

# Grego, Lovell try to discredit Mittelstadt with State Bar

By Kathryn Reed

Nearly a year to the day after Jacqueline Mittelstadt turned in her resignation notice as assistant city attorney of South Lake Tahoe she received a letter in the mail from the State Bar of California.

The letter dated March 14, 2011, says, "The State Bar is in receipt of a complaint filed against you by Bruce Grego and Kathy (sic) Lovell. ... Mr. Grego and Ms. Lovell filed the complaint in their official capacities as council member and mayor of the city of South Lake Tahoe, respectively."



Jacqueline  
Mittelstadt

Their issue, according to the letter, was Mittelstadt used information from her job with the city to help clients she now has in private practice.

One of those people is police Officer Johnny Poland who in June 2010 filed a complaint against the city. Mittelstadt is his attorney. Poland won a contentious lawsuit against the city in October 2009 that allowed him to stay on the force.

Grego and Lovell's other issue with Mittelstadt was she had

been on staff as the city began working on the medicinal marijuana laws. She is now representing someone who wants to open a dispensary.

Mittelstadt was never asked to sign a no-compete agreement upon her departure.

In her 14-page response to the State Bar, Mittelstadt states, "This is a matter of 'sour grapes' and nothing more. Since the day that I refused to submit to Mr. Grego's and Ms. Lovell's demands that I engage in illegal and blatantly unethical conduct, both have been on a mission to ruin my good name and reputation, as well as to run me out of South Lake Tahoe."

On April 6, 2011, the Bar wrote another letter to Mittelstadt. This one says, "The determination has been made that there are insufficient grounds for disciplinary action. Therefore, we are closing our file at this time, without prejudice."

Grego and Lovell did not return phone calls to *Lake Tahoe News*. Grego is still on the council.

Mittelstadt said, "The fact that the State Bar closed the file the day they received my papers speaks for itself."

The other three on the council at the time – Jerry Birdwell, Hal Cole and Bill Crawford – said they did not know their colleagues had filed the grievance nor do they support their actions. Cole is the only one of the those three still on the council.

Birdwell said, "The complaints were without merit. I think that filing the complaint was vindictive, and that using their titles as councilmember and mayor in filing the complaint suggested that they were speaking for the entire council. They could have filed the complaint using their names as private citizens."

Cole said, "As long as they are doing it on it their own and

not as whole council.”

Crawford said, “Somehow they had to punish her and going to the Bar is what they elected to do. And it did not work. I’m very happy it did not work.”