

(414) 899-8273
Kevin@kevinscottlaw.com
2665 South Moorland Boulevard
Suite 200
New Berlin, WI 53151



August 25, 2026

VIA CERTIFIED MAIL, RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Tammy Butz
Village Clerk / Interim Administrator
Village of Kewaskum
204 First Street
Kewaskum, WI 53040

Adam Gitter
former Village Administrator, Village of Kewaskum
712 Moraine Court
Kewaskum, WI 53040

Michael "Fuzz" Martin,
former Village President, Village of Kewaskum
470 Reagan Road
Kewaskum, WI 53040

RE: Notice of Claim of Jeremy Haske Pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 893.80

Dear Ms. Butz:

This letter provides notice, pursuant to *Wis. Stat. § 893.80*, of the circumstances of claims by Jeremy Haske, a police officer employed by the Village of Kewaskum Police Department, against the Village of Kewaskum, former Village Administrator Adam Gitter, and former Village President Michael "Fuzz" Martin, for damages arising out of (1) Mr. Gitter's unauthorized suspension of Officer Haske from duty without any lawful authority to do so, undertaken, upon information and belief, at Mr. Martin's direction, (2) Mr. Martin's and Mr. Gitter's abuse of the disciplinary process available under *Wis. Stat. § 62.13(5)(b)* to accomplish that suspension indirectly, (3) both men's tortious interference with Officer Haske's employment relationship with the Village, and (4) defamatory statements concerning Officer Haske made publicly by Mr. Martin while he served as Village President.

BACKGROUND

Officer Haske has spent many years in Wisconsin law enforcement, including lengthy service with other agencies following his 2009 separation from the Juneau County Sheriff's Office, including serving five years with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections as a Probation/Parole Agent. Officer Haske was subsequently promoted to Police Liaison position after two years with the Department of Corrections. Officer Haske was again promoted to Pre-Sentence Investigation Writer for Washington County Circuit Court.

Officer Haske was hired by the Kewaskum Police Department on July 17, 2024, following a background investigation conducted by Lieutenant Bryan Frank and approved by Chief of Police Thomas Bishop, who under Department Policy 3.01 retained overall responsibility for the Department's hiring decisions. Officer Haske was promoted to Sergeant at the Kewaskum Police Department in October 2025.

Almost two years after his hiring, and after not stating anything publicly in relation to it previously, then-Village President Michael Martin publicly and vocally opposed the hiring of Officer Haske, ultimately filing formal disciplinary charges under Wis. Stat. § 62.13(5)(b) against Chief Bishop and Lt. Frank before the Village of Kewaskum Police and Fire Commission (the "Commission"), seeking their discipline and demotion arising from Officer Haske's hiring.

By Mr. Martin's own public account, on February 1, 2026, he received an anonymous tip identifying Officer Haske as the officer previously terminated by the Juneau County Sheriff's Department under the circumstances described above. Mr. Martin immediately notified Chief Bishop and Mr. Gitter. Chief Bishop — the official actually vested with statutory authority over Officer Haske's discipline — responded the following morning that he had been aware of Officer Haske's history when he hired him and stood by that decision.

Chief Bishop did not suspend Officer Haske, then or at any other time. Rather than accept the Chief's determination, Mr. Gitter — again by Mr. Martin's own account — contacted the Village's labor counsel, who advised placing Officer Haske on administrative leave, and Mr. Gitter did so on February 3, 2026. Whatever advice the Village's labor counsel gave, that advice did not and could not confer authority that Wis. Stat. § 62.13(5) reserves exclusively to the Chief of Police and the Commission. Officer Haske remained suspended from duty until on June 10, 2026, when the Commission voted to dismiss the disciplinary charges against Chief Bishop and Lt. Frank with prejudice, and Officer Haske was reinstated to full duty.

