER THAN THE PERSON COMPLAINED AGAINST, WHO IS IDENTIFIED BY NAME ABOVE OR IN ANY ATTACHMENTS AS INVOLVED IN THE ALLEGED INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT: (Leave blank if inapplicable.)
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SECTION OF CHARTER OR ORDINANCE VIOLATED: City Code 2-7-62(J)
DATE OF ALLEGED VIOLATION: October 2018 - Present
ACTIONS ALLEGED TO BE A VIOLATION: We found evidence indicating that Delia Garza, Mayor Pro Tem of the City Council, used City funds for private purposes to an extent not lawfully available to the general public when she used City funds for expenses related to her license to practice law.
WITNESSES OR EVIDENCE THAT WOULD BE PRESENTED: (see attached report and exhibits)
CONTACT INFORMATION OF ANY PERSON(S), OTHER THAN THE PERSON COMPLAINED AGAINST, WHO IS IDENTIFIED BY NAME ABOVE OR IN ANY ATTACHMENTS AS INVOLVED IN THE ALLEGED INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT: (Leave blank if inapplicable.)
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DATE: 9/3/2020	COMPLAINANTS SIGNATURE Brian Mollog PRINT NAME
STATE OF TEXAS	
COUNTY OF TRAVIS	
This instrument was acknowledged, sworn to	and subscribed before me by
the City of Hoten	Coly Cherke Officy
On the day of	culum, 2020, to certify which
witness my hand and official seal.	
As Rex	
Notary Public in and for the State of Texas	MYRNA RIOS
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Myrna Kus	Notery ID 11007377
Typed or Printed Name of Notary	

THIS FORM MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK.





Independent Investigation Report

Office Budget Expenditures for Mayor Pro Tem Delia Garza

Prepared for:

Office of the City Auditor



August 14, 2020

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Scope of Work

Weaver and Tidwell, L.L.P. ("Weaver") and Ross Fischer of Ross Fischer Law, PLLC ("Mr. Fischer") were retained by the Office of the City Auditor for the City of Austin (the "City") to conduct an independent investigation into certain allegations received by the Office of the City Auditor involving Mayor Pro Tem Delia Garza ("MPT Garza"). We were asked to evaluate whether MPT Garza misused City resources by using funds from her City Council office budget to pay for certain expenses related to her law license with the State Bar of Texas ("State Bar").

We have made our best effort, given the available time and resources, to conduct an impartial, independent and extensive investigation into the allegations of misuse of City resources against MPT Garza. The following work steps were performed as part of our independent investigation:

- Reviewed information and documentation provided to the Office of the City Auditor by the complainant submitting the allegation against MPT Garza;
- Requested and reviewed a log of all expenditures from MPT Garza's City Council office budget for District 2 ("Office Budget") from November 2014 – March 2020;
- Requested and reviewed supporting backup documentation for certain expenditures identified from MPT Garza's Office Budget related to MPT Garza's law license with the State Bar;
- Requested and reviewed a log of all expenditures from the City Council office budgets of three former members of City Council;
- Requested and reviewed approximately 7,000 emails for MPT Garza and her Chief of Staff responsive to relevant search terms identified by Weaver and Mr. Fischer;
- Conducted research of publicly available information including media articles, information from the State Bar website, as well as information from social media;
- Requested and reviewed financial documents filed by MPT Garza with the City Clerk during the November 2014 – March 2020 time period including Campaign Finance Reports, Personal Financial Statements and Statements of Financial Information;
- Conducted interviews with MPT Garza and her Chief of Staff, the Financial Manager for City Council and two current members of City Council.

While Weaver performed additional work steps not included above, the above listed work steps reflect the actions performed by Weaver that formed the basis for our observations and findings discussed throughout the remainder of this Report.

City Code requires the City Auditor to hire an external party to investigate allegations of City Code violations by a member of City Council, a member of City Council's direct staff, or the City Manager. City Code: § 2-3-5 (K)





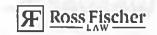
Summary of Findings

A summary of findings of the independent investigation into the allegations that MPT Garza misused City resources is outlined below:

- MPT Garza's law license was inactive during the October 2014 August 2018 time period, during which time MPT Garza paid reduced dues to the State Bar using personal funds, while serving on City Council.
- We determined that MPT Garza submitted a request to the State Bar in November 2015 to have her law license placed on inactive status because her position as a member of City Council did not require a law license.
- In August 2018, MPT Garza reactivated her law license and subsequently used funds from her Office Budget to pay for expenses related to her law license totaling \$1,400 during the August 2018 – February 2020 time period, including dues to the State Bar and Austin Bar Association, as well as registration fees for continued legal education ("CLE").
- We determined that other current members of City Council that hold a law license use personal funds to
 pay for dues to the State Bar and CLE expenditures. We also determined that several former members
 of City Council that held professional licenses or certifications did not use their Office Budget to pay for
 expenditures related to their professional licenses or certifications.
- We determined that the primary factor that motivated MPT Garza's decision to reactivate her law license in August 2018 was a desire to provide pro bono legal services to immigrants being detained. However, under the State Bar's NOVA Pro Bono Program, an attorney with an inactive law license is able to provide pro bono legal services under the supervision of an approved legal assistance program as long as no compensation is received.
- We did not identify any evidence that MPT Garza received any compensation from her law license.
- We also noted that the reactivation of MPT Garza's law license was pertinent to her ability to run for Travis County Attorney, although we determined that MPT Garza first considered running for this position in May 2019, approximately eight months after she reactivated her law license.
- While we identified one event in which MPT Garza worked with a non-profit legal organization to provide pro bono legal services at the immigrant detention center in Karnes City, Texas, we did not identify any evidence that MPT Garza's law license was pertinent to her official responsibilities as a member of City Council and as Mayor Pro Tem for the City.
- MPT Garza's use of public funds through her Office Budget to pay for her law license, including membership dues to the State Bar and CLE, results in possible violations of the following City Code provisions:

City Code Section	City Code Provision
§2-7-62 (I)	No salaried City official or employee shall use his official position to secure a special privilege or exemption for himself or others, or to secure confidential information for any purpose other than official responsibilities.
§2-7-62 (J)	No City official or employee shall use City facilities, personnel, equipment or supplies for private purposes, except to the extent such are lawfully available to the public.





Investigative Findings

a. Background

MPT Garza was elected to City Council in November 2014 as part of the City's first 10-1 City Council.² In January 2015, MPT Garza took office as a member of City Council representing District 2, located in Southeast Austin. Prior to being elected, MPT Garza was a firefighter for the Austin Fire Department until 2007 when she resigned to attend law school at Gonzaga University School of Law ("Gonzaga") in Spokane, Washington. MPT Garza graduated with a law degree from Gonzaga and returned to Austin in 2010 to practice law. MPT Garza received her law license in Texas through the State Bar on May 6, 2011 and began practicing law as a solo practitioner and then for the Child Support Division of the Office of the Attorney General.^{3,4} In September 2014, MPT Garza resigned from the Office of the Attorney General in advance of her election to City Council in November 2014.⁵

b. MPT Garza Enrolled in Inactive Status for Law License in November 2015

During her first year serving on City Council, MPT Garza submitted a Request for Inactive Status with the State Bar on November 18, 2015 to be placed on the "inactive rolls" retroactively as of October 1, 2014.^{6,7} MPT Garza indicated on her Request for Inactive Status that she does not "hold a position that requires a law license." Once MPT Garza's Request for Inactive Status was approved by the State Bar, MPT Garza was prohibited from practicing law, however, the annual dues for membership decreased to \$50 and MPT Garza was no longer required to meet annual CLE requirements. With MPT Garza's Request for Inactive Status form, MPT Garza also submitted a check for \$75 for membership dues for half of the fiscal year 2014-2015 and the full fiscal year 2015-2016. ^{10,11} The \$75 check for membership dues to the State Bar was not paid out of MPT

In 2012, the City adopted a City Council structure based on ten (10) single-member districts (plus the mayor), which was first implemented in the 2014 elections. Previously, City Council was comprised of six (6) at-large elected members (plus the mayor).

State Bar of Texas website.

See Exhibit 1 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza.

⁵ See Exhibit 1 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza.

See Exhibit 2 - Request for Inactive Status dated 11/18/2015.

As described previously in this Report, MPT Garza resigned from the Office of the Attorney General in September 2014.

See Exhibit 2 - Request for Inactive Status dated 11/18/2015.

See Exhibit 1 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza.

See Exhibit 2 - Request for Inactive Status dated 11/18/2015.

See Exhibit 1 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza.





Garza's Office Budget, but was paid with MPT Garza's personal funds.¹² It is also our understanding from discussions with MPT Garza, as well as MPT Garza's Chief of Staff, that the \$50 annual membership dues for MPT Garza's inactive law license for fiscal years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 were also paid with personal funds, as opposed to her Office Budget.^{13,14} In addition to the information provided by MPT Garza and her Chief of Staff, we reviewed the complete list of expenditures for MPT Garza's Office Budget since becoming a member of City Council and did not identify any payments to the State Bar until MPT Garza's law license was reactivated in August 2018.¹⁵

c. MPT Garza Reactivated Law License in August 2018

On August 15, 2018, MPT Garza received an email from the State Bar notifying her that membership fees for fiscal year 2018-2019 were due on or before August 31, 2018, at which point her law license could be suspended. The same day, MPT Garza forwarded the email to a staffer from her office with the directive to ask the State Bar "what I need to pay to stay inactive? And then pay wlith! the office budget." The following day on August 16, 2018, the staffer informed MPT Garza's Chief of Staff that "After speaking with the Council Member on this she would like to go active, it is \$300 for her to be active." MPT Garza's Chief of Staff subsequently notified the City's Finance Office of the decision and dues were paid to the State Bar on a City credit card totaling \$305 and applied to MPT Garza's Office Budget. 20 As part of our investigation, we interviewed the Financial Manager who is responsible for the management of the office budgets for City Council who described their role as not to approve or reject expenses but to facilitate requests for payment and ensure sufficient funds are available. The Financial Manager also indicated that the expenditures are ultimately at the discretion of each member of City Council and what they determine to be an appropriate use of their office budget.

We conducted an interview with MPT Garza on May 22, 2020 in which she indicated that the reason she decided to reactivate her law license in August 2018 was due to recent events in Texas in which families were

¹² See Exhibit 1 + Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza,

See Exhibit 1 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza.

¹⁴ See Exhibit 3 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza's Chief of Staff.

¹⁵ See Exhibit 4 – Expenditures from MPT Garza's Office Budget.

See Exhibit 5 - Email from the State Bar to MPT Garza, re: Final Reminder before Suspension, dated 8/15/2018.

See Exhibit 5 - Email from MPT Garza to staffer, Fwd: Final Reminder before Suspension, dated 8/15/2018.

See Exhibit 5 - Email from staffer to Chief of Staff, Fwd; Final Reminder before Suspension, dated 8/16/2018.

See Exhibit 5 - Email from Chief of Staff to Finance Office, Fwd: Final Reminder before Suspension, dated 8/19/2018.

