

FORMER DETROIT METROPOLITAN AIRPORT CEO FILES LAWSUIT



The Michigan Open Meetings Act was violated by the Detroit Metropolitan Airport when it hired ex-chief executive Turkia Mullin, as ruled by a Wayne County Circuit judge. Judge Robert Colombo issued the ruling on Friday based on multiple violations of the state act and then issued an injunction to prevent future violations. Wayne County paid Mullin a \$200,000 severance from tax money to leave her county job to take the new job at the airport, which pays a salary of \$750,000. The attorney for Mullin, Raymond Sterling, released the following statement: "The ruling has no impact on Turkia Mullin's employment contract with the authority; she was just one of the many candidates in a hiring procedure that Judge Colombo today ruled violated the law. The plaintiff did not ask for an invalidation of her contract nor did the judge order it." A lawsuit is also being filed by Mullin against the Airport Authority claiming that they held a closed-door meeting to talk about her termination. Robert Davis, Wayne County resident activist is the plaintiff that Sterling referred to in the statement. Andrew Patterson is representing Davis. "There were 11 secret meetings that we know of, that they've admitted to. There were hundreds of decisions made in the process," Patterson said, according to Click-on Detroit. "There's all kinds of indications that we did receive in the limited discovery that we got that this was a put-up job." Mullin is filing a breach of employment contract claim, arguing that the airport authority is obligated to pay the remainder of her three-year contract. "It was never the intention of the Board to violate the law. Wayne County Airport Authority intends to fully comply with Judge Colombo's ruling. The Airport Authority is planning an Open Meetings Act training session for Board Members and Executive staff," responded Board Chair Mary Zuckerman. Evidence released by Local 4 Defenders shows that the Open Meetings Act could have been violated by the board that hired Mullin. The evidence was found by attorney Carl Marlinga. "You had a group of people getting together deciding Turkia Mullin is going to get this job. Legalities were ignored. The Open Meetings Act was ignored," said Marlinga, attorney for Robert Davis, a Wayne County activist. Last week, the Wayne County Airport Authority Board Chair Mary Zuckerman, released the following statement: *The Authority Board believed it acted in compliance with the Open Meetings Act in its CEO search process and it was never the intention of the Board to violate the law. Wayne County Airport Authority intends to fully comply with Judge Colombo's ruling. In addition, because the Board is always interested in improving its processes, it is also committed to taking two specific actions: 1. The Airport Authority is planning an Open Meetings Act training session for Board Members and executive staff conducted by a law firm with special expertise in this area and which has provided OMA counsel to other governmental entities and municipalities. 2. If at some future date, the Board conducts another executive search, the Board is committed to reviewing the processes used by other similar organizations governed by the Open Meetings Act to determine best practices and implement such in the Authority's search process.*

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