Upon information and belief, Mr. Gitter did not act on his own initiative in suspending Officer Haske, but did so at the direction of, and in coordination with, Mr. Martin, who was actively and publicly campaigning against Officer Haske's continued employment with the Department at the time. Mr. Martin has since publicly confirmed the connection between his campaign and the charges against Chief Bishop and Lt. Frank himself: in a

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guest editorial published in the Washington County Daily News on July 18, 2026, titled “Setting the Record Straight in the Village of Kewaskum,” Mr. Martin wrote that once Chief Bishop “dug in” and declined to reverse course on Officer Haske’s hiring, “the only thing left to do was hold the chief and lieutenant accountable by filing charges with the Police and Fire Commission.”

By Mr. Martin’s own telling, then, the § 62.13(5)(b) charges against Chief Bishop and Lt. Frank were a direct response to, and vehicle for, his unresolved objection to Officer Haske’s continued employment — not an independent assessment of Chief Bishop’s or Lt. Frank’s fitness for duty. Discovery will further establish the extent of Mr. Martin’s direction and control over Mr. Gitter’s actions.

On or about May 16–17, 2026, while the Bishop and Frank disciplinary proceedings were actively pending, Mr. Martin — then still serving as Village President — posted the following statement, under his own name, on the public “Kewaskum Wisconsin Neighbors” Facebook group:

Sarah, who neither lives nor pays taxes here, has made it very clear that she is in the pro hiring-pedophiles camp. If having integrity and holding leaders accountable when the easier thing would be to look the other way makes me a part of the ‘old boys club,’ so be it. I stand firmly that a man — of whom a court said there was credible evidence to have had sex with a minor who was seven years younger than him and was fired from another department because of it (as well as other charges) — should NOT be a police officer in our village and should NOT be in charge of investigating crimes against children. Those who chose to bring him to our community — just three months after Rosales was arrested — should answer for their decisions. If you want to be mad at me for that, fine. That’s on you.

Mr. Martin did not name Officer Haske in this post. He did not need to. The post’s description — an officer hired by the Village of Kewaskum Police Department who had previously been terminated from another Wisconsin law enforcement agency following allegations of sexual contact with a 17-year-old — had already been reported publicly and matched Officer Haske exactly, including in contemporaneous local news coverage of the controversy. Within the small community of Kewaskum, readers of Mr. Martin’s post readily identified Officer Haske as the person being branded a member of the “pro hiring-pedophiles camp” and, by direct implication, a pedophile himself.

Officer Haske was reinstated to his position on June 10, 2026 after the Police and Fire Commission voted to dismiss that charges filed against Chief Bishop and Lt. Frank.

**CLAIM 1: UNAUTHORIZED SUSPENSION / ULTRA VIRES ACT
(Against the Village of Kewaskum and Adam Gitter)**

Wisconsin law occupies the field of disciplinary authority over sworn police officers. Under *Wis. Stat. § 62.13(5)(a)–(c)*, only the chief of police or the Police and Fire Commission (“the board”) may suspend a subordinate officer — whether as a disciplinary penalty or pending disposition of charges. No provision of *Wis. Stat. § 62.13* confers any suspension authority whatsoever on a village administrator, a village president, or a village board.

Mr. Gitter was neither the Chief of Police nor a member of the Commission. Whatever authority he held as the Village’s “personnel officer” under Kewaskum Village Ordinances § 2-153(8)–(9) cannot, and does not, override the exclusive statutory scheme the Wisconsin Legislature established for the discipline of sworn police officers in *Wis. Stat. § 62.13(5)*. A municipal ordinance may not confer authority on a municipal employee that state statute reserves to the chief of police and the Commission alone.

Mr. Gitter’s suspension of Officer Haske was therefore ultra vires and without lawful authority. It was taken without the notice, charges, or hearing rights that *Wis. Stat. § 62.13(5)* requires before a sworn officer may be removed from duty, and it deprived Officer Haske of his position, his professional standing, and his ability to perform his duties for an extended and unwarranted period. Although Officer Haske was suspended with pay, the reputational and professional harm of being publicly sidelined on these grounds — for months, without charges, a hearing, or any lawful basis — was severe, and it compounded the emotional distress Defendants’ conduct caused him.

The point is underscored by Chief Bishop’s own contemporaneous response. Chief Bishop — the one official actually vested with authority over Officer Haske’s discipline — was notified of the same information Mr. Gitter and Mr. Martin had, considered it, and expressly declined to suspend Officer Haske or alter his employment in any way. Mr. Gitter did not fill a gap left by an absent decision-maker; he overrode the decision of the one municipal official legally entitled to make it.

