

"He that filches from me my good name Robs me of that which not enriches him And makes me poor indeed." (Shakespeare's Othello)

Three and a half years into a defamation and wrongful termination civil suit, on May 27, 2025, former City of Mesquite, NV Police Chief Joseph MaQuade Chesley and his wife sat quietly behind his attorney as Clark County, Nevada District Judge Timothy Williams in referring to continued discovery delays told the City defense attorney:

"I would have expected better from a municipality, the City of Mesquite. I have not seen anything like this coming from the city government. I find that shocking."

Defamation

Chesley and his wife, Shayla May, are defending themselves against the aftermath of what his attorney, Phillip Trenchak, described as unsubstantiated:

*"Sustained, vicious series of attacks involved the dissemination of false and defamatory statements of a criminal sexual nature by Mesquite's former City Attorney Bob Sweetin."*ⁱⁱ

In a September 2023 civil suit against The City of Mesquite, Aaron Baker, Robert Sweetin, Davison Van Cleve PC [Sweetin's law firm], and various unnamed individuals, Trenchak outlined the serious nature of defamation against the Chesleys.

Trenchak pointed to the extreme economic and emotional harm, headaches, sleeplessness, and various physical and mental distress imposed on his clients by the defendants, adding that such emotional distress impacted Shayla Chesley's ability to conceive and required fertility treatment.

The attorney added that the serious nature of the allegations impacted Chesley's ability to continue his career since Sweetin's unsubstantiated charges portraying him as a sexual deviant called into question his professional and personal conduct, seeking to impugn his reputation and standing in the community.

2007: Chesley hired

On June 18, 2007, Joseph MaQuade Chesley left the St. George, Utah, Police Department to join the Mesquite Police Department. He first served under then-Police Chief Doug Law and later under Troy Tanner, who replaced Law upon his retirement.

2014 Sweetin rose to City Attorney

In January 2014, Mayor Allan Litman, Council members W.Geno Withelder, George Rapson, Kraig Hafen, Rich Green, and Cynthia' Cindi' Delaney promoted Deputy City Attorney Robert Sweetin to replace Retiring city attorney Cheryl Hunt. Sweetin moved quickly to eliminate the deputy position and consolidate legal power for the City.

2014 Chesley-Sweetin Business Partnership

In late August 2014, the Chesley brothers, MaQuade, MaClinn, and MaKay, entered into a partnership with Courtney Sweetin, Robert Sweetin's wife, to open "The Splash Pad" in Mesquite, serving snow cones, drinks, cookies, and other refreshments. According to Courtney Sweetin, her family has been friends with Chesley's since moving to Mesquite. ⁱⁱ

2017 The Tobler Case

While not directly involved in the Chesley issue, Sweetin's handling of the Tobler Case raised concerns.

In 2017, 16-year-old Kylie Tobler of Mesquite met 19-year-old Broc Smith, which eventually led to a relationship during which Tobler claimed Smith sexually assaulted her, after which her father, Shawn Tobler, a member of the Mesquite Fire Department decided to press criminal charges. According to Tobler, he met with the Chief of Police Tanner, after which Tanner agreed to send the case to Sweetin.

The resulting court proceeding ended with Smith pleading guilty to a charge of Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor and a Temporary Protective Order forbidding Smith from having any further contact with Tobler until she reached 18.

2019, Chesley became the Chief, and Baker became the City Manager.

Following Tanner's retirement, Mesquite Mayor Litman and City Council members Annie Black, George Gault, George Rapson, Brian Wursten, and Sandra Ramaker met on Tuesday, **February 12, 2019**. They appointed Chesley as the new Chief of Police.

When appointed, City Manager Andy Barton said that Chesley had the respect of the men and women throughout the department and that "he will do an excellent job as chief." ⁱⁱⁱ

However, following Chesley's appointment, Sweetin, in referring to the police officers attesting to Chesley's hearing during the appointment meeting, sent text messages to police officers under Chesley's command which read: "*Kiss ass*" and "*Were you guys threatened with your jobs?*" Adding that, "*I don't think I've ever seen a turnout like this for an appointment.*"

Shortly thereafter, Barton retired, and Litman recommended that Deputy City Manager and long-time employee Aaron Baker replace him. Council members Gault, Rapson, and Wursten agreed.

However, Councilwoman Ramaker supported the appointment of Christian Clegg, the Deputy City Manager of Stockton, California, whom a hiring committee had interviewed as part of a replacement search after learning that Barton would retire.

2020 Sweetin vs. Litman and Chesley meets with Baker

In 2020, Sweetin filed to run against Litman for the Mayor's position. In reporting his source of income besides the City Attorney position, Sweetin's ownership interest is in the local Splash Pad, and he earns income as an attorney from Davison Van Cleve, LLC, while also serving as a counselor for the Small Business Development Corporation.

