

Dear Commissioner Parsons,

It is unfortunate that you have chosen to take offense to my letter of 11/23/21 and not welcome the Court's invitation to discuss the issues. Instead, you chose to make inaccurate, distorted, and blatant misstatements of facts in your email of 11/26/21, the majority of which I will not dignify with a response. Clearly, your email was drafted as a political statement intended for your constituents and not for the purpose of resolving the personnel issues that plague our County. However, a few of your misstatements cannot be allowed to go unanswered.

First, contrary to your assertion, neither I nor anyone with my permission released my letter of 11/23/21 to the media before it was delivered to the Commissioners. I have no knowledge of who contacted LNP regarding the letter. Only after I was contacted by LNP and asked about the content of the letter did I decide that in the interest of transparency and accuracy the release of the letter was necessary.

Second, none of the issues raised in my letter of 11/23/21 are unknown to you. These are issues that have existed for a long time and have only been exacerbated by the pandemic. Indeed, the Warden, the Sheriff and the Acting COC over which the Court has no authority have all brought these concerns to your attention on a regular basis. To suggest otherwise is simply not true. The specifics of exactly how the well-known personnel shortages adversely impact the Court on a day-to-day basis may not have been known; however, that was precisely the point of my letter. The factual details and data set forth in our letter simply could not have been provided in a phone conversation or even a face-to-face conversation. Hence, the need for the letter. The letter did not cast aspersions on or blame anyone. It purposely did not even identify the cause of the personnel issues or recommend resolutions. It identified with specificity the impact the issues are having on the court system and invited the Commissioners to meet to discuss how best to address them.

Third, on 10/19/21 I sent you an email inviting you to meet either in the morning before work or over lunch to talk. I explained that my days were full so those times where the only times that would work. You responded with times during the workday and insisted that we meet in your office. No further effort was made on your part to find a mutually convenient time to meet. I was able to meet with both of the other Commissioners. Just the other day, I texted you and asked you to call. I never received a response. Again, I spoke to both of the other Commissioners.

Fourth, your suggestion that the Court has been "locked down" underscores your failure or refusal to comprehend what goes on in the Courthouse. The Court system has never been closed. While it has been necessary to make reasonable accommodations during the pandemic, we have always continued to function. Pursuant to Supreme Court directives, working remotely for a period of time allowed all court departments to continue operations. Despite your inflammatory suggestion, no judges continue to be "working from home."

Finally, in rendering decisions and writing opinions, Judges are trained to document the record and set forth the facts. All of the judges in Lancaster County have taken an oath to protect, obey and defend the Constitution of the United States and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Unlike elected politicians such as yourself, none of the judges make decisions based on politics and we never will.

The invitation for the Commissioners to meet with the Board of Judges remains.

I am told that you chose to provide LNP with a copy of your email so in the interest of full disclosure, I am doing the same with this response.

Respectfully,

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