



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FORMER FAIR MEADOW NURSING HOME AND ASSISTED LIVING ADMINISTRATOR, ANGELA LEITING, [pronounced, ('LIGHTING')] SETTLES LAWSUIT AGAINST THE CITY OF FERTILE AND ITS (FORMER) MAYOR, DANIEL WILKENS, ALLEGING WRONGFUL TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT, GENDER AND AGE BASED DISCRIMINATION, OPEN MEETING LAW VIOLATIONS, AND INTENTIONAL AND NEGLIGENT INFLECTION OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS, IN EXCHANGE FOR THE SUM OF \$340,000. [three hundred forty thousand dollars]**

On Tuesday, June 10, 2025, the parties attended an out of court settlement mediation with well-known employment law mediator, Sheila Engelmeier from the Engelmeier & Umanah [pronounced, 'you-man-a'] law firm. As a result of the mediation and months of post-mediation negotiations, the parties obtained a fully signed settlement agreement - today - resolving all the issues in the case, in exchange for a total settlement amount of \$340,000.

Payment on behalf of the City of Fertile will be made by its insurance company, the League of Minnesota Cities Insurance Trust. Neither side admitted fault or any wrongdoing. The effect of the settlement is that there will be no judicial determination on the allegations in the lawsuit. The case will be dismissed from the Polk County District Court docket at a date in the near future, after a legally required 15-day waiting period has expired and after payment has been received.

Leiting commented on the settlement, saying, "This settlement does not mean I gave up. It does not mean I believe the City and its officials were right; it means that I and my family needed to be done. The City has effectively drained my ability to continue defending myself, financially. But, they did not take away my truth, my integrity, or the public's ability to know what is in the court files, documents and records – the court record speaks volumes about what really went on behind the scenes."

Throughout the legal process, information surrounding the circumstances of Leiting's termination became public — a result that she considers a personal and public victory.

“Although we will be winding down the case without a trial, I feel that I am a winner - because in my opinion, the community and the public won. The facts are out. The truth is no longer buried. My name has been cleared and my reputation restored — and that’s worth far more to me than any financial settlement.”

The settlement was not about financial gain, Leiting emphasized, but about the personal toll the experience had taken. “The entire amount was designated for emotional distress — a recognition of the personal cost I’ve endured. This has never been about money. It’s been about justice, truth, and accountability.”

Leiting also extended a message of deep appreciation to the local community:

“The level of gratitude I feel toward this community is immeasurable. So many of you stood beside me keeping my heart full — not because you had all the facts, but because you knew who I am as a person, and you witnessed me perform in my job day in and day out. You believed in my character. That will stay with me all of my life.”

In addition to restoring her reputation, Leiting views this case as part of a broader movement toward justice and equity in the workplace: “Women are a protected class in the workforce. We have the right to work free from bullying, retaliation, double standards, and those with ulterior motives. Every woman has the right to be treated equally to men in their same profession and held to the same standard. I’m proud of the role I played in standing up for equality in the workplace and for helping to pave the way for women in our community to be treated with fairness and dignity.”

### **A Special Message to Fair Meadow Nursing Home**

Leiting also offered a heartfelt message to the staff, families, and residents of Fair Meadow Nursing Home, where she served for over three decades.

“To the staff of Fair Meadow Nursing Home: I want you to know how much I admire and appreciate you. I know the work you do, and I know the trials and tribulations you have been faced with the last two (2) years. I am proud of you, and you deserve credit where credit is due. The relationships I built over the past thirty-six (36) years of service at Fair Meadow — and the coworkers who stood by me, the families I had the joy of serving, and the beloved residents who have passed — will never be forgotten. I carry all of you in my heart.”

“While I’m moving on with my life now, my prayers remain with Fair Meadow and the challenges it may face in the future. I wish you nothing but success, and I continue to pray for strong, compassionate leadership to guide you forward.”