Among smaller donations, on June 15, 2020, Sweetin received \$10,000 in contributions from Mesquite Gaming, LLC, and on August 26, 2020, Litman received \$5,000 from the same source.

As the political rivalry between Sweetin and Litman continued, Chesley asked City Manager Baker to stop Sweetin's attacks against him.

After that failed on September 24, 2020, Chesley filed a charge with the Director of Human Resources, which resulted in Mayor Litman, along with Council members Black, Gault, Rapson, Ramaker, and Wursten, contracting with Littler Mendelsohn to investigate the allegations made by Chesley against Sweetin. Littler Mendelsohn found that Chesley's complaint against Sweetin was substantiated. ^{iv, 1}

¹ The City of Mesquite attempted to minimize the City's involvement by explaining that the statements were not made in Mr. Sweetin's official capacity as the

2020 MPOA supports Litman

In September 2020, two MPD officers made claims of harassment against Sweetin, which were deemed legitimate. However, despite a recommendation for disciplinary action, none was taken.

Also in September, the Mesquite Police Officers Association (MPOA) ² endorsed Litman. In a series of mailers, the association detailed the Tobler case and reported the belief that Sweetin abused his powers in prosecuting Smith years earlier.

The authors of the mailer said, *"We believe this young man [referring to Broc Smith] was criminally charged [in the Tobler case] for an offense he should never have been charged with."*

2020 Litman retains Mayor Position

Litman retained his seat in the November 3, 2020, election with nearly 67 percent of the vote, or 6,271 votes, vs. 3,098 votes for Sweetin.

According to Vernon Robison, reporting for the Mesa Valley Progress ^v, the Mayor's race had turned when the Mesquite Police Officers' Association (MPOA) sent out a political mailer explaining the Union's endorsement of Litman.

Robison reported that the letter criticized Sweetin in several areas where the MPOA membership had disagreed with Sweetin over the years. Robison wrote that the letter sparked a community political battle that became emotional, bitter, and contentious over the final four weeks leading up to the election.

2020 Sweetin fired

Shortly after being reelected as Mayor on December 8, 2020, Litman, along with Council members Wes Boger (who replaced George Rapson), Gault, Ramaker, and Wursten, held a special meeting to consider Sweetin's retention.

After hearing pro and con comments about Sweetin, Wursten moved to retain Sweetin as the City Attorney. The motion went without a second,

former City Attorney. Therefore, they argue, the City Attorney cannot make a criminal allegation against another City Official, as just another ordinary civilian citizen.

² The MPOA is a separate organization apart from the Mesquite Police Department and not under the authority of the Police Chief.

followed by a motion by Councilwoman Ramaker to terminate Sweetin without cause. Councilman Gault seconded the motion, which passed with Mayor Litman and Councilman Boger joining Ramaker and Gault. Wursten, of course, voted against the termination.^{vi}

Simultaneously, Ramaker, Gault, and Boger agreed to terminate the retainer agreement with Sweetin's Law Firm, Davison Van Cleve PC, with Wursten opposing.

2021 Rumors and Lawsuit

In the meantime, the unsubstantiated allegations against Chesley continued as rumors.

In April 2021, Barbara Ellestad reported on her local news website, [Mesquite Citizens Journal (MCJ) (now closed)³], that an investigation by the Nevada Attorney General was underway into allegations of inappropriate conduct by Chesley.

Ellestad alleged that unnamed sources accused Chesley of authoring questionable texts, holding conversations, and exchanging photos with teenage girls in the community between 2015 and late 2019. Ellestad did not name sources or accusers in her MCJ article.

Chesley denied the accusation, and without substantiating evidence, Ellestad removed the article from her website.

On April 27, 2021, Mayor Litman, Council members Boger, Karen Dutkowski (who in 2020 filled the vacated seat formerly held by George Rapson), Gault, Ramaker, and Wursten (via Phone) held a council meeting during which they heard from individuals concerned about attacks against Chesley.

Amanda Adams addressed the anger she felt about the accusations against Chesley. She said she had worked with him at the Splash Pad and found him an exceptional, professional, and respectful boss. She said the working environment was like a family, and she never felt intimidated or uncomfortable around him.

Taylor Mayer, who also worked with Chesley and his wife Shayla at the Splash Pad, joined Adams in commending Chesley for his thoughtfulness, polite, and courteous behavior.

³ On May 13, 2021, the Mesquite Citizens' Journal ceased operations.

Brooke Lee joined Adams and Mayer in appreciating Chesley's professionalism while she worked at the Splash Pad as a high school student.

