

Distributed by M. Lautner
Reg. Session 01/16/2024

From: James O'Rourke <jorourke@leelanau.gov>

Date: January 14, 2024 at 3:35:29 PM EST

To: Jamie Kramer <jkramer@leelanau.gov>

Cc: Ty Wessell <twessell@leelanau.gov>, Board of Commissioners <boc@leelanau.gov>, Deborah Allen <dallen@leelanau.gov>

Subject: Re: Climate Survey

Time to "let it go"!

If you are in a hole quit digging.

we must separate the two departments ASAP.

regardless of the cost!

On Jan 14, 2024 3:17 PM, Jamie Kramer <jkramer@leelanau.gov> wrote:

It was not necessary to add context to Dr. Sholten. We asked for raw data, pure and simple. Instead you called into play the work of Dr. Sholten and its validity (not our intention) and now there is yet another person feeling disenfranchised.

This is not about calling his work into question and that is not what we were asking for. Data, just data. And apparently we are not getting now.

The letter should have read something like this....

Dear Dr. Sholten,

Thank you so much for your work on the Climate Survey. We are now tasked with doing the heavy work of shifting our culture and healing some of the issues that have long gone under the radar in Leelanau. Because of your hard work, we can start addressing each concern one by one. We as commissioners, feel a deep responsibility to all of our employees and decided it would be advantageous for our better understanding if we could have access to the raw data of your report. We understand the need for anonymity within the county so if you could please redact the names and positions of employees on any documents it would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your help on this weighty but important work.

Maybe next time???

Sent from W iPad

On Jan 12, 2024, at 9:31 PM, Ty Wessell <twessell@leelanau.gov> wrote:

Commissioners: As requested, I reached out to Dr. Scholten and forwarded the draft minutes and video from Tuesday's meeting for his information and response. I informed Dr. Scholten that some Commissioners questioned the study design, the limited number of questions and investigator bias. I also communicated that there was concern expressed that certain information obtained from employees was ignored. I communicated that I had been asked to reach out to request additional information.

Dr. Scholten's response is below.

I totally agree with and respect Dr. Scholten's response. We all heard things that were hard to hear but we asked for an assessment of our organization's culture/climate and that is what we received. John is a recognized expert and he knows what he is doing; Attacking the messenger does not change reality.

I hope that we can all accept his report (coupled with the report of Mr. Janik's 2012 *Employee Survey* results) as evidence of organizational strengths, issues, positives, staff quality, challenges, opportunities and possible avenues for improvement. The report can help us improve Commissioner governance, address employee concerns, improve communications and leadership, and foster teamwork and organizational functioning. We must move forward.

Ty Wessell

From: John Scholten <jscholtenmli@gmail.com>

Date: January 12, 2024 at 12:46:11 PM EST

To: Ty Wessell <twessell@leelanau.gov>

Subject: Re: Climate Survey

Mr Wessell (Ty),

Thank you for our recent phone conversation and the kind words in your email.

My personal and professional integrity have and will always be extremely important to me. It deeply concerns me and frankly irritates me that some are attempting to attack my integrity through my work.

I believe I met the expectations laid out for me in the culture/climate study and followed exactly what was proposed to you and supported by your fellow commissioners.

The methodology used was carefully designed to not even remotely lead employees in their response(s). That was reiterated to each and every employee I met with. We were looking for response(s) that helped discern what from employee perceptions was working well and what was not working so well in their respective work environment. I also, by design, totally assured each and everyone of them that I would protect their personal response anonymity. This approach was made clear to all of you at the proposal level and followed through the work.

Theme (topic responses in bold print) responses were created by the number of employee responses on that topic and were placed in the order of greatest response on each corresponding page/section of the report. Normal font wording was verbatim from your employees and shared to help you all understand the topics/themes better.

Since it was agreed upon at the onset of the work that employee response anonymity would be totally protected and such was reiterated upon meeting with each employee, I will not be sharing any of my notes or data from the study.

I wish the Commissioners and Employees only the best with their culture/climate work moving forward.

Sincerely,

John Scholten, Ed.D
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Regional President - Northern Michigan
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