See Exhibit 6 - Credit Card Authorization Form for payment of \$305 to the State Bar on 8/24/2018.

See Exhibit 7 - Interview Memorandum for Financial Manager.

See Exhibit 7 - Interview Memorandum for Financial Manager.





being detained, separated and in some cases deported during raids conducted by Immigration and Customs Enforcement ("ICE").²³ MPT Garza indicated that she had received emails from several non-profit agencies around that time seeking assistance from community members, including the recruitment of probono attorneys to represent families being detained.²⁴ In our review of MPT Garza's email data, we did identify various emails from the Texas Civil Rights Project seeking assistance from community members and discussing the need for probono attorneys, including an email on August 15, 2018, which was around the time MPT Garza decided to reactivate her law license.²⁵

Based on our review of MPT Garza's email data and discussions with MPT Garza and her Chief of Staff, we determined that the primary factor motivating MPT Garza's decision to reactive her law license in August 2018 was her desire to provide pro bono legal services for families facing immigration issues in the aftermath of the ICE raids. We also confirmed that MPT Garza participated in a group visit to the immigrant detention center in Karnes City, Texas in June 2019 to provide pro bono legal services to immigrant families. It is our understanding that MPT Garza had hoped to participate in other events to provide pro bono legal services but was unable to do so due to time constraints with her schedule as a member of City Council and Mayor Pro Tem. However, we also determined that it was not a requirement for MPT Garza to reactivate her law license to provide pro bono legal services as the State Bar allows licensed attorneys on inactive status to provide pro bono legal services under the supervision of an approved legal assistance program as long as no compensation is received for the services. 31,32

d. Expenditures from MPT Garza's Office Budget Pertaining to her Law License

In addition to the payment to the State Bar for \$305 for membership dues to reactive her law license, we identified other expenditures paid out of MPT Garza's Office Budget related to her law license including attendance at the Bench Bar Conference and annual dues for both the Austin Bar Association and the State

²³ See Exhibit 1 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza.

²⁴ See Exhibit 1 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza.

See Exhibit 8 - Email from Brent Beckert to MPT Garza on 8/15/2018.

See Exhibit 1 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza.

²⁷ See Exhibit 9 - Emails related to MPT Garza's trip to Karnes City, Texas.

²⁸ The trip was organized by the Refugee and Immigrant Center for Education and Legal Services ("RAICES") to prepare women detainees for their credible fear interviews.

²⁹ See Exhibit 1 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza.

³⁰ See Exhibit 3 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza's Chief of Staff.

³¹ See Exhibit 10 – State Bar Rules.

Article XIII of the State Bar Rules for the State Bar of Texas define a New Opportunities Volunteer Attorney ("NOVA") under the NOVA Pro Bono Program in which inactive or emeritus members of the State Bar are able to provide pro bono legal services under the conditions outlined in Article XIII. The NOVA Pro Bono Program was created in May 2018.





Bar. The expenditures from MPT Garza's Office Budget related to her law license after reactivation in August 2018 are summarized in the table below:³³

Date	Payee	Description	Amount
August 2018	State Bar of Texas	Membership dues for fiscal year 2017-2018 (partial year) and fiscal year 2018-2019	\$305.00
April 2019	Austin Bar Association ³⁴	2019 Bench Bar Conference (CLE)	\$400.00
June 2019	Austin Bar Association	2019 Membership dues for Austin Bar Association	\$215.00
June 2019	State Bar of Texas	Membership dues for fiscal year 2019-2020	\$240.00
February 2020	Austin Bar Association	2020 Membership dues for Austin Bar Association (\$25 donation)	\$240.00
Total			\$1,400.00

Of the \$1,400 in expenditures from MPT Garza's Office Budget related to her law license, we identified total payments of \$545 to the State Bar for membership dues as a licensed attorney with active status, \$455 to the Austin Bar Association for membership dues, and \$400 for the 2019 Bench Bar Conference organized by the Austin Bar Association. Based on our discussion with MPT Garza, there was not a requirement to join the Austin Bar Association but she decided to do so because of the CLE opportunities offered by the Austin Bar Association. MPT Garza indicated that she registered and attended the 2019 Bench Bar Conference because it provided 7.25 hours of CLE. MPT Garza was required to meet the CLE requirement set by the State Bar after the reactivation of her law license in August 2018, it is our understanding that she had the ability to earn CLE credits in a more cost effective manner including free CLE opportunities offered by the City and other organizations.

e. MPT Garza Decided to Run for Travis County Attorney Position in 2019

In December 2019, MPT Garza filed paperwork to run for the position of County Attorney in Travis County. ³⁸ As part of our investigation, we made an effort to determine the timing of MPT Garza's decision to run for County Attorney, a position that required an active law license with the State Bar. When we interviewed MPT Garza, she indicated that the first time she considered running for County Attorney was in May 2019 after a friend raised the issue with her and discussed the need for more Latina judges in Travis County. ³⁹ In July 2019, the Progressive Justice Now PAC was established with the purpose of supporting MPT Garza as a candidate

³³ See Exhibit 11 – Supporting Documentation for Expenditures from MPT Garza's Office Budget.

³⁴ Paid via Eventbrite.

³⁵ See Exhibit 1 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza.

³⁶ See Exhibit 1 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza.

According to the Austin Bar Association website, the objective of the Bench Bar Conference is to "abtain 7.25 hours of continuing legal education while building congeniality between the bench and the bar."

See Exhibit 1 - Interview Memorandum for MPT Garza.

See Exhibit 12 – Austin American Statesman article dated 12/16/2019.





for County Attorney.⁴⁰ The County Attorney position that MPT Garza was running for was previously held by David Escamilla ("Mr. Escamilla") who held the position since 2003 and announced that he would retire after the completion of his term in 2020.⁴¹ Based on publicly available information, it does not appear that Mr. Escamilla's retirement announcement was reported publicly until an article in the Austin American Statesman on September 25, 2018, the month after MPT Garza reactivated her law license.⁴² We did not identify any evidence that MPT Garza was planning to run for County Attorney at the time that she reactivated her law license in August 2018, although the reactivation of her law license enabled MPT Garza to be eligible to run for County Attorney.

f. Other Councilmembers Pay for Law License with Personal Funds

During our investigation of the allegations against MPT Garza, we interviewed two current members of City Council (referred to in this Report as "CM1" and "CM2") who had active law licenses prior to becoming public officials. We determined that CM 1 changed their law license status with the State Bar to inactive upon being elected and has always paid for membership dues with personal funds.⁴³ CM 1 indicated that they pay for most, if not all, of their expenses with personal funds, including travel expenses, to avoid any questions related to how public funds are used from their office budget.⁴⁴ We also determined that CM 2 maintained an active law license since being elected to City Council and pays for their dues to the State Bar and CLE expenses with personal funds because CM 2 receives compensation for legal consulting services separate from their duties related to City Council.^{45,46} According to CM 2, it would be improper in their situation to use public funds to pay for expenses related to their law license since their law license is used to earn income.⁴⁷ CM 2 also stated that they did not think it was improper for MPT Garza to use public funds to pay for her law license because MPT Garza is not using her law license for compensation.⁴⁸

See Exhibit 13 – Austin Monitor article dated 7/19/2019.

⁴¹ See Exhibit 13 - Austin Monitor article dated 7/19/2019.

See Exhibit 14 – Austin American Statesman article dated 9/25/2018.

⁴³ See Exhibit 15 - Interview Memorandum for CM 1.

⁴⁴ See Exhibit 15 - Interview Memorandum for CM 1.

⁴⁵ See Exhibit 16 - Interview Memorandum for CM 2.

⁴⁶ CM 2 indicated that their office budget was used to pay for their law license during their first year on City Council and later repaid the City for these expenses since their law license was used to earn additional compensation in the private sector.

⁴⁷ See Exhibit 16 - Interview Memorandum for CM 2.

⁴⁸ See Exhibit 16 - Interview Memorandum for CM 2.





g. Former Councilmembers Paid for Licenses and Certifications with Personal Funds

We also reviewed the office budget expenditures for three former members of City Council who had professional licenses or certifications during the period that they served on City Council including two former Councilmembers who held a real estate license and one former Councilmember who held an engineering license. We determined that none of the three former Councilmembers used their office budgets to pay for expenses related to their professional licenses or certifications while serving on City Council.





Conclusion

Based on the evidence and information reviewed during our investigation, it is our determination that MPT Garza's use of City funds through her Office Budget to pay for her law license results in possible violations of City Code provisions §2-7-62 (J) and §2-7-62 (J) for the reasons outlined below:^{49,50}

- MPT Garza's Office Budget is comprised of City funds and should only be used for City purposes.
- MPT Garza's position as a member of City Council does not require a law license or the completion of CLE, a point that MPT Garza acknowledged in her Request for Inactive Status with the State Bar in November 2015.⁵¹
- Subsequent to MPT Garza's reactivation of her law license in August 2018, MPT Garza did not provide any legal services for the City, or fulfill any duties that required an active law license.
- It is common practice by current and former members of City Council to use personal funds to pay for licenses and certifications that are not required to fulfill the duties and responsibilities of City Council.
- MPT Garza's law license provided a benefit to MPT Garza outside of her position as a member of City
 Council, which represents a use of City funds for <u>private purposes</u>.
- MPT Garza secured a <u>special privilege</u> by using City funds from her Office Budget to pay for her law license, which was not required or used to fulfill her official responsibilities as a member of City Council.

⁴⁹ City Code § 2-7-62 (!): No salaried City official or employee shall use his official position to secure a special privilege or exemption for himself or others, or to secure confidential information for any purpose other than official responsibilities.

City Code §2-7-62 (J): No City official or employee shall use City facilities, personnel, equipment or supplies for private purposes, except to the extent such are lawfully available to the public.

⁵¹ See Exhibit 2 - Request for Inactive Status dated 11/18/2015.





Exhibits

Exhibit 1

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INTERVIEW MEMORANDUM

INTERVIEWEE(S)	Delia Garza, Mayor Pro Tem		2
CAIU STAFF	Travis Casner (Weaver), Ross Fi	scher (Ross Fischer Law, PLL	C)
LOCATION	Virtual Meeting	Date/Time	05-22-2020

On May 22, 2020, Travis Casner (Weaver) and Ross Fischer (Ross Fischer Law, PLLC) conducted an interview with City of Austin Mayor Pro Tem Delia Garza ("MPT Garza"), via Zoom. The purpose was to interview MPT Garza about the allegations against her related to the misuse of public funds through her office budget. The following was determined:

INTERVIEW SUMMARY:

BACKGROUND

- MPT Garza received her law license in 2011 from the State Bar of Texas ("State Bar") and practiced law as a solo
 practitioner dealing with matters involving family law / divorces and landlord / tenant disputes.
- MPT Garza then worked in the Office of the Attorney General for approximately one year as a contractor before being hired as an Assistant Attorney General.
- In September 2014, MPT Garza resigned from her position with the Office of the Attorney General to run for City Council in November 2014.