Mesquite police officers who worked with or knew Chesley spoke highly of his kindness and professionalism, not only during his tenure with the St. George Police Department before joining Mesquite but also as an Officer and Chief of the Mesquite Department.

Wyatt Oliver, a Mesquite Police Officer with a long-standing working relationship with Chesley, said there is nothing remotely factual in the allegations against the Chief. Oliver said that as an MPOA member, he was *"sick and tired of the City Manager's office bulldozing us in every aspect and everything we try to do."*

Others spoke on behalf of Chesley, including Rabbi Arthur Zuckerman, who reported on the number of times he had met with Chief Chesley, whom Zuckerman described as above reproach. Zuckerman added that ruining someone's name is *"the worst thing you can do to someone."*

Following the numerous accolades, Baker addressed the group. He informed them that he had received a complaint from a citizen and referred the issue to the Attorney General's office for investigation.

A month later, on May 12, 2021, Baker resigned as Mesquite City Manager. According to Robison of the Mesa Valley Progress, poor relations between Baker and the Mesquite Police Officers Association (MPOA) boiled over when Ellestad published unsubstantiated allegations against Chesley.^{vii}

Thirteen days later, on May 25, 2021, Mayor Litman addressed the issue of the Chesley rumors.

"There are a few in Mesquite that live by rumors and ignore the truth," Litman told those attending the May 25, 2021 City Council Meeting.^{viii}

"Rumors were spread about our Police Chief by some of those haters. I know these are harsh words, but this is the truth," Litman said. *"Let me dispel all these rumors once and for all,"* he continued, adding, *"What was ever alleged about our Police Chief MaQuade Chesley or even hinted about were always false, but the haters didn't care, the fools that read those rumors and believed them were idiots."*

Litman went on, *"If I offended some of those that I referred to, I meant to. The rumor mongers hoped to open a can of worms even though they knew there were no worms in the can."*

Litman further addressed the rumors by reading into the public record a May 18th letter to City Manager Aaron Baker from Attorney General (AG) Aaron Ford in which the AG said,

"Dear Mr. Baker, thank you for contacting the office of the Nevada Attorney General regarding your complaint. Since your communication with our office, your complaint has been forwarded and reviewed by our investigative unit. We conducted a preliminary investigation but found no evidence of any criminal violation. As such, we believe that this matter has been addressed at the appropriate levels within the law enforcement system. Accordingly, we have closed our investigation concerning your matter, and no criminal prosecution will be pursued."

Litman said that:

"This letter should put to rest the falsehoods that were alleged about our Chief forever. No one, and I mean no one, whitewashed anything". He continued, *"There was never anything to investigate, not in the past, not in the present, not ever, just rumors; they were not even firsthand or secondhand."*

2021 Pack appointed City Attorney

During the October 12, 2021, City Council meeting, Mayor Al Litman nominated Bryan Pack as the City Attorney to replace Interim City Attorney Adam Anderson, who served since the termination of Sweetin. Councilmembers Boger, Dutkowski, George Gault, Ramaker, and Wursten agreed.

Before the appointment, Pack served on the Ivins, Utah Planning Commission for several years. He has also served as Assistant City Attorney for the City of St. George, Utah.

2021 Chesley goes to Court

Nine days later, on October 21, 2021, Chesley, through his attorney Phillip Trenchak, filed a lawsuit in the United States District Court for the District of Nevada against the City of Mesquite, Ellestad, and Baker alleging defamation, discrimination based on religion and sex, retaliation due to religion (LDS) and sex, and intentional negligent infliction of emotional distress.

Trenchak emphasized that: *"Chesley didn't want to sue his employer." "He loves his job, and he loves working in Mesquite."*

However, Tranchak said the onslaught of attacks just kept going on, *"So this was what we had to do to protect MaQuade and his family,"* the attorney said.

In December, Ellestad filed a motion to dismiss all claims against her in the case. The motion cited a Nevada law preventing Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPP). ⁴

A week after Ellestad's motion, Chesley's attorney filed a separate motion to dismiss Ellestad, which Judge Anne R. Traum, a Biden appointment, granted but *"without prejudice."* ⁵

On January 27, attorney Marcus Lee, managing partner of the O'Hagan Meyer) and Inku Nam (of Lewis Brisbois Bisgaard & Smith, LLP), representing the City and Baker, filed a motion to dismiss the claims. The motion claims that even presuming all the allegations made by Plaintiff were true, there were *"no actionable claims for discrimination or retaliation based on gender or religion, deprivation of civil liberty....or defamation."*