**CLAIM 2: ABUSE OF PROCESS
(Against Michael Martin and Adam Gitter)**

Abuse of process under Wisconsin law requires (1) a purpose other than that which the process was designed to accomplish, and (2) a subsequent misuse of that process to obtain an ulterior advantage — an improper purpose alone is not enough; it must culminate in an actual misuse of the process itself. *Strid v. Converse*, 111 Wis. 2d 418, 426–27, 331 N.W.2d 350 (1983); *Maniaci v. Marquette Univ.*, 50 Wis. 2d 287, 299, 184 N.W.2d 168 (1971) (adopting Restatement (Second) of Torts § 682).

The disciplinary charging process available under *Wis. Stat. § 62.13(5)(b)* is designed to allow a fair, neutral adjudication before the Commission of whether a specific subordinate officer engaged in misconduct warranting discipline. It is not designed to

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give a village president or village administrator a mechanism for accomplishing, indirectly and through a proceeding against different officers, the removal of an officer whom neither has any independent authority to discipline.

Mr. Martin filed the § 62.13(5)(b) charges against Chief Bishop and Lt. Frank for exactly that ulterior purpose. His own public statements confirm it: Mr. Martin's objective, from the outset, was that Officer Haske "should NOT be a police officer in our village" — not merely that Chief Bishop or Lt. Frank be disciplined for a hiring decision. Rather than pursue that objective through the only process actually available to address it — a § 62.13(5) proceeding against Officer Haske himself, before the Chief and the Commission, with the notice and hearing rights that process guarantees — Mr. Martin and Mr. Gitter instead used the pendency of the Bishop and Frank proceeding as their vehicle. Officer Haske's suspension was publicly and expressly tied to, and contingent upon, that proceeding: he remained suspended only while the disciplinary charges against Chief Bishop and Lt. Frank "over [his] hiring played out," by the Village's own public account of events.

That is the misuse Wisconsin law condemns: employing a legal process against one set of parties (Chief Bishop and Lt. Frank) to accomplish, as to a different person (Officer Haske) who was not even a party to that proceeding, something the process itself did not authorize and that neither Mr. Martin nor Mr. Gitter had independent authority to do directly. Officer Haske was removed from duty for months based solely on the existence of a proceeding in which no charge, finding, or order concerning him was ever entered.

CLAIM 3: TORTIOUS INTERFERENCE WITH EMPLOYMENT (Against Adam Gitter and Michael Martin)

Officer Haske had an employment relationship with the Village of Kewaskum Police Department. Mr. Gitter interfered with that relationship by unilaterally suspending Officer Haske from duty despite having no legal authority to do so. That interference was unjustified — Mr. Gitter acted outside the scope of any authority conferred on him by state law, for the purpose of appeasing political pressure arising from Village President Martin's public campaign against Officer Haske's continued employment, rather than any legitimate personnel or public-safety purpose. As a direct result, Officer Haske suffered professional harm, damage to his standing within the Department and the law enforcement community, and related emotional and reputational damages.

Upon information and belief, Mr. Martin is equally liable for this interference because he directed and procured Mr. Gitter's unauthorized suspension of Officer Haske. Mr. Martin had no more authority than Mr. Gitter to suspend a sworn police officer — that authority belongs exclusively to the Chief of Police and the Commission under Wis. Stat. § 62.13(5) — and his use of Mr. Gitter as an intermediary to accomplish what Mr. Martin could not lawfully do himself does not insulate him from liability. Mr. Martin's conduct was motivated by personal and political animus rather than any legitimate governmental purpose, as further evidenced by his public statements described below.

**CLAIM 4: DEFAMATION PER SE
(Against Michael Martin)**

A. The May 16–17, 2026 Facebook Post.

Mr. Martin's May 16–17, 2026 Facebook post falsely and recklessly characterized Officer Haske as a member of the "pro hiring-pedophiles camp" and, by clear implication, as a pedophile. That characterization is false. The clinical and legal definition of pedophilia does not extend to conduct involving a 17-year-old, and Officer Haske has never been criminally charged with, much less convicted of, any such conduct. Mr. Martin's own post acknowledges as much, referring only to a civil court's reference to "credible evidence" — not a criminal conviction.