LAW LICENSE - REQUEST FOR INACTIVE STATUS

- In 2015 during her first year on City Council, MPT Garza submitted a Request for Inactive Status to the State Bar because she had recently had a baby and a law license was not a requirement for her position on City Council.
- According to MPT Garza, while her law license was inactive she did not have to meet annual Continued Legal
 Education ("CLE") requirements and annual dues were reduced, which she paid with personal funds.

LAW LICENSE - REACTIVATION

- MPT Garza indicated that she made the decision to reactivate her law license in response to the ICE Raids that started
 in 2016 and there were discussions in the community about a need for legal clinics for citizens with a law license.
- According to MPT Garza, she discussed the payment of dues to the State Bar for the reactivation of her law license
 with her current Chief of Staff, as well as her former Chief of Staff.
- MPT Garza also indicated that the Chief of Staff would also have discussions with individuals from the Finance Office
 that oversees the office budgets for City Councilmembers. According to MPT Garza, the Finance Office made the
 determination that State Bar dues were an allowable expense for the office budget.

- MPT Garza stated that she had intended to participate in pro bono legal clinics after she reactivated her law license
 but there was frequently scheduling conflicts that prevented her from participating. She did participate in the trip
 to Karnes County Correctional Facility in 2019 to provide pro bono legal services.
- According to MPT Garza, her law license was a benefit to the citizens, as well as to City Council as she would receive
 legal questions from citizens during the ICE raids, and Executive Session of City Council meetings typically involved
 discussions related to legal matters including land use questions or police shootings.

DECISION TO RUN FOR TRAVIS COUNTY ATTORNEY

- MPT Garza indicated that she had seriously been considering running for Travis County Attorney for a long time and
 was approached by several people about running in 2019 because of the need for Latina judges. MPT Garza also
 stated that she was approached about running for a position as a judge during her first term in City Council but
 declined the opportunity.
- Subsequent to our interview, MPT Garza sent an email stating that she checked her calendar and confirmed that she
 had a dinner in May 2019 and a lunch in June 2019 to discuss running for Travis County Attorney. According to MPT
 Garza, the dinner in May 2019 was the first time she considered running for the position.
- At that time that she was approached about running for Travis County Attorney in 2019, MPT Garza had already
 made the decision that she was not going to run for City Council again at the end of her term.

CLE EXPENDITURES

- MPT Garza indicated the expenditures from her office budget in 2019 and 2020 for the Bench Bar Conference as well
 as the Austin Bar Association related to the fulfillment of her CLE requirements after she reactivated her law license
 in 2018.
- When asked about expenditures for the Texas Tribune Festival, MPT Garza indicated that this event was not for CLE and included passes for several members of her staff that had asked to attend and participate in policy workshops.
- When asked whether or not the City of Austin provided free or discounted CLE for City Councilmembers or other City employees, MPT Garza assumed that this did not occur because there were City Attorneys always in attendance at the Austin Bar Association events.

EXPENDITURES FOR SPANISH CLASSES

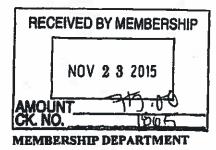
- MPT Garza indicated the expenditures totaling \$441 in July 2019 related to registration costs for an immersion Spanish class in Costa Rica.
- According to MPT Garza, she received information from her former Chief of Staff about the benefits of an immersive
 class and decided to use the July break to attend.
- MPT Garza indicated that she originally intended to spend two weeks in Costa Rica attending the course but ultimately decided to make it a family trip and only attended for one week.

- According to MPT Garza, she paid for her travel expenses out of her personal funds and the \$441 in expenditures from her office budget related to registration for the classes for one week.
- MPT Garza also indicated that she, as well as other City Councilmembers, participated in weekly/monthly Spanish speaking classes for a period of time in Austin which was paid for out of the office budgets of various City Councilmembers.

Exhibit 2

STATE BAR OF TEXAS





Request for Inactive Status

	I, Delia Garra certify, under the
	penalty of perjury, that no portion of my income is
	supplemented by my Texas Law License and wish to be placed
101	on the INACTIVE rolls of the State Bar of Texas effective
1	$\frac{1/2014}{4}$, and will not/have not practice(d) after this date.
	**If you practice after June 1 of the current fiscal year, you are responsible for full active bar dues.
	I do hold a position that requires a law license
	(must enclose proof of active law license in another state).
	I do not hold a position that requires a law
	license.
Sh	
	Signature:
	Bar Number: 24016391
	Date: (1/18/15

Exhibit 3

INTERVIEW MEMORANDUM

INTERVIEWEE(S)	Chief of Staff for Mayor Pro To	em Delia Garza	9
CAIU STAFF	Travis Casner (Weaver)		
LOCATION	Phone Meeting	Date/Time	06-26-2020

On June 26, 2020, Travis Casner (Weaver) conducted a witness interview with the Chief of Staff ("Interviewee") for Mayor Pro Tem Delia Garza ("MPT Garza") in regards to the allegations against MPT Garza related to the misuse of public funds through her office budget. The following was determined:

INTERVIEW SUMMARY:

- Interviewee has worked on MPT Garza's staff since being elected to City Council and took over as her Chief of Staff in or around 2016.
- Interviewee recalled that in 2018 there were many discussions with MPT Garza about how she could help out in the
 community as it related to various legal organizations that were seeking individuals with a law license that were
 willing to volunteer.
- Interviewee indicated that MPT Garza had discussed several pro bono legal opportunities with Interview after MPT
 Garza reactivated law license but it was difficult for MPT Garza to find time to participate due to her busy schedule.
- Interviewee was only aware of MPT Garza's participation at Karnes County Correctional Facility in 2019 as it related to pro bono legal activities that MPT Garza attended.
- Interviewee had never dealt with issues related to MPT Garza's law license until 2018 because Interviewee was not MPT Garza's Chief of Staff until 2016 and dues were paid by MPT Garza with personal funds prior to 2018.
- Interviewee stated that they contacted the Financial Manager to City Council in 2018 to ask about the use of MPT
 Garza's office budget for payments related to her law license. According to the Interviewee, this conversation took
 place over the phone and Interviewee left the conversation with the impression that this was a permissible use of
 the office budget.
- Weaver had previously conducted an interview with the Financial Manager to City Council on May 28, 2020 and determined that the Financial Manager's role was not to approve or authorize expenses for City Council's office budgets. Financial Manager might have discussions with staff from City Councilmembers about processing payments for expenses and logistical discussions but that was the extent of Financial Manager's role. Weaver contacted Financial Manager again on June 26, 2020 after interview with Chief of Staff and Financial Manager reiterated that they never approved or authorized expenses related to City Council's office budget.