Furthermore, the defense attorneys asserted that Chesley has not shown any substantial burden on his Free Exercise Rights. The harms he alleges—a *"destroyed"* reputation at his church and consummate discomfort worshipping there—are subjective, and the Ninth Circuit is clear that *"a subjective chilling effect on free exercise rights is not sufficient to constitute a substantial burden."*

2022 Jankowski as City Manager

During the July 12, 2022, Mesquite City Council meeting, council members Boger, George Gault (via Phone), Ramaker, and Brian Wursten. Ratified the appointment of Peter Jankowski as the City Manager to replace Andy Barton, who had returned to the City manager seat after the resignation of Baker

⁴ The anti-SLAPP statute aims to prevent lawsuits that would censor, intimidate, or silence critics by unnecessarily burdening them with the high cost of legal defense.

⁵ "Without prejudice" means that a statement, communication, or action is made without affecting or waiving a legal right or claim.

Additionally, during the meeting, Adam Leverenz, who frequently addresses the Council, discussed the City's consideration and approval of contracts for its insurance renewals for fiscal years 2022 through 2023.

Leverenz informed those attending the council meeting that the Dixie Leavitt agency and the Travelers Companies, as insurers, provided seven types of liability insurance, including general liability, public entity management liability, and law enforcement liability.

Leverenz pointed to an estimated cost of \$1,900,668 for fiscal years 2021 and 2022, with Premiums for the upcoming period for fiscal years 2022 through 2023. \$1,126,186. He said he hoped that the coverage would address issues surrounding the Mesquite Police Department. Boger, Dutkowski, Gault (via Phone), Ramaker, and Wursten approved the insurance coverage.

2022 Elections

The November 3, 2022, elections resulted in the election of Paul Wanlass to replace Dutkowski, Karen Fielding to replace Ramaker, and Pattie Gallos to take the seat previously held by Gault. They joined Councilman Boger, Wursten, and Mayor Litman.

2023 Civil Rights Action dismissed, actions filed in district court.

On August 14, 2023, Judge Traum granted a motion, with prejudice,⁶ to dismiss allegations of federal civil rights violations that she deemed unsubstantiated. However, the Judge declined to address potential state law violations which were beyond her Court's jurisdiction.^{ix}

Therefore, on September 23, 2023, Trenchak, along with co-counsels Victoria C. Beasley, took the Joseph and Shayla Chesley defamation case ([A-23-877738-B](#)) against the City of Mesquite, Aaron Baker, Robert Sweetin, Davison Van Cleve PC, and other unnamed individuals to the Nevada District Court.^x

In addition to those named in the civil action, Trenchak reported that: *"City Councilmen Brian Wursten was actively communicating with former disgraced City Attorney Robert Sweetin, which may or may not have been related to the dissemination of flyers further imputing Chesley*

⁶ "With prejudice" means that a case is dismissed permanently and cannot be refiled.

of serious sexual criminal activity victimizing minors, which was documented as occurring as recently as April of 2023."

Chesley's attorney added that: *"The former City Attorney's dissemination of false criminal accusations, which were a key component in Robert Sweetin's campaign to destroy the career and reputation of MaQuade Chesley, without a shred of evidence, continues. "*

In an amended complaint filed on January 5, 2024, Tremchak added Wursten to the list of defendants.

In this case, Trenchak for the Chesley asks *"For compensatory damages in the principal amount above fifteen thousand (\$15,000) dollars to be proven at trial; For punitive damages in the principal amount in excess of fifteen thousand (\$15,000) dollars to be proven at trial; For special damages in the principal amount in excess of fifteen thousand (\$15,000) dollars to be proven at trial; For attorney's fees and costs incurred; For all damages in an amount to be proved at trial; For costs of suit herein incurred; For reasonable interest on amounts due; and any such other and further relief as this Court deems just and proper."*

This move by Chesley and their attorneys had the immediate impact of increasing Pack's workload while also raising the cost of litigation, as represented by Travelers Insurance and the O'Hagan Law firm, in the dispute involving the City, Baker, and Wursten. At the same time, Laura, Elizabeth Rios, from Kemp Jones LLP, defended Sweetin and his Davison, Va., Cleve law firm in litigating issues.

As a practical matter, continuing the disputes in the legal system brought forth a series of costly complaints, amendments, summons, affidavits, numerous motions, default judgments, rule compliance hearings and conferences, stipulation oppositions, orders, and notices, all of which potentially lead to a trial set for September 8, 2026.

