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West Palm Beach utilities worker settles suit

January 29, 2014 | Filed in: Legal.

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Former West Palm Beach utilities worker Lenny Corrigan has settled his wrongful termination suit against the city.

Corrigan and the city confirmed that, as part of the settlement reached Wednesday, Corrigan will receive \$75,000.

Corrigan, along with coworkers James Giles and Robert Burd sued in the fall of 2011.

The plaintiffs allege they were punished as retaliation for writing an anonymous letter that said a supervisor "used a derogatory and offensive term against African-Americans in the workplace."

Corrigan and Giles were fired and Burd was suspended for 10 days. The city has contended the three were disciplined because they were found to have been misusing city vehicles and lying on their time cards, not because of the anonymous letter. Corrigan and Giles were fired because they'd been found to have committed the same infractions in the past, the city contends.

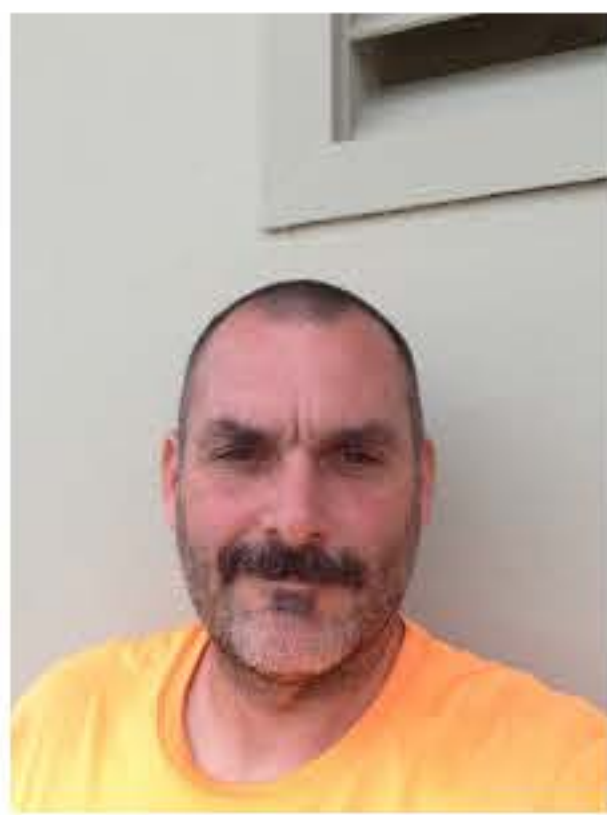
The city has said the letter was written two years after the comment allegedly was made and that the supervisor, Ramsey Ramsaran, later was fired.

In the settlement, Corrigan and Giles each receive \$75,000; Burd \$25,000.

"We were more than ready to go to trial this week and finally lay out exactly what happened, but in the end the decision to settle is about more than the strength of our case," city spokesman Elliot Cohen said. "It's also about whether it's better to avoid devoting any more taxpayer resources to defending ourselves against these claims."

The city commission still must vote to approve the settlement, it's on the agenda for the city's Feb. 18 meeting.

Since his firing, Corrigan protested outside city hall, sometimes daily, and became a regular city critic at commission meetings.



Corrigan, who's spent the last year and a half as a meter reader for the city of Lake Worth, said West Palm Beach offered his job back but he declined.

"I decided, no. I don't want to go there, because of the unfairness and despicable treatment of how they treat their employees there," he said Wednesday.

Corrigan

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