Exhibit 4

ACTG_LIN_DSCR_UP		CARDS	CARDS	20 NO2			MEMBERSHIP IN THE BOYCLE PROGRAM FOR COUNCIL MEMBER DELIA GARCA - 1 YE.	MANERS FOR UN GARGA S OFFICE	AUSTIN AMERICAN STATESMAN SUBSCRIPTION (DIGITAL ONLY) FOR COON			CAKE ORDERED BY CM GARZA'S OFFICE FOR AN EVENT THEY WERE INVOLVED IN (SUPPLIES	SUPPLIES	REFRESHMENTS REQUESTED BY CM GARZA FOR A COMMUNITY EVENT	COUNCIL MEMBER DEUA GARZA'S PORTION OF THE CHARGES FOR THE WOMEN ELEC	AN & DELIA GARZA		ROUNDTRIP TICKETS FRO AUSTIN, TEXAS TO PITTSBURG PA, FOR COUNCIL MEMB	HOTEL CHARGES FOR CM GARZA ATTENDED CENTER FOR POPULAR DEMOCRACY MEETI	EVERHART	REGISTRATION FOR BRIAN MCGIVERIN (CM GARZA'S OFFICE) TO ATTEND THE HOU	PIZZA FOR AN EVENT (FIRE DEPARTMENT) REQUESTED BY CM GARZA	REGISTRATION FOR CM GARZA TO ATTEND THE HOUSING WORKS AUSTIN CONFERENCE			IEETING NEEDS	IRETING MEEDS	SUPPLIES	SUPPLIES			IP FOR CM GARZA	CHARGE FOR REFRESHMENTS FOR COUNCIL MEMBER GARZA'S SWEARING IN EVENT	FINAL CHARGES FOR REFRESHIMENTS ORDERED FOR COUNCIL MEMBER GARZA'S SWEA	REFUND OF A CHARGE FOR REFRESHMENTS FOR 2017 SWEARING IN EVENT IN COUN	REFRESHMEN IS SERVED AT LOCUMUL MEMBER GARGA S SWESHMEN IN EVENT (FANCE). RENEWED DIGITAL ONLY SUBSCRIPTION FOR COUNCIL MEMBER DELIA GARZA (#575)	ISTRICT 2 TOWN HALL			89		HALL MEETING	HALL MEETING	AIRFARE FOR CM GARZA ID GO IO THE LOCAL PROGRESS CONFERENCE IN NEW YOR	ETREAT Gedecuaarnte	E DETREAT	OFFICE SUPPLIES: POST-ITS. BINDERS, DIVIDERS, NOTEBOOKS AND FOLDERS FO	BLACK BIC PENS 18 PACK FOR GENERAL OFFICE SUPPLY	BUSINESS CARDS FOR KATE GARZA (POLICY AIDE IN COUNCIL MEMBER GARZA'S O	
SumOfPSTNG, AM	255.00 COUNCIL DISTRICT 2			21.72 BUSINESS CARDS—LANDEROS & WILLIAMSON 02	620.00 TRANSLATION SERVICES	CM GARZA SUBSCRIPTION	AUSBCYCLE 512-954-1665	MAGNETS & COLOR DIGITAL BY	COX STATESMAN SUBSCRIP	130.51 SUMMUSINGUSINES, INC. CM GAREA SUPPLIES		SQ SUGAR CIRCUS	BUSINESS CARDS FOR BRIV		SUMMUS INDUSTRIES,	250.25 EAST SIDE PIES REFRESHMENTS REC	THE VANILLA ORCHID		22.36 BUSINESS CARDS FLACE 2-JACAE GOODWAN & DELIN GRACA	3183	WESTIN (WESTIN HOTELS)	ŖĠ	77,47 PAYPAL HOUSINGWORK REGISTRATIC	65.97 GATTI'S PIZZA BASTROP PIZZA FOR AN	77.47 PAYPAL HOUSINGWORK REGISTRATIC					6.45 STRAMES INDUSTRIES, INC. CM GARZA SUPPLIES	SHAMILS INDUSTRIES INC	TOWN HALL MEETING 10/12/		AUSTIN B-CYCLE YE		SQ AVIATOR PIZZA &	SQ AVIATOR PIZZA &	129.88 STATESMAN RENEWED DIGITAL	PRINTED SIGNS USED T		340.00 COUNCIL DISTRICT 2				D2, COSTCO, REFRESHMENTS FO	SOUTHWES 5262492918754	22.24 D2 SFROUTS, REFRESHMENTS FOR STAFF RETREAT 14 D2 TRADE LIDES WELCOME CEREMONY REFRESHMENTS	15.98 UZ IRADEN JOES, WELLOWE CENEMONT REFRESTIVILE	STAPLES 00119131	STAPLES 00119131	PRINTMAILPRO COM	
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21-Jun-17	1 #	D011	5150	4100	4002	7482	
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30-lun-17	0 0	0014	5150	9100	4007	7500	4.06 DOLLAN-SENERAL #3133 FAPER TONIES FOR DISTRICT Z TOWN THALL 150 70 CTABLES DOLLAND GENERAL DESIGNATION OF TONIES AND BORTEDUD SOLDES
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30-Jun-17	10	D014	5150	4100	4005	5860	FUNFLICKS OUTDOOR MOVI
12-Sep-17	11	D011	5150	4100	4002	5800	360.00 TOWN HALL MEETING
29-Sep-17	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6452	23.00 PRINTMAILPRO COM ORDERED BUSINESS CARDS FOR BRENDA DELEON-DURAN (COUNCIL MEMBER GARZA'S
09-Oct-17	30	D014	5150	4100	4005	7500	12.92 SUMMUS INDUSTRIES, INC CM GARZA SUPPLIES
09-Oct-17	01	D014	5150	4100	4005	7500	SUMMUS INDUSTRIES, INC
09-Oct-17	9	D014	5150	4100	4002	7500	SUMMUS INDUSTRIES, INC
09-Oct-17	01	D014	5150	4100	4005	6452	
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30-Oct-17	10	D014	5150	4100	4007	6501	ALASKA A 0272152938815
30-Oct-17	9 5	5014	5150	4100	4002	6501	216.40 ALASKA A 0272152938316 AIRFARE FOR KATHERINE NICELY FROM AUSTIN TO PORTLAND OREGON TO ATTEND
30-061-17	2 5	2014	OCTE	2012	7007	1000	ALASKA M UZ/ZISZSSOGI
30-Oct-17	2 5	0014	2150	4100	4002	1009	A40.00 PATPAL BUILDSMALL REUBINGATION FOR LM GARZA ID ATTENDING BUILD SMALL LIVE LARGE LOWERS.
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29-Dec-17	2 5	0014	2150	4100	4002	6501	SCHINERSHIP FLACE AT PS
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29-Dec-17	9	D014	5150	4100	4002	6501	AMERICAN 00106127257482
30-Jan-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6501	UNITED 01629283178390 TI
30-Jan-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6501	UNITED 01629283178390
30-Jan-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6501	UNITED 01623796545372
30-fan-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6501	SOUTHWES 5268790848973
27-Feb-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7500	SUMMUS INDUSTRIES, INC.
27-Feb-18	10	0014	5150	4100	4002	7500	
27-Feb-18	10	0014	5150	4100	4002	6452	PRINTMAILPRO COM BL
27-Feb-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6633	179.88 STATESMAN ONE YEAR RENEWAL OF THE NEWSPAPER FOR COUNCIL MEMBER DELIA GARZA TO EX
27-Feb-18	10	0014	5150	4100	4002	7482	9.00 DOLLARTREE PLASTIC WARE FOR TOWNHALL
27-Feb-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7482	50.29 HEB #639 FOOD FOR TOWNHALL MEETING AT DISTRICT 2
27-Feb-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7482	36.68 SQU SQ AVIATOR PIZZA TEAM MEETING AT DISTRICT 2 WITH CM GARZA
27-Feb-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7482	23.48 TACO SHACK 1 LUNCH MEETING FOR CM GARZA
30-Apr-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6501	434.40 CORPORATE SUITES NETWO HOTEL CHARGES FOR KATE GARZA {CM GARZA'S OFFICE} TO ATTEND THE POLICYL
30-Apr-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6501	317.50 AMERICAN 00121787498910 ROUNDTRIP ARFARE FOR KATE GARZA (CM GARZA'S OFFICE) TO ATTEND THE PO
25-May-18	11	D011	5150	4100	4002	5800	11.1
31-May-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7500	182.34 SUMMUS INDUSTRIES, INC COUNCIL MEMBER GARZA - OFFICE SUPPLIES
31-May-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6452	23.00 PRINTMAILPRO COM BUSINESS CARDS FOR ALLISON GARCIA (COUNCIL MEMBER DELIA GARZA'S OFFICE
28-Jun-18	11	0011	5150	4100	4005	6633	340.00 COUNCIL DISTRICT 2
02-Jul-18	10	0014	5150	4100	4002	6501	200.00 DELTA 00621978916300 ADDITIONAL CHARGE FOR CHANGING CM GARZA'S RETURN TICKET FROM MINNEAPOL
02-Jul-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6501	477.60 AIRLINE RESERVATION AIRFARE FOR CM GARZA TO TRAVEL TO MINNEAPOLIS TO ATTEND A NATIONAL LE
02-Jul-18	10	0014	5150	4100	4002	7482	120.67 TRUE FOOD KITCHEN #101 TEAM LUNCH MEETING
02-Jul-18	10	0014	5150	4100	4002	7482	50.17 TAQUERIA LOS JAUSCIEN TEAM LUNCH MEETING
D2-Jul-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7482	86.50 WHOLEFDS DOM # 10316 DISTRICT 2 MEETING WITH NON-PROFITS
17-14-18	11	D011	5150	4100	4002	6501	26.00 DELIA GARZABOUITY SUMMIT 2018 - SPEAKERBHICAGO, IL 4/15/18
19-Jul-18	11	D011	5150	4100	4002	6532	158.65 KATHRYN GARZABQUITY SUMMIT 2018BHICAGO, IL 4/13/18
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31-Jul-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7482		4	ACM DUCE DAD * TOACHASE
31-Jul-18	91	D014	5150	4100	4002	7482		SQU SQ AVIATOR PIZZA	ĸ.
31-Jul-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7482		JAN RE	DOORDASH PHOENICIAN RE - PURCHASE
28-Sep-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6452	34.50 PRINT	PRINTMAILPRO COM	BUSINESS CARDS FOR COUNCIL MEMBER DELIA GARZA
28-Sep-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6452	Z3.00 PRINT		BUSINESS CARDS FOR CYNTHIA VAN MAANEN (CM GARZA'S OFFICE)
28-Sep-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	6452	23.00 PRINT		BUSINESS CARDS FOR KATHERINE NICELY (COUNCIL MEMBER GARZA'S OFFICE)
01-Oct-18	10	0014	5150	4100	4002	6632	305.00 STATE	STATE BAR TX-DUES-WEB	ANNUAL DUES FOR CM D. GARZA
01-Oct-18	10	D014	5150	4100	4003	6632	425.00 GTR A	GTR AUSTIN HISP CHMBER	MEMBERSHIP FEE FOR CM D.GARZA
12-Oct-18	11	1100	5150	4100	4002	6633	170.00 COUN	COUNCIL DISTRICT 2	
23-Oct-18	, 11	D011	5150	4100	4002	6501	730.63 GARZ	GARZA, DELIA, OSLO, NORWAY2018	VY2018
30-Oct-18	2 2	D014	5150	4100	4002	7500		FEDEXOFFICE 00000828	PRINT BOARD FOR PRESS CONFERENCE
30-Nov-18	2 5	D014	5150	4100	4002	2500		FEDEXOFFICE 00000828	PRINT BOARD FOR PRESS CONFERENCE
20.000.00	2 :	1100	5150	4100	4002	6531		CLASS FOR C VAN MAANEN	
97-39	7 ;	100	3130	200	1004	1000		CLASS FOR CM GAR7A	
28-Dec-18	1 5	100	0110	200	4004			SOUTHWES \$362412215108	COUNCIL MEMBER GARZA FROM DALLAS TO SAN ANTONIO SHE WAS IN DALLAS FOR
31-Dec-18	2 5	*100	OCTO	0011	4002			AAAEBICAN 00133314738560	
31-Dec-18	D.	D014	5150	4100	4005	1000		DEAN COLESCIA MADIN	
31-Dec-18	01	D014	5150	4100	4005	1009		h	- 1
31-Dec-1B	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7482			MSINICI Z IEAM MEETING
31-Jan-19	10	0014	5150	4100	4005	6633	179.B8 AUST	SMAN	YEARLY RENEWAL FOR MAYOR PRO TEM GARZA - D 2
28-Feb-19	10	0014	5150	4100	4002	6452	23.00 PRINT	PRINTMAILPRO COM	BUSINESS CARDS FOR AUSON GARCIA (MAYOR PRO TEM GARZA'S OFFICE)
28-Feb-19	91	0014	5150	4100	4002	6452	Z3.00 PRINI	PRINTMAILPRO COM	BUSINESS CARDS FOR CYNTHIA VAN MAANEN (MAYOR PRO TEM'S OFFICE)
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28-Feb-19	2 :	DOIA	0215	919	4004	1000			TEAM I INC.
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28-Feb-19	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7482		XX	STAFF RETREAT AND LUNCH MEETING
28-Feb-19	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7482		₹	DISTRICT 2 TOWNHALL
28-Feb-19	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7482			BREAKFAST TEAM MEETING
28-Feb-19	10	0014	5150	4100	4007	6531	171.34 EBHC	EB HOUSING EQUITABLE	ATTEND CONFERENCE ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING
26-Mar-19	11	0011	5150	4100	4002	6450	39.60 FLYEF	FLYERS FOR DISTRICT 2 TOWN HALL MEETING	N HALL MEETING
26-Mar-19	11	D011	5150	4100	4002	7500	61.43 REFR	ESHMENTS & FRAMING	REFRESHMENTS & FRAMING MATERIAL FOR DISTRICT 2 PEOPLE'S GALLERY COMPETITION
75.44ac.30	: =	1100	5150	4100	4002	6561		ING FEES FOR FUTURE	PARKING FEES FOR FUTURE OF REGIONAL MOBILITY SUMMIT FOR DISTRICT 2
67.18	: :	1100	5150	4100	4002	7487		FSHMENTS FROM COST	REFRESHMENTS FROM COSTCO FOR DISTRICT 2 TOWN HALL MEETING
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26-Mar-19		1001	0515	4100	4005	701/		TOWN DAIL MEETING	
27-Mar-19	11	1001	0010	4100	4005	200		APPLICATION OF THE PROPERTY OF	CONTRACT ACT FOR DISTRICT 3 COUNCIL OFFICE CTAFF (4)
01-Apr-19	10	0014	5150	4100	4002	/200		300	10 (AAMELABS FOR DISTRICT & COONCIL OFFICE STAFF (4)
01-Apr-19	10	0014	5150	4100	4002	7482			TEAM INTELLING
01-Apr-19	10	0014	5150	4100	4002	7500	18.72 HOBE		MATERIAL FOR OPEN GALLERY ART EXHIBIT AT DISTRICT 2 UPPLE
01-Apr-19	10	D014	5150	4100	4002	7500	125.45 AMZ	AMZN MKTP US MIOK94ICD	MATERIALS FOR OPEN GALLERY AT DISTRICT 2 OFFICE
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Exhibit 5

From:

Brumley, Lauren

Sent time:

08/20/2018 09 48 58 AM

To:

Bazan, Connie

Cc: Subject: Nenadal, Carmen, Nicely, Katherine RE Final Reminder before Suspension

Good morning, Connie. Could you please pay this with you ProCard? The funding line will be 5150-4100-4002-6632.

