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May 19, 2023

VIA Hand-Delivery and EMAIL: mmitchell@laurel.md.us

Councilman Martin Mitchell
Laurel City Council
8103 Sandy Spring Road
Laurel, MD 20707

Re: 2021 Financial Disclosure Form

Dear Councilman Mitchell:

It has come to my attention that on Monday, May 1st, 2023, you came to the office of the City Administrator, requesting to see your 2021 Financial Disclosure Statement, as well as requesting a copy of the 2022 Financial Disclosure Statement form. You then left the building, taking your original 2021 Financial Disclosure Statement with you, along with the blank 2022 financial disclosure form.

One week later, on Monday, May 8th, you returned to the office of the City Administrator to get another blank 2022 financial disclosure form, telling the Administrative Assistant to the City Administrator, Ms. Laura Christoplos, that you lost the blank 2022 financial disclosure form that you obtained the week before. You were then told by Ms. Christoplos that you needed to return your 2021 Financial Disclosure Statement immediately, which should not have been removed from the building, but you told her that you had lost that, along with the form for the 2022 financial disclosure statement. You then told Ms. Christoplos that you would look again for it, but as of this date, it has not yet been returned. Further, you were sent a Memorandum just yesterday from Ms. Christian Pulley, the City Administrator, also requesting the immediate return of your 2021 Financial Disclosure Statement.

I would note that Section 2-56(e) of the Laurel City Code governs the requirements for maintaining and reviewing all financial disclosure statements filed for the City. Within the City, the office of the City Administrator possesses and maintains all financial disclosure statements for the City, and is required by law to allow any member of the public, upon request, to review and copy any of the financial disclosure statements. When any individual examines and/or copies a financial disclosure statement, the City Administrator's office is required, under the same section of the City Code, to record the name and home address of the individual reviewing or copying the statement, and the name of the person whose financial disclosure statement was examined or copied. Additionally, Section 2-56(f) of the Code requires that the

Councilman Martin Mitchell

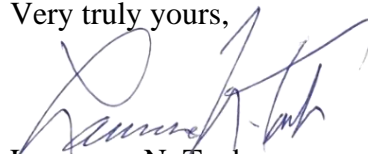
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office designated to maintain financial disclosure statements (as noted above, the office of the City Administrator) retain each such statement for a period of four (4) years from the date of its receipt.

Your removal of your original 2021 Financial Disclosure Statement deprives the public of its legal right to review that statement, which, as noted above, is legally required to be maintained in the office of the City Administrator for a period of four (4) years from date of its submission. This is an extremely serious matter, and the City demands that your ORIGINAL 2021 Financial Disclosure Statement that you submitted last year be returned immediately. If it is not returned to the office of the City Administrator by the close of business this Monday, May 22, 2023, the matter will be immediately referred to the Maryland State Ethics Commission for further review and possible action.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Lawrence N. Taub", is written over the typed name.

Lawrence N. Taub
Laurel City Solicitor

LNT/gmm

cc: Craig A. Moe
Mayor

Brencis D. Smith
City Council President

Christian L. Pulley, CPM
City Administrator

Joanne Hall Barr
Deputy City Administrator

Sara A. Green,
City Clerk

James Hester
Chairman, Laurel Ethics Commission

Maxene Bardwell
Vice-Chair, Laurel Ethics Commission

Dennis Whitley, Esquire
Counsel to the Laurel Ethics Commission