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NEWS RELEASE

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Chicago, IL – Joseph La Margo, who served the Village of Orland Park for 13 years, including most recently as Village Manager, has filed a lawsuit against the Village of Orland Park, Mayor Keith Pekau, the Pekau campaign committee, and Trustee Bill Healy.

The lawsuit alleges that Defendants breached provisions of Mr. La Margo's separation agreement which prohibited disparaging comments, they made defamatory remarks about Mr. La Margo, and intentionally inflicted emotional distress.

Mr. La Margo alleges that throughout May and June of 2019, Defendant Pekau and Defendant Healy made public statements during board meetings that were disparaging to Plaintiff.

Defendants made these defamatory and slanderous statements regarding Mr. La Margo for the purpose of attacking Plaintiff's character and credibility. As a result of the false statements made by Defendants, Mr. La Margo has suffered economic loss, emotional distress, and impairment of personal and professional reputation and standing in the community.

The lawsuit alleges that Defendants made false statements about Mr. La Margo during a press conference, in public meetings, by releasing private minutes to the public, and publishing the comments on various public social media accounts in order to disperse the false and defamatory statements to a wider audience and cause greater harm to Mr. La Margo's reputation.

Mr. La Margo is represented by Heidi Sleper and Jacob Exline of Kurtz, Sleper & Exline, LLC.

Attorney Sleper said: Mr. La Margo had been a pillar in the community for nearly 20 years. As the Village Manager, Mr. La Margo had a moral and ethical obligation to look into allegations of corruption in the Village. He did so in a professional and measured manner that included consulting with the trustees and following the advice of the Village attorneys. Unfortunately, Defendants responded by making disparaging remarks against Mr. La Margo that not only breached his separation agreement, but also harmed his reputation and caused him economic loss and emotional distress. This lawsuit seeks to remedy the fact that the Village put personal vendettas above the people of the Village of Orland Park and targeted Mr. La Margo.

Sleper also said: Mr. La Margo did not make the decision to file a lawsuit lightly, however, the continuing interference and harm made it clear that he had no other choice.

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