Defendant	Peterson, Tamara Beatty (Peterson Baker PLLC	Rios, Laura Elizabeth, (Kemp Jones LLP)	Lee, Marcus June (O'Hagan Meyer)	Padilla, Jorge Leonardo (O'Hagan Meyer)	Leifried, Drake (O'Hagan Meyer)
City of Mesquite		x	x	x	x
Baker, Aaron		x	x	x	x
Wursten, Brian		x	x	x	x
Davison Van Cleve PC	x				
Sweetin, Robert	x				

Table 1 Defense firms in Chesley case.

2024 Mesquite administrative shakeup

On February 20, 2024, Mesquite City Manager Peter Jankowski presented a letter of resignation to Mayor Litman, effective immediately.

Two months later, in April, Bryan Pack left his position as the City of Mesquite's City attorney to return to Ivins as their city attorney.

Two months later, on June 25, 2024, Edward O. Dickie III was sworn in the City Council Chambers.

Then, on July 23, 2024, the Council appointed Michael Branum to fill Pack's position. Branum has served as Deputy City Attorney for the City of Mesquite since October 2022.

2024 Mesquite Council rejects settlement

On October 18, 2024, The Mesquite City Council held a special meeting to consider a settlement-mediation offer in Chesley's litigation against the City and former city attorney Sweetin, former city manager Baker, City Councilman Wursten, and others.

In attendance was Mayor Pro Tem Gallo, who chaired the session in the absence of Mayor Litman. Council members Wursten, Boger, Fielding, and Wanlass (via Phone). Dickie and Branum also attended.

Daniel Miller, during public comments, asked why Wursten, a litigant in the case, did not recuse himself from voting on the issue. Gallo agreed that Wursten should recuse.

Mike Benham asked the Council to *"do the right thing. Settle it and move on,"* adding, *"We have had enough of this adding that we are taxpayers here, we put you guys up to do the job, get it settled."*

Boger agreed, pointing to payments to the insurance company totaling \$78,000, with another fee of \$25,000 due in June, for which the insurance company would cover the representation of Wursten and Baker. "Everyone knows," Boger said. *"This is just leftover stuff from the 2020 (Sweetin vs Litman) Mayoral race."*

Boger motioned to accept the offer, with judgment contingent upon the insurance company's payment [undetermined] of the claim. *"If they do not,"* he said, I propose mediation. Gallos seconded the motion.

Wursten said, *"For me, for multiple reasons, we absolutely should not accept this offer, and I don't believe we should go to mediation."*

With Boger and Gallo accepting, Wursten, Fielding, and Wanlass voted against the motion to accept the offer.

Boger, for the record, protested that the meeting should have been held in closed session *"for doing more deliberating, not in a public forum."* Wursten agreed.

Boger motioned to go to mediation and not accept the offer of judgment. Gallo seconded the motion, but it failed with three votes against.^{xi}

2024 City Council Elections

A month later, in the November 2024 election, Jesse E. Whipple defeated incumbent Al Litman, and Kevin Parris took the seat previously held by Wursten. Wanlass and Boger, despite their competition, retained their seats.

2024 MPOA no-confidence vote

In an apparent reversal of support in November 2024, Del Schlosser, the president of the Mesquite Police Officers' Union (MPOU), stated that the Union had voted no confidence in Chesley.

Schlosser noted that Chesley had been retaliatory toward people *"because of comments that they made or things that they've brought forward."*

He added, *"There has been some hiring that is believed to be close friends, based on his comments that they were, it's the perception that it was rushed through, if you will, in the hiring processes."*

Following the no-confidence vote, Dickie placed Chelsey on administrative leave.

2025 Chesley Termination Process

On Friday, January 10, 2025, Dickie sent an email to Chief Chesley, removing him from administrative leave based on conversations he allegedly had with the independent investigator tasked with investigating the multiple allegations of misconduct made against the Chief.

A few days later, on Wednesday, January 22 Dickie stated to Channel 8 NEWSNOW reporter James Schaeffer that he terminated Chief MaQuade Chesley on Tuesday.

Dickie said in the statement that *"The city's internal investigation into Chesley has been a topic of discussion during recent city council*

meetings, with officials fielding questions and concerns surrounding the police chief in recent months."^{xii}

On January 29, 2025, the City served Chesley's counsel with a "Notice of Meeting to Consider Character, Misconduct, Competence, or Health" under NRS 241.033, to take place on February 11, 2025.

A few days later, the City Council rescinded the notice pending a City Council scheduled for March 17, 2025.

In a widely distributed February [recording](#), Dickie said, 'Guys, I'm going down to Louisiana, I'm going back to the back parishes, and I'm going to find me a 6 foot 5 Black woman chief...'"

In another [recording](#), he asserts he'll bring back an "Aunt Jemima" should the need arise to replace then-Chief of Police Maquade Chesley. In a third [recording](#) made by Chesley, Dickie used the 'N' word.

