

Transcription: Excerpt from April 2, 2003 Council Meeting
Concerning Councilman Raney's Complaint of Slander Against Mayor Rowe

Councilmember Raney

The last issue is something that I've got some mixed feelings about but given some of the circumstances, I think I'll bring it up here. I came into the council chambers on Sunday at 9 o'clock for our -- I think it was 9 o'clock -- for our council retreat, and the first thing that the mayor wrote on the board was "work together." And we talked about that as a council and what we will do to work together in the future. Well, around 24 hours later -- and the reason I'm bringing this up is because of the positions that we hold -- the mayor walked into a downtown business and stated to the business owner that she should not use my business, should not come to the doctor's office to see me, discouraging people from using Sultan businesses, harming my business, and then proceeded to make claims about my professional abilities, which is slander. I'm raising this issue because he's the mayor of our city and not, this is not an individual thing. I'm also an official of the city. And I have received -- as all of the councilmembers who have email do -- an email, unsolicited email from an individual who was standing behind the mayor when this exchange took place, who witnessed it, and unsolicited wrote a note to all of us about this incident. This is not a political thing from the standpoint of the person who was standing there, nor the person that the mayor made these comments to. She's a Sultan business owner who has done an excellent job in negotiating very treacherous political waters in this town. I will say now for the record, I will accept a written apology, and also your resignation for these comments. *[There's a bit of laughter, but I believe Dr. Raney was, and is -- rightfully so -- serious.]* That's the end of my statement.

Mayor Rowe

I guess my return comments, Mark, being's you brought this up in here is, we're talking about Cheryl over at the hardware. Cheryl and I have, um, I don't know what the right term would be, given each other a hard time about anything we're doing for years. And that's what I meant. I, I made some comment. She said she was going to Mark and, *[I said]* "Jeez, you're not going to him for a doctor?" The same thing I woulda said if she'd bought a Chevrolet. I would've said, "You're not buying a *Chevrolet*, for God's sakes, are ya?!?" As far as your professionalism, Mark, I have never said anybody - anything to anybody in this town except that all I've ever heard is you're a good doctor. There's other things I don't like, but as far as your doctoring abilities, I have no complaint with that. And I have supported keeping the clinic here. Now if you feel I've slandered you and you want to go to court with it, you get right with it. Well, if you want to go behind the barn, we'll settle it man-to-man, we'll do that. Whichever you want to do. But I didn't purposefully slander you over in the hardware store. You wanna go set down *[in]* a three-way conversation with Cheryl, well, I think she'll verify what I just said, that her and I give each other a hard time about one thing or another. I can assure you I did not mean anything against your professional abilities. And right now I'm not resigning.

Councilmember Raney

I actually did go to the hardware store after the chamber of commerce meeting and spoke directly with Cheryl and her daughter. And Cheryl confirmed for me that the comments were derogatory and that there was not any joking that was involved with us. So there's a difference in perception. And certainly the citizen --

Mayor Rowe

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Mayor Rowe

Councilmember Raney

Male

Councilmember Raney

Mayor Rowe

[end of excerpt]

[unintelligible] difference in perception --

-- the citizen standing behind did not see it as a joke.

Well, Okay *[unintelligible]*. As far as the --

As far as the --

This is not the place to discuss it anyway.

Well, and we also don't settle things out behind the bar or at 20 paces with pistols.

I didn't say "the bar," I said --

Barn.

Barn.

That's what I said, "barn."

Okay. Well, whatever. This is not the place for you and I to discuss our differences. Okay, moving along....