Exhibit 5

From: Nicely, Katherine

Sent: Sunday, August 19, 2018 9:16 PM

To: Nenadal, Carmen < Carmen. Nenadal@austintexas.gov > Cc: Brumley, Lauren < Lauren. Brumley@austintexas.gov >

Subject: FW: Final Reminder before Suspension

Importance: High

Carmen,

Below you will find the State Bar fees that need to be paid by August 30th for CM Garza's to stay active. Please let me know if you need anything else from us to get this processed.

Best, Katherine

Katherine Avalos Nicely, LEED Green Assoc.

Chief of Staff

Austin City Council Member District 2 Delia Garza

Katherine, nicely@austintexas.gov | 512,978,2142 | 301 W. 2nd St., 78701

Not sure which City Council District you live in? You can search for it here.

A Please consider the environment before printing this email.

Please Note: To comply with City of Austin Ordinance 20160922-005 that took effect on June 1, 2017, the Office of Council Member Delia Gorza has decided to implement an electronic form to record information as required by City Code Section 4-8-8(F). Optionally, physical forms may completed before meeting with the Council Member or her staff the day of the meeting. Individuals scheduling or accepting a meeting invitation with Council Member Delia Garza or her staff are requested to provide responses to the

all of the questions using the following link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAlpQLSekfeFqDxlrmrTQJrL3uipLOE3JYrmuJgNp3OG8XXQiQwhvVw/viewform?c=0&w=1

From: Garcia, Allison

Sent: Thursday, August 16, 2018 11:02 AM

To: Nicely, Katherine < Katherine. Nicely@austintexas.gov >

Subject: FW: Final Reminder before Suspension

Importance: High

Good morning,

After speaking with the Council Member on this she would like to go active, it is \$300 for her to be active.

Thank you,

Allison Garcia

Constituent Liaison
Austin City Council Member District 2 Delia Garza
Allison, Garcia@austintexas.gov | 512.978.2141 | 301 W. 2nd St., 78701

Please Note: To comply with City of Austin Ordinance 20160922-005 that took effect on June 1, 2017, the Office of Council Member Delia Garza has decided to implement an electronic form to record information as required by City Code Section 4-8-8(E). Optionally, physical forms may completed before meeting with the Council Member or her staff the day of the meeting. Individuals scheduling or accepting a meeting invitation with Council Member Delia Garza or her staff are requested to provide responses to the all of the questions using the following link: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSekfeFaDxirmrTQ.lrL3uipLOE3JYrmuJaNp3OG8XXQiOwhvVw/viewform?c=0&w=1

From: Delia Garza [mailto:delia.aileen.garza@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, August 15, 2018 2:59 PM

To: Garcia, Allison < Allison.Garcia@austintexas.gov>
Subject: Fwd: Final Reminder before Suspension

Can you ask them what I need to pay to stay inactive? And then pay w the office budget. Thx.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: State Bar of Texas - Membership Department < onlinefees@texasbar.com >

Date: Wed, Aug 15, 2018 at 2:48 PM Subject: Final Reminder before Suspension

To: delia.aileen.garza@gmail.com

STATE BAR of TEXAS

August 15, 2018

Barcard #24076399

Dear Delia Garza.

Our records indicate that we have not received full payment for your FY2018-2019 Membership Fees.

If we do not receive payment of your Dues and the Legal Services Fee on or before August 31, 2018, your license will be suspended and late penalties will be applied to your balance due.

If you are eligible for a Legal Services Fee exemption, please claim the exemption online or click here to download the form. To check your balance due, pay your fees, and/or claim a Legal Services Fee exemption, go to www.texasbar.com, log in to your Bar Page and then click "Pay Dues/Fees". Click here for a direct link to the login page.

If you believe you received this message in error, please contact the Membership Department at (800) 204-2222, ext. 1383, or email <u>onlinefees@texasbar.com</u>, and we will review your record with you.

Thank you!

Sincerely,

State Bar of Texas Membership Department

State Bar of Texas | 1414 Colorado Street | Austin, TX 78701 | Privacy Policy | Unsubscribe

Note: If you unsubscribe from Informz, you will not receive future reminders from the Membership Dept.



5150 4100 4002 6632

STATE BAR OF TEXAS



Membership Department

300.00

CREDIT CARD AUTHORIZATION FORM

I hereby authorize the State Bar of Texas Membership Department to charge the following amounts on my credit card:

	Dues.			\$ <u>-29</u>	<u> </u>
e.	Legal Se	rvices Fee:		\$	
	Access	to Justice Contrib	ution:	\$	
	Other:			\$	
	Credit Ca	ard Processing Fee	1	\$ 5	.00
	TOTAL:	,		\$ 305	5.00
Type of Cred	lit Card:	MasterCard	□ Visa	☐ Discover	O American Express
Credit Card I	Number:				Exp date:
Please note the by the State Ba Bar's cost of ac	r of Taxas	for accepting cradit o) credit card ard transacti	processing (ee, to ons. This \$5,00 f	o help offset the costs incurred se is not greater than the State
	N ате о	n Credit Card;	Can	men Ne	nadal
	Authoriz	ed Signature:	()	V	Junala
	Attorney	's Name:	Deli	a Garza	3
	Attomay	's Bar Number:	240	76399	
	Aulhoriz	ation Date:	8	24/18	

Please raturn the completed form via small at <u>memmali@texasbar.com</u>, fax at (512) 427-4424, or mail to Slate Bar of Texas, Membership Department, PO Box 12467, Austin, TX 78711-2487.

P.O. Box 12487, Austin, Texas 78711, 512-427-1383 or 1-800-204-2222, x1383

INTERVIEW MEMORANDUM

INTERVIEWEE(S)	Financial Manager for City Council				
CAIU STAFF	Travis Casner (Weaver)				
LOCATION	Phone Meeting	Date/Time	05-28-2020		

On May 28, 2020, Travis Casner (Weaver) conducted a witness interview with the Financial Manager for City Council ("Interviewee") in regards to the allegations against Mayor Pro Tem Delia Garza ("MPT Garza") related to the misuse of public funds through her office budget. The following was determined:

INTERVIEW SUMMARY:

- The Interviewee has been the Financial Manager for City Council for the past 11 years.
- The Interviewee stated that she did not approve any expenditures for MPT Garza's office budget related to her law
 license and it was not her position to approve expenses for the City Councilmembers since Interviewee reports to
 City Council.
- Interviewee indicated that they lead an orientation for new Councilmembers each year and consistently told
 Councilmembers and their staff that it is up to them to use their discretion for expenses from their office budgets.
 Interviewee said that the general rule was that the Councilmember should ask themselves whether they would feel
 comfortable if any expense from their office budget was posted in the media to guide their decision-making.
- Interviewee is not involved in the day-to-day management of expenses for the City Council office budgets and only
 recalled two conversations with CM Garza since being elected to City Council in 2014. Interviewee primarily
 communicated with CM Garza's Chief of Staff but never authorized or approved expenses as this was not
 Interviewee's role.
- Interviewee provided a budget template to CM Garza during fiscal year 2015, along with other new members of City
 Council, because this was the first election after the switch to a 10-1 City Council and there were more new City
 Councilmembers with questions about their office budget.
- Interviewee indicated that most office budget expenses related to personnel and travel but the budget template provided to Councilmembers did include line items for memberships and professional registrations.
- Interviewee did not recall if other City Councilmembers had used their office budget for professional licenses or certifications and could only recollect an instance in which a City Councilmember used their office budget for membership to the Austin Area Urban League.
- Interviewee recalled seeing expenditures from the office budget of several City Councilmembers related to a private
 Spanish tutor.

From:

Brent Beckert <info@texascivilrightsproject.org>

Sent time:

08/15/2018 02 49 02 PM

To:

Garza, Delia

Subject:

I went to the border to represent separated families



Delia,

We've sent a lot of emails asking for partners like you to support our critical work to reunite families. Thanks to that support, we've been able to recruit pro bono attorneys from around the country and provide them with the training they need to represent these families.

The story we're about to share, told by one of our volunteer attorneys, proves that representation can mean the difference between separation and reunification, between deportation—which, for asylum-seekers, can mean death—and freedom.

In a "zero tolerance" system intentionally designed to maximize cruelty, there is no tool more powerful than an advocate.

Robert Lopez, Texas Civil Rights Project

When the family separation crisis initially unfolded, I watched an endless stream of alarming news stories on TV. I felt sad, angry, and more than anything, powerless. So as soon as I heard about the need for pro bono attorneys to help TCRP at the border, my colleagues and I at Haynes and Boone decided to turn our frustration into action.

We flew down to McAllen and began taking on cases. It quickly became apparent that nothing I watched on TV or learned about during training could ever prepare me for the horrors these families experienced.

One of my clients was a woman who I will refer to as "Jane." Jane was a business owner and mother who left her ex-boyfriend after a history of brutal abuse. On her own, she soon became the target of extortion by local gangs. As the threats got worse, Jane knew it was no longer safe for her 12-year-old daughter. They made the tough decision to flee their country in the dead of night.

Within a few minutes of crossing into the United States, Jane and her daughter were arrested and sent to an intake processing center known as the La Hielera, or the "Ice Box," for its frigid temperatures. There, the guards forcibly separated Jane from her daughter. They told Jane she would be deported by herself as punishment and her daughter would remain in the U.S. without her.

A few days later, Jane was transferred to another facility known as La Perrera, or the "Dog Cage," for its resemblance to a chain-linked cage. She slept on the floor of the Dog Cage for three days before being transferred to the Port Isabel Detention Center (PIDC). Two weeks went by before she was allowed contact with her daughter, who she learned had been taken to Miami.

Alone in PIDC, Jane met with an asylum officer, without the help of an attorney, to plead her case for asylum. Despite her past persecution, the officer denied her application. Jane wrote a letter to ICE, informing them of her desire to appeal the decision. The next day, an ICE officer entered Jane's cell and told her to sign an English-language document. Intimidated by the officer and without any understanding of the meaning of the document, Jane signed the waiver. It was a waiver of her appeal rights.

A few days later, we signed up Jane as a client. When we faxed in our representation paperwork to ICE, a guard called me with a confused voice. "Why are you signing up to represent her? She waived her rights to appeal and is going to be deported any day." We were shocked, and so was Jane when we informed her of the news.

We had to work quickly. A few days (and long nights) later, we filed an emergency motion that resulted in a favorable ruling. Jane and her daughter were reunited and released without deportation, with a notice to appear in court in a few months.

I will never be able to describe exactly what this victory felt like. But I know that it would not have happened had an attorney not been present. It almost didn't happen at all.

Though the news on TV is beginning to move on, those of us on the ground know our work is as important as ever. Many of our clients have been released from custody and are scattered throughout the country. Some face immediate deportation. Others face upcoming court hearings, ICE check-ins, and a maze of confusing legal requirements. Many of these families also face the additional challenge of settling into new communities without an ability to work, secure shelter, or speak the local language. These families rely on a nationwide network of pro bono attorneys, Texas Civil Rights Project staff, and dedicated community members to help them with the next step of their journeys.

