

## COMMENT

We are extremely disappointed that the City of Pigeon Forge chose to call a press conference and release personnel records without giving us the opportunity to attend the press conference or view records from our personnel file prior to their release. Why the City acted this way toward us is beyond our comprehension; but we feel the City wanted to make examples of us for its own reasons - perhaps to deter other City employees from questioning any City action. We feel it was unnecessary to call a press conference to announce a disciplinary action. We feel that doing so cast an air of sensationalism over the whole unfortunate event and put both sides of this matter in a position that prevents an amicable resolution.

The actions of the City toward us lean toward being malicious and are unjustified under the circumstances. We are young men who work very hard in a very stressful profession. Sometimes we blow off steam in ways that are hard to understand if you're not in our circumstances. That is what happened here, nothing more. We acknowledge it was inappropriate in the strictest sense, but the recordings are not an accurate reflection of who we are. The recordings are a couple of minutes out of hours and hours of recordings. We were not given the opportunity to search the recordings for any content that might serve to place our conversation in proper context, nor did the City make the recordings of the entire shift available to us or anyone else.

The way the City has chosen to handle this matter has disappointed and disheartened us. Frankly, we do not deserve to be treated this way. We were never given the opportunity to put this conversation in context. If we deserve any punishment, it should have been administered privately, just like all other personnel matters have been handled before this incident.