

****Press Release: Immediate Action Required on Warwick Water Division Leadership****

**** June 19, 2024 - Warwick, RI****

Warwick City Councilman Vinny Gebhart today issued the following statement:

“I am calling for the immediate dismissal of the Chief of the Warwick Water Division following deeply troubling allegations of misconduct revealed through local reporting and court filings. The Water Division's leadership has been accused of multiple instances of sexual harassment, making anti-Semitic jokes and statements, and was charged with assault after slapping an employee during one such anti-Semitic incident. This behavior is unacceptable and incompatible with the values of our community.

The residents of Warwick deserve transparency, accountability, and integrity from their public officials. Our city employees, especially those in crucial services like the Water Division, must feel secure, respected, and free from discrimination in their workplace. These allegations, if true, signify a profound failure in leadership and a serious breach of public trust.

The presence of anti-Semitic rhetoric and harassment in any form is a direct affront to the principles of equality and respect that our city stands for. We cannot tolerate any actions or words that demean or marginalize individuals based on their gender, religion, or any other personal characteristics.

It is imperative that we hold our officials to the highest standards and ensure that no individual feels marginalized or threatened in their role. The safety and dignity of our city's workforce are paramount, and there is no place for such behavior in our administration.

I urge the city administration to take swift and decisive action to address these allegations. We must replace the current leadership with individuals who exemplify ethical conduct and a commitment to serving the people of Warwick with integrity.

We must restore trust in our city's governance and uphold the values of respect, fairness, and accountability.”

****Vinny Gebhart****

Councilman, Ward 9

Warwick, RI