Your support keeps this work going, and it is far from over. Thank you for continuing to be an ally and advocate.

Sincerely,



Brent Beckert Associate, Haynes and Boone

> Texas Civil Rights Project 1405 Montopolis Austin, TX 78741 United States

If you believe you received this message in error or wish to no longer receive email from us, please unsubscribe.



Austin, TX 78741
United States
www.texascivilrightsproject.org

If you believe you received this message in error or wish to no longer receive email from us, please unsubscribe

From:

Garza, Delia

Sent time:

06/26/2019 02:54:58 PM

To:

cshear@mcdhousing.com, ront@throwerdesign.com

Cc:

Nicely, Katherine

Subject:

Friday tour

Ron and Christopher,

I wanted to thank you for organizing the tour at the Nuckols Crossing property this Friday. I unfortunately will not be able to go, but Katherine from my office will be there and will take lots of pictures for me. I've been offered a last minute opportunity to provide some pro bono legal services at one of the immigrant detention centers in Karnes City and I feel the absolute need to help where I can. I appreciate your understanding.

Exhibit 9

I also appreciate you taking my feedback on my concerns on your project to heart and for being willing to work with my office to ensure we make this a successful project that benefits District 2.

All my best,

DELIA GARZA

MAYOR PRO TEM
COUNCIL MEMBER, DISTRICT 2

To: Kate Lincoln-Goldfinch <kate@lincolngoldfinch.com> Cori Hash <cori@lincolngoldfinch.com>; Kathryn Delgado <kathryn.delgado@raicestexas.org> Cc: Subject: Re: Karnes Friday 6/28 Hello, I will be able to attend. See y'all Friday. What is the appropriate attire? Any specific identification I need to bring? Oh and please use my personal email for any further communication - Delia.aileen.garza@gmail.com Thanks, Delia Garza > On Jun 25, 2019, at 4:10 PM, Kate Lincoln-Goldfinch wrote: > Thank you for volunteering to assist at Karnes this week! Just an FYI, I will be in Santa Fe at a conference this Friday, but the Legal Director at my office, Cori Hash, will be hosting you. You are in very good hands with her. We will also have two RAICES staff members on site to help with our assignments. > Please meet at Starbucks on Ben White and I-35, 500A E Ben White Blvd, Austin, TX 78704, view map here, at 8:30am. You will return by 6:00pm. Cori's cell is 859-608-2921. > You will be preparing women for their credible fear interviews on Friday. Although Cori will train you on the topic on the drive down, for those who have not done this before, please try to review the training modules below. I also recommend you review all the attached materials. > Important - please bring your laptop, ID and Bar Card, as well as a lunch for yourself that does not need refrigeration. > Kate > Module 1 > Module 2 > Module 3 > Module 4 > Module 5 > [https://docs.google.com/a/lincolngoldfinch.com/uc? id=OBxIjItJImN6rclhGaWcxeGV4cEk&export=download] > Kate Lincoln-Goldfinch > Attorney/Abogada > Lincoln Goldfinch Law > Bringing Peace to Immigrant Families. > AUSTIN > 1005 E. 40th Street > Austin, TX 78751 > WACO > 1616 Austin Avenue > Waco, TX 76701 > call or text: 512.599.8500 > www.lincolngoldfinch.com > #familiassinfronteras > [https://docs.google.com/uc?export=download&id=0B_ZjyA2J-1L2VkpiSEFPZ3VCdmc&revid=0B_ZjyA2J-1L2MGdKSTZwUX1PUHBMam5ScFRMQzZRVF1IZzR3PQ) [https://docs.google.com/a/lincolngoldfinch.com/uc? id=OB ZjyA2J-1L2LVVJazN3SO41elE&export=download] [https://docs.google.com/a/lincolngoldfinch.com/uc?id=OB_ZjyA2J-1L2Vi11VEE4OGNIQzA&export=download [https://docs.google.com/uc?export=download&id=0B_ZjyA2J-

Garza, Delia

06/26/2019 03:39:28 PM

From: Sent time:

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1L2ST1taVZ0dWxWdWs&revid=0B ZjyA2J-1L2MkpWRFRVUWpjQmM3ZkRROXRhY2M1eUNqbmw4PQ]
>
> This message contains confidential information and is intended only for the individual named. If
you are not the named addressee you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this e-mail. Please
notify the sender immediately by e-mail if you have received this e-mail by mistake and delete
this e-mail from your system. If you are not the intended recipient you are notified that
disclosing, copying, distributing or taking any action in reliance on the contents of this
information is strictly prohibited.
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> <12. trauma="" guide.pdf="">
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06/27/2019 08 26 31 PM
Sent time:
To:
             Kate Lincoln-Goldfinch < kate@lincolngoldfinch.com>
Cc:
             Cori Hash <cori@lincolngoldfinch.com>, Kathryn Delgado <kathryn delgado@raicestexas.org>
Subject:
             Re Karnes Friday 6/28
Hello all, I can't seem to find my bar card. Can I still participate/help tomorrow if I don't have
my bar card?
Thx,
Delia Garza
> On Jun 25, 2019, at 4:10 PM, Kate Lincoln-Goldfinch wrote:
>
> Thank you for volunteering to assist at Karnes this week! Just an FYI, I will be in Santa Fe at
a conference this Friday, but the Legal Director at my office, Cori Hash, will be hosting you.
You are in very good hands with her. We will also have two RAICES staff members on site to help
with our assignments.
> Please meet at Starbucks on Ben White and I-35, 500A E Ben White Blvd, Austin, TX 78704, view
map here, at 8:30am. You will return by 6:00pm. Cori's cell is 859-608-2921.
> You will be preparing women for their credible fear interviews on Friday. Although Cori will
train you on the topic on the drive down, for those who have not done this before, please try to
review the training modules below. I also recommend you review all the attached materials.
> Important - please bring your laptop, ID and Bar Card, as well as a lunch for yourself that does
not need refrigeration.
>
> Kate
> Module 1
> Module 2
> Module 3
> Module 4
> Module 5
> [https://docs.google.com/a/lincolngoldfinch.com/uc?
id=0BxIjItJImN6rclhGaWcxeGV4cEk&export=download]
> Kate Lincoln-Goldfinch
> Attorney/Abogada
> Lincoln Goldfinch Law
> Bringing Peace to Immigrant Families.
> AUSTIN
> 1005 E. 40th Street
> Austin, TX 78751
> WACO
> 1616 Austin Avenue
> Waco, TX 76701
> call or text: 512.599.8500
> www.lincolngoldfinch.com
> #familiassinfronteras
> [https://docs.google.com/uc?export=download&id=0B_ZjyA2J-1L2VkpiSEFPZ3VCdmc&revid=0B_ZjyA2J-
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From:

Garza Delia

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> This message contains confidential information and is intended only for the individual named. If
you are not the named addressee you should not disseminate, distribute or copy this e-mail. Please
notify the sender immediately by e-mail if you have received this e-mail by mistake and delete
this e-mail from your system. If you'are not the intended recipient you are notified that
disclosing, copying, distributing or taking any action in reliance on the contents of this
information is strictly prohibited.
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> <1. confidentiality="" agreement.pdf="">
> <11. glossary.pdf="">
> <12. trauma="" guide.pdf="">
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STATE BAR RULES
As Amended March 2020

- E. A member may challenge the Board's decision by filing suit against the State Bar in Travis County district court. The suit must be filed within thirty days of the Board's decision, or the Board's decision will be final. Trial will be de novo and to the bench. The member has the burden to prove good cause by a preponderance of the evidence. Either the member or the State Bar may appeal the trial court's judgment.
- **F**. Any suspension of a member under this Article shall be vacated during the administrative review process and while any suit filed is pending.

Section 10. Return to Former Status

Any member whose license to practice law has been suspended under the terms of this Article who after the date of suspension files an activity report with the MCLE Director showing compliance and who has paid all applicable fees associated with non-compliance and suspension, shall be entitled to have such suspension promptly terminated and be returned to former status. Return to former status shall be retroactive to the inception of suspension, but shall not affect any proceeding for discipline of the member for professional misconduct. The MCLE Director shall promptly notify the Clerk that a member formerly suspended under this Article has now complied with this Article.

Section 11. Exemption of Certain Judges

Judges subject to Supreme Court Order for Judicial Education dated August 21, 1985, Supreme Court Order for Judicial Education for Retired or Former District Judges dated July 2, 1986, and federal judicial officers, shall be exempt from these requirements.

Section 12. Confidentiality

A member who reports attendance credits individually to the MCLE Director, without the sponsoring organization's knowledge, automatically consents to release of his or her name to the sponsoring organization for the sole purpose of reconciling attendance records. Otherwise, the files, records and proceedings of the Committee, as they relate to the compliance or noncompliance of any member with the requirements of this Article, shall be confidential and shall not be disclosed except upon consent of the member affected or as directed in the course of judicial proceeding by a court of competent jurisdiction.

ARTICLE XIII NEW OPPORTUNITIES VOLUNTEER ATTORNEY PRO BONO PROGRAM

Section 1. Definitions

- A. "Program" is the New Opportunities Volunteer Attorney Pro Bono Program established by this article.
- B. A "New Opportunities Volunteer Attorney" or "NOVA" is a person of any age who:
 - 1. is an inactive or emeritus member of the State Bar or is licensed to practice law in another U.S. jurisdiction, even if inactive or retired; and
 - 2. meets the following conditions:
 - is in good standing with the State Bar or the entity that governs the practice of law in the

jurisdiction where the attorney is licensed;

- is in good standing with all courts and jurisdictions in which the attorney is admitted to practice;
- agrees to abide by the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct and to submit to the disciplinary jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Texas and the State Bar;
- provides legal services under the supervision of an approved legal service organization;
- is not compensated for legal services rendered under the Program; and
- complies with the policies and procedures of the Program.

C. An "approved legal assistance organization" must:

- 1. provide free legal services;
- 2. maintain malpractice insurance for its NOVAs, and
- 3. be either:
 - a. a nonprofit that:
 - is funded in part by the Texas Access to Justice Foundation;
 - is funded in part by the Legal Services Corporation;
 - is a current participant in the State Bar of Texas Malpractice Insurance Network Exchange; or
 - provides at least 50% of its legal services at no cost to Texans living at or below 200% of the federal poverty guidelines published annually by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services;
 - b. a clinic or pro bono program of a Texas law school; or
 - c. a pro bono project or program of the State Bar or of a local or specialty bar association within Texas.

Section 2. Scope of Authority

A NOVA may engage in any activity necessary to resolve a legal matter for a client, including giving legal advice, preparing pleadings or other documents, and appearing before a court or tribunal. A NOVA need not be admitted pro hac vice to appear before a court while providing legal services under the Program. A NOVA may not represent himself or herself to be an active member of the State Bar.

