



SEWER INVESTIGATION: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On or about October 10, 2024, the Town of Rockland engaged Compliance Plus, PLLC, doing business as HR Solutions At Work (“Compliance Plus”), to conduct an independent investigation into allegations of gender discrimination by the former Chair of the Sewer Commission, Charles Heshion. The allegations were raised by three females (the “Reporting Parties”) who worked for or with the Town of Rockland.

The investigation included review of email files and Sewer Commission Working Session recorded meetings, as well as investigatory interviews of persons having direct knowledge of the issues under investigation. The results of the investigation were reported to the Select Board on April 16, 2025.

The investigation determined that Mr. Heshion did not engage in gender discrimination. However, Mr. Heshion engaged in written and/or verbal behavior towards the Reporting Parties that is objectively unprofessional and undermining, and which they reasonably perceived as aggressive and/or hostile.

Some examples include:

- Disrespectful email communication using commanding/demanding language.
- Confrontational behavior, including communicating in a manner that can be reasonably perceived as angry, including yelling and swearing.
- Not providing information that was requested and needed for others to perform their jobs.

Based on interview statements from multiple witnesses, Mr. Heshion engaged in conduct towards other individuals, including Town employees, in a manner similar to that alleged by the Reporting Parties. This includes unprofessional conduct towards males who worked for or with the Town of Rockland. Thus, there is insufficient information to support a finding that it is more likely than not that Mr. Heshion’s conduct was based on or directed towards the Reporting Parties on the basis of their gender.

Recommendations

Based on this investigation and a previous 2021 Town of Rockland investigation¹, I make the following recommendations to the Town of Rockland:

Review and/or implementation of Town policies and guidelines to ensure clear and consistent **standards of conduct** and **accountability** for all Town officials, including appointed and elected officials.

For example, this could include language along the lines of:

The basic expectation of those serving in any capacity representing the Town is to treat others with respect, despite differences of opinion, and interact in a manner that demonstrates respect for the abilities, experience and dignity of each individual.

In addition, such policies should also include:

- guidelines for acceptable use of social media;
- a clear process or procedure for reporting alleged misconduct;
- potential recourse or consequences if conduct is found to be inconsistent with the standards and expectations set by the Town; and
- a process for communicating such standards to new and current Town officials.

Released by the Select Board on June 17, 2025.

¹ The 2021 investigation had no bearing on the findings of the current investigation; it was reviewed following the findings and conclusions in this investigation; thus, only impacts recommendations.