



PO Box 1242 | Sandpoint, ID 83864 | Phone: (208) 304 - 6852 | info@cboyleslaw.com

April 19, 2023

Personal Service

City of Bonners Ferry
7232 Main Street
Bonners Ferry, Idaho 83805
Phone: (208) 267-2412

Re: Notice of Tort

Dear City of Bonners Ferry:

I write to you on behalf of Steven Petersen. Mr. Petersen has a child that attended Boundary County Middle School in 2022. The conduct at issue herein took place on or about the 2022 volleyball season and is ongoing. During the school year and volleyball sports season, Mr. Petersen and Mr. Petersen's child were uncomfortable with the behavior of one of the middle school coach volunteers. Mr. Petersen's child was inappropriately touched (along with other athletes), present when Samuel Sandel flirted with other coaches, and otherwise made to feel uncomfortable by Samuel Sandel through the portion of the season Mr. Petersen's child participated. Multiple parents sent letters of complaint and notified the school district or its agents of the inappropriate conduct. In September 2022, Mark Fisk informed Mr. Petersen that Mr. Sandel was staying on as a volunteer. Dissatisfied, Mr. Petersen retained an attorney who reported that based upon his investigation he believed Samuel Sandel has a violent criminal history including at least one active warrant and prior felony.

Because Mr. Petersen believed that Mr. Sandel's substantial criminal history was disqualifying and school policy required that the school district decline Mr. Sandel's offer to volunteer, Mr. Petersen filed complaints with the middle school, superintendent, school board, state board of education and provided the information to police. Boundary County School District and the middle school rely upon SRO Brandon Johnson and the Bonners Ferry Police Department to conduct criminal background checks on volunteers. The superintendent presented the information that Mr. Petersen discovered regarding Mr. Sandel to the Board who discarded the policies and approved Mr. Sandel despite the superintendent recommending that Samuel Sandel not be approved as a volunteer. Mr. Petersen again reported the criminal history and inappropriate behavior, including the touching, to the school resource officer, Brandon Johnson, who negligently failed to discover the convictions, charges and active warrant despite being informed with the same. Indeed, the undersigned was able to confirm a current, active warrant for Samuel Sandel's arrest out of Montana within five minutes of



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calling the Flathead County Sheriff's Office. Shockingly, anyone can locate the active warrant by querying "samuel sandel warrant montana" in a search engine.¹

Mr. Petersen reports that his child has been harrassed and made fun of by other students and children of school disctrict employees responsible for hiring and firing volunteers. Because of your agencies' negligence, Mr. Petersen's child was forced out of sports due to inappropriate touching and harassment. The Petersen family has been defamed, and experienced emotional distress, which have developed into physical symptoms.

We believe that Mr. Petersen has multiple claims against the school district, Bonners Ferry Police Department and school resource officer including but not limited to a breach of duty to ensure the safety of students, negligent hiring and retention, harassment, retaliation and negligent infliction of emotional distress. We reserve the right to bring any other appropriate claims as we are still investigating the facts of this matter and this notice of tort is based upon the facts as we understand them now.

Amount of damages: \$500,000.

Residence address for six months immediately preceding: 200 Mica Rd., Naples, Idaho 83847.

Please direct all further communication regarding this matter to the office of the undersigned.

Sincerely,

BOYLES LAW, PLLC



D. Colton Boyles, Esq.

cc: Client

¹ https://apps.flathead.mt.gov/warrants/warrants_view.php?line=2005178001&letter=5 Last accessed April 19, 2023.

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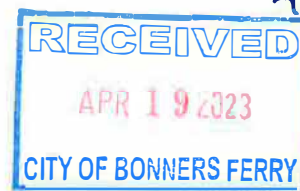
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