2025 injunctive relief A-25-913815-C

On March 3, Chesley, through his Reno, Nevada attorney Ronald J. Dreher, Esq., filed a complaint against the City of Mesquite seeking declaratory relief and injunctive relief (A-25-913815-C), claiming that the City deprived him of any procedural protection by terminating him without notice or a hearing and failed to implement safeguard Chesley's due process rights.

The lawsuit claims that the City acted in "*bad faith*" and violated NRS 289.057 by using a non-law enforcement agency during the investigations into Chesley's alleged misconduct. It also claims that his termination was done at least in part due to the City's "questionable, discriminatory and retaliatory employment practices."

Chesley's lawsuit also claimed that the City violated the terms of his contract by terminating him without cause, as he was not an at-will employee; "*therefore, the termination process required a pre-termination hearing, a post-termination hearing, and a reasonable opportunity to be heard at a meaningful time and in a meaningful manner.*"

Chesley, through Dreher, also claims that his termination was done at least in part due to the City's "*questionable, discriminatory and retaliatory employment practices.*"

2025 Chesley Hearing

On March 17, 2025, Mayor Whipple Council members Gallo, Fielding, Wanlass, and Parrish heard arguments both for and against

Chesley.⁷ City Manager Dickie and City Attorney Branum also attended the meeting.

However, Councilwoman Gallow refrained from ratifying the meeting, arguing that, as a police officer, Chief Chesley had certain rights under the Peace Officers Bill of Rights (NRS 289), which the City ignored.

Councilwoman Gallo argued, among other things, that as a result of Branum's poor advice, the legal entanglements will likely be costly.

Gallo said, *"This all could have been avoided if we had proper and competent legal counsel, which we do not. The result now is that the City is in a ridiculously costly litigation that will cost us tens of thousands of dollars in legal fees."*

The Councilwoman continued: *"That's not the lawsuit; we will wind up paying and out, including the real strong opportunity that Chief Chesley is going to be very successful with this."*

I really would like not to be a part of any of this. I don't blame Wes for leaving because this is not worth it, she added.

For his part, Branum said that Chesley, who was not present, *"now has the opportunity to present information to the Council, which could be considered in closed session."*

Council member Parrish, despite numerous evidentiary and other hearings in three separate actions, wrongly argued that none of the evidence against former Chief Chesley had been presented to either Judge. Again, Parris wrongly said, *"The only thing that has been argued is whether he should obtain an injunction to halt these proceedings."*

Former Mayor Litman told those attending the meeting that this meeting should not take place, as a Federal Judge had ruled that the City of Mesquite had violated NRS 289, along with allegations of an illegal investigation by the City Manager and City Attorney, which will be presented in Chesley's state court litigation.

"The agenda item to consider the character, misconduct, competence, or physical or mental health of Chief Chesley should die with no second of the motion," Litman said.

"Don't go down the same rat hole as your two employees [Dickie and Branum] have done," Litman urged, adding that *"I have followed the vilification of the Chief for approximately six years. When those who*

⁷ Councilman Boger had left the Council on March 3 for personal reasons.

wanted him out failed, it started again with rumors, and those of the police union that have sided with the Chief and those who had sided with a handful of enemies who would stop at nothing to have him removed."

"Let me remind you," Litman added, "anyone commits no crime until formal charges have been brought up, and they have not. If the Chief committed a felony, why has he not been arrested, arraigned, and tried? The reason why? There was no crime."

"Thankfully," Litman concluded, "I am no longer here to serve you, and I can sleep peacefully at night, and I seriously wonder how most of you can."

Councilwomen Fielding moved to ratify the termination of Chesley, with Wanlass adding the second. Parrish joined with the two, and the motion passed. Gallo abstained. ^{xiii}

2025 Dickie fired

During an April 22, 2025, City Council meeting, Councilwoman Gallo noted a string of "*bad decisions*" by Dickie, including firing Chesley at the behest of the local police union. "*It's time for this city to start healing*," she said before making the motion to terminate Dickie.

Council members Bill Ennis (who had replaced Boger) along with Wanlass, and Parrish agreed Councilwoman Fielding supported Dickie and blamed the public outcry to fire him on the individuals who recorded his comments,

Dickie's February "*racist*" remarks, along with the handling of the termination of Chesley, played a part in the decision to terminate the city manager.

According to Bobbie Green, reporting for the Mesa Valley Progress, Dickie apologized for what he characterized as a poor choice of words and stated that he was not a racist.

Green, in her reporting, said that Council members stated this was a difficult decision to make since Dickie was well-liked, but the majority sided with termination for the sake of the City.

In addition, Green wrote that the City can't have a city manager who speaks that way and that the City has already received too much negative publicity due to the handling of the Chesley termination.

