



COUNTY OF DANE
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
EMPLOYEE RELATIONS DIVISION
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GREG BROCKMEYER
Director of Administration

AMY UTZIG
Director of Human Resources

September 23, 2022

Dear Dane County Highway Employees:

DETERMINATION OF DANE COUNTY HIGHWAY WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT INVESTIGATION 5/9/22 – 6/2/22

This letter is to inform you that the Dane County Highway workplace environment investigation conducted by Employee Relations (ER) Division's Human Resources Manager, Kabura Mukasa and Office for Equity & Inclusion's (OEI) Manager of Equal Employment Opportunity, Carrie Braxton has been completed. One Hundred and Ten (110) employees participated in the interviews from May 9 – June 2, 2022! We greatly appreciate the time you took from your hectic schedules to share your thoughts with us on what was working well and also to offer many valuable suggestions on improvements. Highway leadership also shared with us their efforts and actions taken to address many of the concerns in the past. We have spent this time talking with employees, meeting with leadership, reviewing all of the information that was provided and considering options to improve the culture at the Highway Department.

It was our goal to preserve the integrity and confidentiality of the process and have all individuals share their experiences and perspectives without undue influence from other staff, management, employee group representatives or the media. Unfortunately, this was not the case – we learned that the week the interviews started, some employees received texts and phone calls from internal Employee Group representatives/stewards asking that staff attend a meeting prior to the interviews so that they “could all be on the same page” as well as phone calls from the media. Despite this effort to circumvent the process, we believe that we received solid information that will help the Highway Department become a welcoming, conducive work environment for staff and management.

While we cannot disclose the specific details of the individual discussions, we have provided Highway leadership with feedback about the themes that emerged and suggested improvements. In order for this to be a productive process and so leadership can begin working on the various concerns and implement the improvements, we will share the findings during the Highway's in-house all-staff required training *Snow Roadeo* on October 4, 2022.

Our goal is to support your efforts in improving the Highway Department's workplace environment. To do that, we will also team up with leadership to ensure that the support you all need is available, and to make sure everyone (management and staff) is held accountable. We will follow up at least quarterly with leadership to find out the status and ensure action items are being implemented. In six (6) to twelve (12) months we will conduct an All-Employee survey so you can provide feedback on whether the Highway workplace environment has improved; and we shall follow-up with leadership on what if any changes need to be addressed/amended.

All management and staff have been advised of Dane County's *No Retaliation* and *Harassment* policies and are expected to abide by them. If you believe that you are experiencing any retaliatory or harassing behavior, contact HR Manager, Kabura Mukasa (Mukasa.Kabura@countyofdane; (608) 283-1665) immediately.

From this point forward, with our goal of learning from the past but focusing on the present and future, the concerns that have been covered during this process are considered concluded and will no longer be investigated by Highway Management or Employee Relations (ER). If there are new questions/concerns regarding the work environment, you should first speak with your supervisors to attempt to work through them. It is everyone's responsibility to play their part in making the Highway work environment conducive, welcoming and peaceful for all.

Thank you for your commitment to the Highway Department.

Sincerely,

Kabura

Carrie

Kabura Mukasa & Carrie Braxton

Copy:

- Greg Brockmeyer – Dane County Director of Administration
- Amy Utzig – Dane County Director of Human Resources - Employee Relations
- Carlos Pabellon – Dane County Interim Corporation Counsel
- Wesley Sparkman – Director, Dane County Tamara D. Grigsby Office for Equity & Inclusion
- Jerry Mandli – Dane County Highway Commissioner
- Pam Dunphy – Dane County Highway Deputy Commissioner
- Employee Relations File