Section 3. Compensation and Fees

- **A.** A NOVA may not receive compensation for providing legal services under the Program, but an approved legal serviced organization may reimburse a NOVA for actual expenses incurred by the attorney.
- **B.** A NOVA is exempt from paying the legal services fee mandated by Section 81.054(j), Government Code.
- C. An approved legal service organization may charge the client for services provided by a NOVA and collect attorneys' or other fees awarded by a court or tribunal or as a part of a settlement.

Section 4. Administration

The State Bar may develop policies and procedures for the Program and is responsible for its administration.

Section 5. Discipline

A NOVA may be sanctioned or disciplined by a court or the State Bar in the same manner as an active member of the State Bar.

Section 6. MCLE Requirement

A NOVA must complete at least three hours of CLE annually.

Section 7. Authority of Approved Legal Service Organizations

An approved legal service organization is not required to:

- A. accept any particular NOVA;
- B. refer any case, a particular type of case, or a particular number of cases to any NOVA; or
- C. take any action inconsistent with the rules, laws, regulations, policies, or procedures governing the organization's pro bono programs.

ARTICLE XIV MILITARY SPOUSE TEMPORARY LICENSE

Section 1. Definitions

A "temporary licensee" is an attorney who:

- is the spouse of an active-duty military service member who has been ordered stationed in Texas;
 and
- has been issued a three-year temporary license to practice law in Texas by the Court in accordance with the Rules Governing Admission to the Bar of Texas.



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STATE BAR OF TEXAS



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TOTAL:		s 305	5.00
Type of Credit Card: MasterCard	□ Visa	☐ Discover	O American Express
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Please note that your total will include a \$5.00 by the State Bar of Taxas for accepting credit of Bar's cost of accepting credit cards.	credit card pard transaction	processing fee, to one. This \$5,00 f	o help offset the costs incurred se is not greater than the State
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Attomey's Name:	Deli	a Garza	
Attorney's Bar Number:	240	76399	
Authorization Date:	8/2	24/18	

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Non-Member \$400.00

Austin Country Club, 4408 Long Champ Drive, Austin, TX 78746

Friday, May 3, 2019 from 9:00 AM to 5:15 PM (CDT)

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Order Information

Order #934747005. Ordered by Delia Garza on April 15, 2019 2:15 PM

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Delia Garza





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2019 BENCH BAR CONFERENCE SCHEDULE:

8-9 a.m. REGISTRATION / VENDOR FAIR

9 – 9:15 a.m. – Welcome and Introductions by Austin Bar President Adam Schramek & AYLA President Jorge Padilla.

9:15 – 10 a.m. – Everything You've Ever Wanted to Know about Practicing in Travis County: The rules and unwritten etiquette on how to navigate the system successfully. Panel: Warren Vavra, Judge Lora Livingston, Judge Todd Wong; Moderator: Sinead O'Carroll - .75 CLE

10 – 10:30 a.m. – Judicial B-I-N-G-O: Chat with judges, fill out a bingo card, and enter to win prices. *Coordinators: Megan Johnson and James Parker - .5 CLE*

10:30 – 11:15 a.m. – Practice Local: Understanding Travis County's local rules, standing orders, uncontested docket, and new submission docket—and suggestions for improvement. Panel: Judge Scott Jenkins, Judge Darlene Byrne, Judge Amy Clark Meachum, Judge Jan Soifer; Moderator: David King - .75 CLE

11:15 a.m. – 12 p.m. – Ask the Staff Attorneys: A discussion with staff attorneys from the Travis County District Courts, U.S. District Courts for the Western District of Texas and the Third Court of Appeals. Panel: Jenny Brannen, Kathryn Baffes, Megan Johnson, and Brent McCabe; Moderator: Andrew Williams - .75 CLE

12 - 12:30 p.m. - VENDOR FAIR







AUSTIN BAR ASSOCIATION 816 Congress Ave. Suite 700 Austin, TX 78701 Phone: 512.472.0279 Fax: 512.473.2720

6/6/2019

Delia Garza

\$215

QUANTITY	DETAILS	Column1	LINE TOTAL
1	2019 Austin Bar Dues	215.00	215,00
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		Total	215,00
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(1414 Colorado Street * Austin, TX 78701 * Phone: 800-204-2222 * Website: http://www.texasbar.com)

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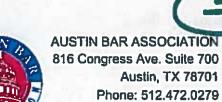
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Order Placed at 06/18 By Delia Garza		
Qty. Product	Price	Total
1 Dues Payment	\$235.00	\$235.00
1 Processing Fee	\$5.00	\$5.00
	Subtotal:	\$240.00
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Payment Information		
Payment Type: MasterCard Card/Check Number: 545046 (Partial Number displayed for your protection)		

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2/28/2020

Delia Garza

QUANTITY	DETAILS	Column1	LINE TOTAL
1	2020 Austin Ban Dues	215.00	215.00
1	2020 Austin Bar Foundation Charitable Contribution	25.00	25.00
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		Total	240.00
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Statesman

In county attorney race, some see Delia Garza as strong candidate; critic says she's the 'least qualified'

By Ryan Autullo

Posted Dec 9, 2019 at 9 50 AM Updated Dec 16, 2019 at 5 05 PM

Austin City Council Member Delia Garza made it official Monday and filed paperwork to run for county attorney in Travis County, ending months of speculation that she would attempt the unconventional shift from crafting municipal policies to prosecuting misdemeanor crimes.

Garza, who is Austin's mayor pro tem and is the first Latina to serve on the council, made the announcement on the last day to file for the Democratic primary, becoming the fourth candidate to line up for the position that will open when longtime county attorney David Escamilla retires.

Her announcement was met with disdain from former Travis County Judge Bill Aleshire, who addressed a three-page letter to Garza that he also circulated to media outlets saying she's unqualified due to her short legal experience.

"If you get elected, you would be — demonstrably — the least qualified county attorney in Travis County's history," Aleshire wrote. "Your ability to lead that law office would be suspect from day one."

Aleshire, an open-government lawyer, also raised concern that Garza might accept contributions in her bid for county attorney from special interest groups that want favors from her as a city council member. Garza will remain on the council until her term expires in 2021.

Aleshire called for Garza to resign from her council seat or adhere to the city's campaign finance rules, which cap an individual's donation to a race at \$400.

Garza, who has represented District 2 in Southeast Austin since joining the council in 2015, said on Monday she couldn't comment because she was in a meeting about the city's new land development code.

Her Austin City Council peer, Greg Casar, rejected Aleshire's criticism, noting that the campaign finance laws that Garza has adhered to on the council are stricter than those that controlled Aleshire when he was county judge. In defending Garza's qualifications for the position, Casar cited several criminal justice reform initiatives that Garza has championed as proof that she's ready.

"There isn't another candidate in the race that can prove their record better than Delia," said Casar, who co-chaired a campaign that launched last summer to draft Garza for the position. "Folks can say she's unqualified, but we hear that all the time when people don't want young, qualified progressives to win a race."

The county attorney in Travis County oversees a powerful law office that handles the prosecution of misdemeanor offenses, like most drunken driving arrests. It also represents county officials against civil litigation. The \$180,944 annual salary that Escamilla pulls in would be a significant bump in salary for Garza, who makes about \$76,000 as a city council

7/13/2020

In county attorney race, some see Delia Garza as strong candidate; critic says she's the 'least qualified' - News - Austin American-States...

member.

Though lacking the decades of legal experience that past county attorneys have carried into the office, Garza, whose professional legal background is limited to a three-year stint with the Texas Attorney General's office earlier this decade, has built up enough name recognition through her work on the council to make her a strong contender in the race.

According to her supporters, a recent survey they conducted showed Garza is the heavy favorite. Of 502 registered voters surveyed, 34% said they'd likely vote for Garza, while 10% preferred former County Court-at-Law Judge Mike Denton. Forty-eight percent of the voters who were polled said they were undecided. Another 7% picked Assistant County Attorney Lauric Eiserloh as their favorite candidate. One percent chose defense attorney Dominic Selvera.

Garza announced last month she would not run for reelection. David Chincanchan, the chief of staff for Council Member Pio Renteria, said he will enter the race to replace Garza in the November election. Vanessa Fuentes, a director at the American Heart Association, has also expressed interest in the seat.

AUSTIN MONITOR"



Friday, July 19, 2019 by Jo Clifton (https://www.austinmonitor.com/stories/author/jo-clifton/)

POLITICS (HTTPS://WWW.AUSTINMONITOR.COM/STORIES/CATEGORY/POLITICS/)

Group pushes Garza to run for county attorney

Council Member Greg Casar and community activists Martha Cotera and Brian McGiverin are leading an effort to encourage Mayor Pro Tem Delia Garza to run for Travis County attorney – and to raise campaign funds for her before she officially announces her candidacy.

David Escamilla, the current county attorney, has announced he will not seek another term when his term expires at the end of 2020. Escamilla was appointed in 2003 and ran unopposed in 2004, '08, '12 and '16.

The group supporting Garza has filed a document to appoint a campaign treasurer showing the name of the group as Progressive Justice Now PAC and McGiverin as treasurer. The purpose of the PAC is described as "support potential candidate Delia Garza."

Garza, who is Mexico on a trade mission with the Greater Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, texted the *Austin Monitor* the following statement:

"I'm grateful and humbled that a coalition of community leaders have come together to encourage me to run. Right now, my focus is serving my constituents and the city as Mayor Pro Tem, but I am seriously considering running for Travis County Attorney. My passion for social justice, advocacy and equity, and my experience as an attorney and in the courtroom would help me be a strong asset to the residents of Travis County, and I am interested in continuing to pursue public service where I can have the biggest positive impact for the community."

Casar explained the reasoning behind starting an independent political action committee to advocate and raise money for Garza before she announces her candidacy.

"Essentially, the most conservative reading of the law would indicate that a Council member resigns their seat if they announce for another office within 13 months of their term ending," he said. Since Garza's term does not end until November 2020, she can announce for another position in December, which is also the deadline for signing up for the March 3, 2020, Democratic primary, without resigning from Council.

If Garza were to announce before December, it would set in motion a number of events, probably including an election to fill her seat next May. But if she makes no such announcement and wins the primary, she can keep her Council job but she couldn't run for reelection to the District 2 seat. Casar said, "The decision is entirely Delia's because the draft campaign isn't coordinating with her in any way."

In the press release announcing the formation of the committee, McGiverin said, "Travis County should be poised to lead Texas on criminal justice reform. Instead, we've fallen behind Dallas County. If Mayor Pro Tem Garza becomes county attorney. I know she'll fight to ensure her office's work fully reflects our community's progressive values."

Although McGiverin declined to criticize Escamilla specifically, he said, "Travis County officials can exercise a very strong role" in determining whether police decide to file charges for small amounts of controlled substances, for example.

McGiverin worked in Garza's office when she sponsored a resolution (https://www.austinmonitor.com/stories/2016/08/council-approves-alternatives-jail-time-indigent-defendants/) directing Municipal Court judges to more carefully consider whether defendants are indigent before ordering them to pay fines or perform community service.

In her text message, Garza said, "Fighting for reforms and improvements to the justice system would be a natural transition for me after my work to reform most of the systems I've been a part of, including fighting for collective bargaining for firefighters and advocating for the 10-1 Council structure for the city."