Green noted that Chesley attended the council meeting and said, "*Dickie should be held accountable for what he said.*"

2025 Injunctive relief Hearing and order A-25-913815-C

On May 15, 2025, Clark County District Court Judge Nadia Krall heard Chesley's declaratory and injunctive relief charge (A-25-913815-C) from March 3, regarding Chesley's claim that the City terminated him without notice or a hearing, thereby violating his due process rights.

At that hearing, Dreher for Chesley made a motion for an order to Show Cause and a Motion for Attorney's Fees and Costs.

Additionally, the Court heard Defendant City of Mesquite's ("City") Motion for Reconsideration of a previous Court's Order (1) Granting a Restraining Order, a Motion for Preliminary Injunction, and a Motion to Enforce Injunction, and Defendant's Amended Motion for Reconsideration of Court's Order Granting Plaintiff's Motion for Order to Show Cause.

Twelve days later, on May 27, the Mesquite City Council had scheduled, among other things, an action to consider City Attorney Michael Branum's performance. He resigned before the hearing.

2025 Definition Case Default

On May 30th Trenchak for Chesley filed a motion in Chesley's defamation case (A-23-877738-B) against the City of Mesquite, Aaron Baker, Robert Sweetin, Davison Van Cleve PC, and other unnamed individuals asking District Judge Timothy Williams to issue a default against the City of Mesquite, former city manager, Aaron Baker and former City Councilman Brian Wursten for "severe pernicious and continuous discover abuses under Nevada; s Civil Procedure ruling 37".

Judge Williams expressed his concern that the litigation costs of Chesley's civil cases against the City of Mesquite and other former employees impact his attorneys' ability to represent him.

Moments later in the hour-long hearing, the Judge awarded attorney fees [without regard to recovery] to Chesley's attorney.

In awarding attorney fees without regard to recovery, Judge Williams essentially signaled a belief that the City of Mesquite officials and the defense attorneys they represented maintained, without reasonable ground, various delaying actions to harass the attorneys in presenting Chesley's case.

2005 order A-25-913815-C

Then, on June 3, Judge Krall granted the Plaintiff's Motion for Order to Show Cause and Motion for Attorney's Fees and Costs. Additionally, the Judge denied the Defendant's Motion for Reconsideration of the Court's Orders and previous motions.

Court Order

- The Court granted the Plaintiff's motion for an order to show cause and attorney's fees.
- The City of Mesquite and its attorneys were held in contempt for violating a court order.
- The Court denied the defendant's motions for reconsideration regarding previous orders.

Findings of Fact

- The Plaintiff's motion for attorney's fees met the criteria established in *Brunzell v. Golden Gate National Bank*.
- The City of Mesquite failed to respond to the Plaintiff's motion within the allotted time.
- The City violated a clear court order by holding a prohibited agenda item.

Conclusions of Law

- The City of Mesquite, as a law enforcement agency, is required to comply with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) Chapter 289 regarding investigations of peace officers.
- The Court found that the City acted in bad faith by fabricating criminal allegations against the Plaintiff.
- The City was fined \$500 for contempt and ordered to pay the Plaintiff's legal fees.

2005 Interim Mesquite City Attorney.

Also, on June 3, the Mesquite City Council unanimously appointed Adam Anderson from Barney McKenna & Olmstead as the interim attorney for the City of Mesquite.

This is not the end.

To quote Churchill, *"It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."*

Meanwhile, Judge Williams outlined the costly schedule for the continuation of the Joseph and Shayla Chesley defamation case (A-23-877738-B) against the City of Mesquite, Baker, Sweetin, Davison Van Cleve PC, and other unnamed individuals.

The schedule, which concludes with a Jury trial on September 8, 2026, includes a litany of Plaintiff motions essentially designed to compel the City of Mesquite and the insurance company's defense attorneys to produce documents that will aid in presenting the case to a jury.

It is common for a defense to use such delaying strategies to prepare for trial, gather evidence, or explore potential weaknesses in the prosecution's case.

However, Judge Williams, in reviewing the delays from October 21, 2021, when Chesley, through his attorney Phillip Trenchak, filed the lawsuit, to May 27, 2025, when he told the defense that he expected *"better from a municipality, the City of Mesquite, "I would have expected better from a municipality, the City of Mesquite. "I have not seen anything like this coming from the city government. I find that shocking."*

Potential plaintiff attorney fee awards (estimated in 2024 at more than \$100,000) would mitigate the fiscal impact on the Chesleys.

