

10/02/2008

Some board members in vulnerable position, attorney claims

By: BOB BETHELL, Metro Editor

BROKEN ARROW - Attorney Gary Richardson says school board members calling for Dr. Jim Sisney's firing could increase exposure to financial damages.

Three Broken Arrow School Board members allegedly seeking the suspension or termination of superintendent Dr. Jim Sisney at a special school board meeting Monday evening could increase their exposure to financial damages under terms of a lawsuit filed by Tulsa attorney Gary Richardson on Sisney's behalf in September.

The suit against Air Assurance Co. owners Mike and Narissa Rampey and local optometrist Dr. Douglas Hudkins now includes board members Maryanne Flippo, Sharon Whelpley and Shari Wilkins - plus Doug Mann of Tulsa law firm Rosenstein Fist & Ringold.

Sisney laid out a series of events evolving from his discovery of what he called \$77,000 in unauthorized billings by the Rampeys earlier this year.

He indicated three school board members interfered with his investigation and instructed him to apologize to the Rampeys - which he reportedly refused to do.

The situation apparently spiralled downward from there.

"As far as the lawsuit that is already filed," Richardson told the Ledger, "there is the potential for increased damages (defendants) will incur from the things that have gone on.

"We are anxious to hear what their 'reasoning' is to even giving thought to suspension or termination," he said.

"As we all know, wrongful termination of a contract - and especially when wrongdoing is being revealed by the one being terminated - damages can be severe."

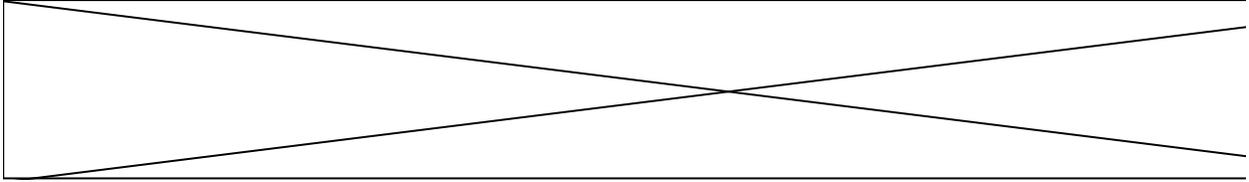
In addition to discussing Sisney's future in executive session, Wilkins and Whelpley wanted all public comments eliminated at Monday's meeting, as permitted by state law in certain circumstances.

Should the board's vote go against Sisney, he is entitled to a due process hearing conducted by the school board.

"I think it is going to be very interesting to find out what has been going on at the schools. Dr. Sisney has been bringing all this to the surface and has been meeting with great resistance," Richardson said.

"You can't stop people from doing foolish things, of course. If you could, we wouldn't need our prison system."

The special board meeting begins at 6 p.m. at Central on Main, 210 N. Main St.



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