As for Cotera, she said Thursday that she acted as an interpreter for non-English speakers at both municipal and county courts for many years. "I know these issues firsthand," she said. "One thing that always bothered me a lot was the treatment of transgender people when they were incarcerated. I would really love to see some reforms there."

Although there are no official candidates in the race so far, Travis County judges Elisabeth Earle and Mike Denton have both expressed interest in the job.

Other supporters listed on the group's press release include Mayor Steve Adler and state Reps. Celia Israel, Sheryl Cole, Eddie Rodriguez, and Gina Hinojosa; Council members Jimmy Flannigan, Paige Ellis, Pio Renteria, Ann Kitchen and Natasha Harper-Madison; Austin Community College trustees Geronimo Rodriguez and Nora Comstock; former Council

members Raul Alvarez and Mike Martinez; Austin Firefighters Association President Bob Nicks; Selena Xie, president of the Austin Travis County EMS Employees Association; and Nelson Linder, president of the Austin NAACP.

Currently, Dominic Selvera (https://www.dominicselvera.com/) is the only official candidate for county attorney.

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This story has been updated to include Selvera's candidacy.

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Statesman

Travis wants to combine prosecution offices — will Republicans approve?

By Ryan Autullo

By Taylor Goldenstein

By Tony Plohetski

Posted Jun 6, 2018 at 12:01 AM Updated Sep 25, 2018 at 7:13 PM

After tossing around the idea for decades, Travis County officials are prepared to seek Legislative approval to combine the prosecutorial offices that handle misdemeanor and felony crimes and all civil cases.

The merger would save area taxpayers roughly \$1.4 million a year, according to local criminal justice leaders. It would also bring Travis County in line with 49 other Texas counties that have a unified prosecuting agency. Politics have scuttled past efforts to merge the two offices in Travis.

Since the formation of the state constitution in 1876, separate offices have prosecuted crime in Travis County. The County Attorney handles misdemeanor prosecutions, civil litigation involving the county and its employees, and provides legal advice to the Commissioners Court and other county elected officials. The District Attorney's office tries felonies and has separate divisions that handle juvenile crimes, asset forfeitures and Child Protective Services cases.

If the consolidation is cleared in next year's Legislative session, both offices would dissolve into a unified Criminal District Attorney's office that would handle everything from drunken-driving cases to capital murders, and represent the county in civil court.

The restructured agency would launch in January 2021, coinciding with the retirement of County Attorney David Escamilla, who announced he will step down after 17 years as the county's top misdemeanor prosecutor.

"This is a unique moment in Travis County history," District Attorney Margaret Moore told the American-Statesman. "We think it's important we do some things right now that have not been possible before and probably won't be possible for quite a while."

READ: How hard do Travis judges work? County is collecting data

Moore, whose four-year term expires as the merger would take effect, said she would run for the new elected position, adding that a combined agency could emerge as "an exemplary prosecutorial office."

Moore said her goal would be to unite the departments without job cuts, but that some positions likely would be lost through attrition. That would include County Attorney, a job that pays Escamilla about \$174,000 per year. Between the offices, there are about 423 full-time equivalent positions.

Escamilla says he would encourage the county Commissioners Court to direct overall savings from the merger to criminal justice reform, including the county's plan to improve representation for indigent defendants by increasing pay for defense lawyers.

The County Attorney's 2018 budget is \$21.3 million. The District Attorney office's budget is \$23.7 million.

The proposed consolidation is backed by state Sen. Kirk Watson (D-Austin), who has agreed to sponsor or author the bill at the upcoming Legislative session. Watson said Travis County would benefit from a collaborative prosecution unit that has long been present in Bexar, Tarrant and Dallas counties.

"I feel comfortable this is a good time to do this, particularly when you coordinate it with the election cycle," Watson said.

Harris County employs a similar model in which the District Attorney handles all criminal cases and the County Attorney oversees all civil matters.

Merger could decrease delays

Austin attorney Martha Dickie said the merger is a bad idea, pointing to a philosophical difference between the prosecution of violent felonies that necessitate prison sentences and the prosecution of misdemeanors that can be resolved with diversion programs.

"That's a completely different focus than what a district attorney's office does," said Dickie, a former State Bar president whose practice focuses on civil litigation. She said the County Attorney's role in civil matters involving elected officials "would not mesh well" in an agency that also prosecutes the most serious crimes.

Multiple defense lawyers declined to comment about the county's proposal, saying they feared that speaking out against the merger might complicate plea negotiations with the DA's office.

The Capital Area Private Defender Service — the agency that matches indigent criminal defendants with defense lawyers — will not take a position, said deputy director Bradley Hargis.

The Austin Criminal Defense Lawyers Association plans to discuss the measure at its next board meeting on June 12, president Sidney Williams said.

Escamilla and Moore both say they are in favor of the merger and believe it will cut down on delays that are common when prosecutors from the two offices disagree on whether a case should be filed as a misdemeanor or as a felony.

In 2016, it took an average of 213 days from the time of arrest to reduce a felony to a misdemeanor and 194 days to increase a misdemeanor to a felony, Escamilla said. There were 619 cases that were reclassified.

Moore said combining the offices also would offer a more assured career path for people who work in the agency, who would be able to begin by prosecuting misdemeanor cases and move up to felony prosecutions without having to change offices. Moore said that can help the county with recruiting minority prosecutors.

DA's DWI stopped earlier merger

Previous efforts to merge the agencies have been undone by political snags.

Escamilla said that in 2013, then-DA Rosemary Lehmberg wanted to consolidate the offices before her arrest for drunken driving rankled Republican lawmakers. Gov. Rick Perry <u>pushed</u> for Lehmberg to <u>resign</u> and threatened to withhold \$7.5 million in state funds from Travis County's Public Integrity Unit.

The threat resulted in a criminal indictment against Perry that was later dismissed by the Court of Criminal Appeals.

In 1972, retired state District Judge Jon Wisser was an assistant county attorney when he suggested that the office unite with the district attorney's office. It wasn't going to happen, Wisser recalled being told.

The District Attorney at the time, Robert Smith, had irritated County Attorney Ned Granger by launching an investigation into some of the county commissioners. The commissioners were represented by Granger's friend and powerful defense lawyer Roy Minton.

"A lot of political hostility," Wisser said. "The last thing the county commissioners wanted to do is to make the district attorney's office stronger."

Wisser said former DA Ronnie Earle (1977 to 2009) would have had a difficult time getting bipartisan support due to his office's criminal investigations into Republican lawmakers Tom DeLay (House majority leader) Kay Bailey Hutchison (Senator) and Mike Martin (state representative).

County optimistic despite past roadblocks

The longstanding animosity between Texas Republicans and Austin Democrats has some court watchers questioning whether the merger will clear political red tape.

The county drew the ire of Gov. Greg Abbott and much of the Republicanmajority Legislature last year after Travis County Sheriff Sally Hernandez in January 2017 introduced a policy limiting the jail's cooperation with federal immigration authorities.

A month later, Abbott cut \$1.5 million in grant funding from his office to the county, and in May 2017, the legislature passed Senate Bill 4, a so-called sanctuary cities ban.

Several of Texas' largest cities and counties and some advocacy groups sued over the law's legality. A <u>federal appeals court in March ruled</u> that most of the law could take effect; an appeal is pending.

Robert Kepple, executive director of the Texas District & County Attorneys Association, said he is unaware of any instances in which lawmakers have blocked a county from merging its prosecution agencies. He added that it will likely get done because Moore and Escamilla have solid reputations among state lawmakers.

"This is something that's been a long time coming, so it makes sense that it's happening," Kepple said.

Despite the SB4 clash, Deece Eckstein, the county's intergovernmental relations officer, said he's optimistic that the county could still muster enough support to pass a bill merging the two offices.

"There may be people who don't like Travis County in the Legislature, but the majority is very reasonable and we're able to do business with them," he said, noting that the county was successful this last session in receiving approval from the Legislature for two new district courts.

INTERVIEW MEMORANDUM

INTERVIEWEE(S)	Current Councilmember 1				
CAIU STAFF	Travis Casner (Weaver), Ross Fischer (Ross Fischer Law, PLLC)				
LOCATION	Zoom Meeting Date/Time 05-04-2020				

On May 4, 2020, Travis Casner (Weaver) and Ross Fischer (Ross Fischer Law, PLLC) conducted a witness interview with a current member of City Council ("CM 1"), via Zoom. The purpose was to interview CM 1 about the allegations against Mayor Pro Tem Delia Garza ("MPT Garza") related to the misuse of public funds through her office budget. The following was determined:

INTERVIEW SUMMARY:

- CM 1 indicated that they had an active law license prior to being elected but changed their law license status to
 inactive prior to taking office due to potential conflicts as a result of their previous law firm having contracts with
 the City of Austin (the "City").
- According to CM 1, once their law license was classified as inactive they were relieved of their annual CLE
 requirements but still required to pay reduced annual membership dues to the State Bar of Texas ("State Bar").
- CM 1 stated that they always paid for dues to the State Bar with personal funds, and even uses personal funds to
 pay for certain travel expenses as to avoid any perception of wrongdoing that would create an unnecessary
 distraction.
- CM 1 indicated that they were unaware if City Councilmembers who had a law license used personal funds to pay
 for their law license but felt that they could be doing a disservice to the City by paying for their law license with
 personal funds because future Councilmembers may not be in the same financial position.
- CM 1 felt that having members City Council with law licenses made it a better City Council because of the expertise
 that it brings to the Council.
- CM 1 stated that they have never consulted with MPT Garza about whether or not to pay for her law license with her office budget or personal funds.
- CM 1 indicated that they did not consult with MPT Garza about her decision to run for Travis County Attorney but
 did participate in an event hosted by City Councilmember Greg Casar when the PAC was formed for MPT Garza's
 campaign in 2019.

INTERVIEW MEMORANDUM

INTERVIEWEE(S)	Current Councilmember 2		
CAIU STAFF	Travis Casner (Weaver)		
LOCATION	Phone Meeting	Date/Time	05-06-2020

On May 6, 2020, Travis Casner (Weaver) conducted a witness interview with a current member of City Council ("CM 2"), by phone. The purpose was to interview CM 2 about the allegations against Mayor Pro Tem Delia Garza ("MPT Garza") related to the misuse of public funds through her office budget. The following was determined:

INTERVIEW SUMMARY:

- CM 2 stated that during their first year on City Council, CM 2 used their office budget to pay for their law license
 including dues to the State Bar of Texas and CLE.
- CM 2 stopped using their office budget to pay for expenses related to their law license in subsequent years because
 they had a private legal consulting firm in which they received compensation for legal services from private entities.
- CM 2 repaid the City of Austin for the expenditures from their office budget for their law license incurred during their first year on City Council.
- CM 2 opined that City Councilmembers should be able to pay for their law license with their office budget as long as there is not a conflict of interest because their legal expertise adds value to City Council.
- CM 2 also stated that several members of the City Council have used their office budget to pay for Spanish speaking lessons and that MPT Garza had been one of the organizers for group Spanish speaking lessons in which City Councilmembers participated.