

## **2007 – January 3 2021**

- Bauer represented BOCC
- Bauer contends that in 2020-2021 he advised the BOCC that ID law granted each elected County Constitutional Officer (CCO) is the legal custodian of all information within the scope of their official duties.
- The BOCC (McDonald) desired to consolidate and centrally manage all of the County offices.
- In their quest, the BOCC developed a scope of work for a new county position of Chief Information Officer (CIO). Bauer helped advise on the scope of work.

## **June 2020 – March 2021**

- April 9 2020: Brad Ptashkin is hired as Manager of Information Systems. He is prepaid \$25K in lodging and supplemental, likely to support his relocation from Tucson, AZ
- June 23 2020: Ptashkin purchases a home in Athol (approx. 700K 6-bedroom home)
- March 16 2021: BOCC executive session and votes to approve the CIO position and appoint Ptashkin to CIO. Connelly votes nay.
- The creation/appointment was never discussed at any public meetings.
- The position was not published as available to county employees, nor external candidates.
- Ptashkin's qualifications unknown.

## **2021 Allegations by Bauer**

- Bauer's complaint alleges Ptashkin and McDonald "embark on a concerted effort to ignore the CIO job description" and overreach to collect/manage the data from other CCO's without their consent.
- The BOCC, against advice, amended the CIO job description to eliminate the other CCO's data custody rights.
- Ptashkin and McDonald interfered with Bauer's job to legally review IT matters and begin harassment campaign against Bauer.
- Ptashkin and McDonald accused Bauer of installing hacking software through Sgt. Marcus Robbins with the Sheriff's office IT.
- Relationship between Ptashkin/McDonald and Bauer becomes untenable.
- Late in 2021 Bauer files initial notice of tort claim.

## 2022

- January 2022: Bauer is removed as legal counsel to the BOCC
- June (date unknown) 2022: Jake Storms promoted to Interim Manager Technology
- June 14 2022: BOCC executive session entitled “personnel.” The minutes do not record the topic, but that all BOCC voted “aye.” These minutes were all that were provided on Ptashkin’s separation. It was rumored that a vote to separate was required because Ptashkin had quit showing up for the job.
- June 26 2022: Storms was promoted to full time Director Technology. Because the CIO position had replaced this position, it was technically a new position at the county. The promotion violated BC Personnel Policy in that HR did not internally or externally post the position. Storms was unilaterally appointed to the position by the BOCC.
- July 1 2022: Ptashkin signs separation agreement
- July 5 2022: McDonald signs Ptashkin’s separation agreement.
- Ptashkin received \$106,000 as separation benefit.
- July 1 2022: Bauer files his civil suit. McDonald and Ptashkin are named in both their official and personal/individual capacities.
- August 2022: McDonald sends countrywide email stating Bauer is “an adverse party to the county” and instructs that no one engage with him.
- November 2022: McDonald leaves office, Luke Omodt wins his district seat.

## 2023

- Bauer still employed by Bonner County
- Bauer continues to amend his case
- The separation of BC Administration IT department and Sheriff/Prosecutor IT department is discussed at several BOCC meetings with Omodt in favor of BC Admin having control over all

## 2024

- February 2024 (date unknown): Omodt directs Storms to remove super-user privileges from Sgt. Robbins
- February 12 2024: Sheriff’s office serves Official Notice of Investigation on IT Director Storms.
- February 21 2024: Prosecutor Louis Marshall sends Luke Omodt CEASE AND DESIST letter stating that Omodt “unilaterally commanded Storms to alter credentials” of Sergeant Robbins with the Sheriff’s IT preventing Robbins from accessing and safeguarding certain records.

- The CD stated if immediate corrective action was not taken legal actions against Omodt would be initiated.
- February (date unknown) 2024: County attorney Bill Wilson states in email to Omodt, “Back then, Dan instructed Brad to install certain software on PC’s in Mike’s office without Mike’s consent.” Wilson also recommends to Omodt to direct Storms to restore Sgt. Robbins privileges.
- February 23 2024: BOCC calls special executive session regarding “Technology.”