

Madison County officials request mediation to resolve case

August 15 2016 1:44 PM



EDWARDSVILLE – In an attempt to resolve a lawsuit filed by the Veterans Assistance Commission, **Madison County officials** have submitted a motion to the **Third Judicial Circuit Court** requesting the case be resolved by mediation.

Madison County officials barred **Veteran's Assistance Commission Superintendent Brad Lavite** from entering the county Administration Building, where the commission offices are located. Lavite was banned from county facilities after law enforcement representatives notified Madison County officials that Lavite potentially posed a threat to the safety of county employees and the public.

The threat was related to the contents of a police dash cam video and the events surrounding Lavite's arrest in March, 2015. Despite the ban, Lavite has continued to receive regular paychecks.

In a statement issued by Madison County, Administrator **Joseph D. Parente** stated, “Madison County is interested in Brad Lavite returning to work in the county Administration Building. For months, we have attempted to create a path for Mr. Lavite to return. Unfortunately, the Veteran’s Assistance Commission has refused to engage with Madison County officials, instead pursuing needless litigation,” Parente stated.

“Madison County officials have an obligation to protect our employees and private citizens who have business at the Administration Building. We maintain this right and will continue to defend our ability to provide a safe and secure environment for our employees and the public,” Parente continued.

Madison County officials are seeking assurances from the Veteran’s Assistance Commission that safety and security issues related to Lavite are addressed. Specifically, the county has requested:

First, prior to Lavite’s being permitted access to the Veteran’s Assistance Commission offices and other county facilities, he must receive full medical clearance. The clearance may come from his personal physician who has been treating him and must be made with full disclosure of the reports related to Lavite’s arrest in 2015.

Secondly, the county is asking for an agreement with the Veteran’s Assistance Commission on how to deal with any future issues.

County officials believe the two requests are reasonable and create a path for Lavite to be permitted access to the Veteran’s Assistance Commission offices. “We (county officials) cannot ignore the severity of Mr. Lavite’s incident with the police or the potential threats to our employees and the public,” the administrator said in the statement. “By ignoring this situation and merely looking the other way, we would not be fulfilling our obligation to county employees and visitors to the Administration Building and Courthouse.”

Parente also addressed the potential of future litigation should an incident involving Lavite occur at a county facility. “We have an obligation to protect the county and its taxpayers against future litigation by taking appropriate measures to limit or eliminate those risks.”

“Resolving this matter did not require litigation by the Veteran’s Assistance Commission, it required communication and working together to resolve it in a manner acceptable to both parties. We are hopeful that mediation will be granted and this matter will be resolved under the court’s supervision,” Parente added.

EDITOR'S NOTE: As a result of the pending litigation, Madison County officials will not make any additional statements at this time regarding this issue.