

GET Committee

From: County Clerk
Sent: Tuesday, February 5, 2019 7:51 AM
To: GET Committee
Subject: FW: testimony against Patrick Wong

From: joel@joelkatzmaui.com <joel@joelkatzmaui.com>
Sent: Monday, February 04, 2019 5:40 PM
To: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>
Subject: testimony against Patrick Wong

Aloha. The following is my testimony against reappointing Patrick Wong as Corporate Counsel.

My name is Joel Katz. I have lived at 1320 Hiahia place, Oceanview Estates, Wailuku for 30 years.

I want to recommend that you do NOT approve retaining Patrick Wong as corporate counsel. My complaint against him is that he supports the unscrupulous actions of attorneys he is in charge of.

I had a claim with the county. I had to work with deputy corporate counsel Moana Lutey. The unscrupulous tactic used against me was stalling a response to my properly submitted claim until the statute of limitations ran out. I had been warned to expect ridiculous lowball offers of settlement too. Which is what I got.

I had a claim with the county of Maui for flooding my house and property when the storm drain in my street overflowed, sending a river of mud and water down my property in September 2016. Drywall, carpeting and base cabinets had to be replaced in my downstairs. Soil was washed away down the slope of my property. There was never a doubt about the county accepted responsibility for design flaws in the storm drain and for not maintaining it. My required repair proposals were submitted almost a year in advance.

I was working in good faith with the county and their claim adjusters but Moana Lutey did not reveal the offer of their claim adjuster to me until 6 months after it was completed, and two weeks before my statute ran out. She did this knowing that I would object to being offered \$4100 for a legitimate \$20,000 claim.

As stated in the Maui News Thursday January 24. "Deputy corporate counsel Moana Lutey said "No one was more critical of Pat than me" So when Wong became her boss she scrutinized him so much that it was "pretty much abusive". Moana Lutey was abusive in her treatment of me.

To make matters even more complicated, while finally attempting to make the storm drain design corrections I had proposed in 2006, the county botched the job during construction and flooded my property again, in the same way in October of 2018. I filed another claim and have now begun the same process again.

The corporate counsel department said they would not be submitting my new claim to their claim adjuster.

In their goal of saving the county money Moana Lutey and Patrick Wong treated me like an adversary while I was legitimately trying to reach a fair compromise and follow their rules.

So now we have a lawsuit. We could have settled this with a fair compromise but under Patrick Wong's direction we have a complicated and costly mess for all of us.

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