However, the defense strategy of delay, while enriching defense attorneys,

06/11/2025 Motion to Stay	[208] Defendants City of Mesquite, Aaron Baker and Brian Wursten's Opposition to Plaintiff's Sixth Motion to Compel Defendants Motion to Stay Proceedings Pending the Outcome of Defendants' Writ of Mandamus to the Nevada Court of Appeal on Order Shortening Time
06/25/2025 Motion to Compel	First Motion to Compel Documents Pursuant to a Lawful Subpoena Duces Tecum Served Upon Travelers' Indemnity Company on March 04,
07/02/2025 Motion to Compel	Second Motion to Compel a Privilege Log from Travelers Indemnity
07/09/2025 Motion for Leave	Plaintiffs' Motion for Leave to File Second Amended Complaint
07/09/2025 Motion to Compel	Plaintiff's Sixth Motion To Compel Ohagan Meyer To Produce Documents Responsive To The Subpoena Duces Tecum Served On Ohagan Meyer On April 22, 2025
07/10/2025 Motion	Defendant's Motion for Protective Order to Preclude Plaintiffs from Serving Subpoena Duces Tecum on Google, LLC
07/15/2026 Status Check: Trial	Hearing
07/23/2025 Motion to Compel	Fifth Motion to Compel Responses to the Third Requests for Documents from the City of Mesquite
07/30/2025 Motion	Plaintiffs' Motion to Deem Requests for Admissions Admitted by Order of the Court
Table 2 Litigation strategy to 2026	
08/08/2025 Motion to Strike	Plaintiff's Motion to Strike Following Defendants: 1.) The City of Mesquite; 2.) Aaron Baker; & 3.) Brian Wursten
08/20/2026 Pretrial/Calendar Call	Pretrial/Calendar Call
09/08/2026 Jury Trial	Maybe (authors comment)

may place a potential long-term burden on the Mesquite taxpayer.

It was former Mayor Al Litman who urged Mayor Whipple, Council members Gallo, Fielding, Wanlass, and Parrish, *"Don't go down the same rat hole as your two employees [Dickie and Branum} have done, and reminding them that, "anyone commits no crime until formal charges have been brought up, and they have not. If the Chief committed a felony, why has he not been arrested, arraigned, and tried? The reason why? There was no crime."*

While the damage to Joseph MaQuade Chesley's career and his wife's health is virtually irreversible, it remains for Mayor Whipple, Council members Gallo, Fielding, Wanlass, and Parrish to heed Litman's advice, accept the consequences of the City's failures, and end the charade now rather than later.

Endnotes

ⁱ Joseph Maquade Chesley, Shayla Mae Chesley vs. City of Mesquite, Aaron Baker, Robert Sweetin, Davison Van ClevePC, Doe Individuals 1 through 300; and Rose Business or Governmental Entities 1 through 300, Case No. A-23-877738B, filed 9/13/2023 Eighth Judicial District Court, Clark County, Nevada.

ⁱⁱ Bickley, Jesselyn, ‘Splash Pad’ cools off end of summer, [The Spectrum, Sept 1, 2014](#).

ⁱⁱⁱ “There’s a new sheriff in town,’ Mesquite Local News, Jan. 17, 2019 at: MES01172019A.pdf

^{iv} Ibid: Chesley, Case No. A-23-877738B, filed 9/13/2023 Eighth Judicial District Court, Clark County, Nevada.

^v Robison, Vernon, Mesa Valley Progress, “Mesquite City Elections End Decisively, [Mesa Valley Progress](#) November 6, 2020.

^{vi} Mesquite Special Meeting, City Hall- Council Chambers, Tuesday, December 8, 2020; 10:00 am.

^{vii} Robison, Vernon, Mesa Valley Progress, “Baker Resigns As City Manager, Effectively Immediately, [Mesa Valley Progress](#) May 12, 2021.

^{viii} Mesquite Regular City Council Meeting Minutes, City Council Chambers – City Hall Tuesday, May 25, 2021; 5:00 pm.

^{ix} See Order for Details Signed by District Judge Anne R. Traum on [8/14/2023](#). (Copies have been distributed pursuant to the NEF - JQC).

^x [Chesley v. Mesquite et al, No. 2:2021cv01946 - Document 91 \(D. Nev. 2023\) :: Justia](#)

^{xi} Mesquite City Council, Special Meeting Minutes, Mesquite City Hall, Friday, October 18, 2024 – 12:30 P.M.

^{xii} Schaeffer, James "Mesquite police chief fired following internal investigation, *NEWSNOW.com, Jan. 22,2005 at: [mesquite-police-chief-fired-following-internal-investigation](#)

^{xiii} Mesquite City Council, Special Meeting Minutes, Mesquite City Hall Monday, March 17, 2025 – 5:00 P.M.