A false statement imputing that a person has committed a crime, or that falsely brands a person a sexual predator or pedophile, constitutes defamation per se under Wisconsin law, actionable without proof of special damages. Mr. Martin made this statement publicly, under his own name, while serving as Village President, to a community Facebook group with substantial local readership, and while proceedings concerning Officer Haske's hiring were actively pending before the Commission. The statement was calculated for maximum reputational harm in a small, close-knit community, and it has caused Officer Haske severe reputational, professional, and emotional harm, including harm to his standing and continued employment as a police officer.

B. The July 18, 2026 Guest Editorial.

The Facebook post was not an isolated lapse. On July 18, 2026 — after Officer Haske had already been reinstated — Mr. Martin published a guest editorial in the Washington County Daily News titled "Setting the Record Straight in the Village of Kewaskum," again under his own name and again invoking Officer Haske's history. In it, Mr. Martin described Officer Haske as "a person who was fired from his job as a sheriff's deputy, in part for allegations that he was having sex with a 17-year-old girl (including in his squad car)."

The parenthetical claim that this occurred "in his squad car" is false. It appears nowhere in the Juneau County circuit court decision, the Sheriff and Jail Grievance Committee's findings, or any other record of the matter, and there is no evidentiary basis for it whatsoever. Unlike the surrounding editorial commentary, this is not an expression of opinion — it is a specific, discrete, and false factual assertion, invented and added by Mr. Martin to make the underlying allegation more sensational and more damaging. Mr. Martin published it knowing he had no basis for it, or at a minimum with reckless disregard for its truth or falsity.

This fabricated detail independently constitutes defamation per se, and it further establishes the actual malice underlying Mr. Martin's broader public campaign against Officer Haske, including the May 2026 Facebook post described above. A person willing to invent a specific, salacious detail with no basis in the record — months after the fact,

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after Officer Haske had already been reinstated, and with no ongoing disciplinary proceeding to justify it — was plainly not engaged in good-faith commentary on a matter of public concern.

NOTICE AND CLAIM FOR RELIEF

This letter is intended to satisfy the requirements of *Wis. Stat. § 893.80(1d)(a)–(b)*, as notice of the circumstances of Officer Haske’s claims and as an itemized statement of the relief sought. Officer Haske’s address is P.O. Box 237 Pewaukee, WI 53072, he may also be reached through the undersigned counsel.

Officer Haske was suspended with pay, and he does not assert a claim for lost wages. The harm he has suffered is nonetheless substantial, and in important respects harder to remedy than lost income. Prior to the events described above, Officer Haske had built an exemplary reputation over many years in Wisconsin law enforcement. Defendants’ conduct — a months-long unauthorized suspension with no charges or hearing, a public campaign falsely branding him part of a “pro hiring-pedophiles camp,” and a fabricated claim of on-duty sexual misconduct published months after the fact — has attached a false and lasting stigma to Officer Haske’s name. That stigma has already impaired his ability to pursue employment with other law enforcement agencies and has damaged the community trust he needs to serve effectively wherever he is employed.

Officer Haske intends to pursue these claims against the Village of Kewaskum, Adam Gitter, and Michael Martin, and to seek all available remedies, including:

1. Compensation for reputational and professional harm, including harm to Officer Haske’s ability to obtain future law enforcement employment and to serve effectively in his current position, in an amount of \$2,000,000;
2. Compensation for emotional distress, humiliation, and dignitary harm, in an amount of \$2,000,000;
3. Actual attorneys’ fees incurred to date: \$10,000;
4. Punitive damages as to Mr. Martin’s malicious and reckless defamatory conduct, as allowed by law.

Please direct any response, including any request for additional information, to the undersigned. We look forward to discussing resolution of these claims.

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Very truly yours,

THE LAW OFFICE OF KEVIN M. SCOTT LLC

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Scott', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kevin M. Scott