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Fifield town board 'oversteps' chief's decision in disciplining first-responder

Sloane suspended from Pike Lake Fire Department for one year

By Trevor Greene
OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

Fifield town chairman Bill Felch and town supervisor John Smith agreed at an Aug. 15 town board meeting to suspend Pike Lake Fire Department emergency medical responder (EMR) Mike Sloane

for one year.

Town supervisor Ann Sloane, the wife of Mike Sloane, recused herself from the discussion and vote.

Felch confirmed with *The Lakeland Times* Wednesday that the board's action "oversteps" the decision the Pike Lake Fire Department's chief

Warren Johnson made on July 3, which was to place Sloane on a six-month probationary period.

A contentious buoy issue among residents and the Pike Lake Chain Lakes Association is what led to Sloane's suspension.

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Presque Isle town supervisors disagree over computer investigation

By Trevor Greene
OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

Presque Isle town supervisor Carl Wolter asked town supervisor and interim town chairperson Cathy Logan Weber to re-open or continue a third-party investigation with regard to town computers during an Aug. 17 town board meeting.

The investigation, which was initially approved by the board in May, consisted of sending the town laptop and two desktops to a third-party investigation firm based out of Madison, Special Investigation and Forensic Technology (SIFT).

Ultimately, the town board agreed to pay the company about \$11,000 to conduct forensic audits on each computer. As it was noted at the board's Aug. 3 meeting, SIFT completed \$11,000 worth of work but essentially told the town it would need to pay more money for it to continue.

Some residents, in the public comment portion of the Aug. 17 meeting, lobbied for the board to continue SIFT's investigation.

Wolter made the motion to do just that, Weber said she wouldn't second it.

The town chairman's seat remains vacant after incumbent town chairman John MacLean challenged an April 12 recount of the April 4 election results that saw longtime town clerk Lorine Walters winning by one vote, 242-241.

With the board only consisting of two members currently, unanimous decisions between both supervisors need to be made for the board to take any action.

A decision regarding MacLean's appeal is expected to be made on Aug. 31 in Vilas County circuit court.

Investigating the town's computers came about after the April 4 election, as well, when a new town treasurer and new clerk took office.

Typically, according to both town supervisors, an audit of the town's finances is done when a new treasurer and clerk are elected.

When the financial audit was being discussed, new town treasurer Jill Eesley expressed concern with regard to town records and property being destroyed from the computers' hard drives after it was learned Walters's son Jim had been working on the computers offsite at his computer maintenance company in Michigan for roughly the past 20 years.

Subsequently, the Vilas County Sheriff's Office conducted its own investigation in late June of the matter and determined there was no evidence "at this time" to support claims of any criminal activity.

Wolter, though, believes something could still come of the computers investigation.

"I read the SIFT report and there's a lot of questions, there's some outright lies, and I want it to come to a conclusion," he said, right before he made a motion to continue the investigation with SIFT.

He told Weber he "figured" she wouldn't second his motion.

"It will come up again because I will persist," he said. "And I did instruct SIFT to hang on to the computers. I signed the contract, I feel I had some obligation to the taxpayers that back me, and therefore they will keep it."

Speaking of the forensic audits SIFT has conducted so far, Weber read a prepared statement.

She said she read through all of the records requests filed by residents regarding the report, the SIFT report and the sheriff's office

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BRETT LABORE/LAKELAND TIMES

Bron Badavinac of Cloquet, Minn. goes hard into the corner on the seven-mile cross country track of the FDSCR race series on Sunday, Aug. 13, at Area 31 in Minocqua.

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Rebecca Bradley blasts Protasiewicz for not recusing in redistricting case

Supreme Court could take case; Bradley says its pre-judged and pre-determined

By Richard Moore
OF THE LAKELAND TIMES

The state's Supreme Court has ordered the Wisconsin Elections Commission to respond to a petition for the court to take original action on a case challenging the state's redistricting maps, as conservative justice Rebecca Grassl Bradley denounced liberal justice Janet Protasiewicz for not recusing herself from the case.

In a withering dissent, Bradley also said the case itself was rigged — prejudged and pre-de-

termined — using the very description that Protasiewicz has used about the redistricting maps themselves.

The petition asking the high court to take the case directly could have been accepted, or rejected. In this case, the court ordered the respondent, the Wisconsin Elections Commission, to file a response no later than August 22.

"Our standard approach when

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