

INCIDENT REPORT AND FORMAL COMPLAINT

Request for Investigation – Assault, Retaliation, and Interference with Civil Rights

February 16, 2026 – Lorain City Hall

I. COMPLAINANT INFORMATION

Name: Aaron Christopher Knapp

Occupation: Investigative Journalist, Editor-in-Chief, Lorain Politics Unplugged

Professional Credentials: Licensed Social Worker (LSW) #S.2208309, Member Cleveland Press Club (2026)

II. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report is submitted to the Amherst Police Department for independent investigation following referral by Lorain Police Chief Michael Failing.

This report documents the following concerns:

Physical assault by a City of Lorain official

Failure to accept or properly document a complaint at the time of the incident

Interference with my right to report criminal conduct

Potential violations of Ohio law and federal civil rights protections

III. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

R.C. 2903.13 – Assault

A person commits assault when they knowingly cause or attempt to cause physical harm to another. “Physical harm” includes any injury, illness, or other physiological impairment, regardless of its gravity or duration.

R.C. 2921.45 – Interfering with Civil Rights

No public servant, under color of public authority, shall knowingly deprive, or conspire or attempt to deprive, any person of a constitutional or statutory right.

R.C. 2935.03 and 2935.04 – Duties to Preserve the Peace, Enforce the Law, and Respond to Offenses Committed in the Officer’s Presence

42 U.S.C. 1983 – Civil Rights Violations

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. 12132)

IV. DATE, TIME, AND LOCATION

Date: February 16, 2026

Location: Lorain City Hall hallway area adjacent to council chambers

V. INVOLVED PARTIES

Rey Carrion – Director of Public Safety/Service, City of Lorain

Chief Michael Failing – Chief of Police, Lorain Police Department

Anthony DiMacchia – City official present in the hallway

Carissa Woytach – Reporter present during the incident

VI. WITNESSES PRESENT

At the time of the incident in the hallway, the following individuals were present:

Rey Carrion

Anthony DiMacchia

Carissa Woytach

Myself

These individuals were in the immediate vicinity of the interaction and may have observed all or part of the incident.

VII. PRIOR CONTEXT AND ADA CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to February 16, 2026, I had ongoing interactions with City officials regarding public participation, reporting concerns involving government conduct, and access to public processes.

I have asserted rights under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act relating to access to government services, participation in public meetings, and the ability to safely access and utilize public facilities.

On the date of the incident, I was lawfully present inside Lorain City Hall for government related purposes, including participation in and observation of public proceedings.

VIII. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

A. Door Closure and Initial Physical Contact

On February 16, 2026, I was present inside Lorain City Hall and was **in the process of walking through a doorway leading to or from the council chambers.**

This doorway is **one of the two primary entry and exit points to the council chambers** and serves as the **accessible entrance connected to the handicapped ramp.** During council meetings, this door is **regularly left open before and after meetings to allow for public ingress and egress.**

At the time of the incident, **Rey Carrion was positioned on the opposite side of the doorway,** in the hallway area, and was engaged in conversation with **Carissa Woytach, a reporter.**

As I approached and began to **pass through the doorway in the normal course of movement,** I had already **substantially entered the doorway opening.**

While I was in that position, **Rey Carrion set down items he was carrying, including a bag and a coat,** and then **moved toward the doorway.**

As I was **in the act of passing through the doorway,** Carrion **closed the door into the doorway opening,** causing the door to make **direct physical contact with me, including contact with my foot.**

Because I was already **within the doorway at the time the door was closed,** the contact occurred while I was **occupying the space through which the door was being closed.**

Carrion was **not entering or exiting the doorway at that time,** but instead was **stationary, engaged in conversation, and then acted to close the door while I was already passing through.**

The force of the door resulted in a **clear physical impact,** rather than incidental contact.

I did not consent to any physical contact and did not initiate or invite physical interaction. The contact caused physical impact and resulted in discomfort and emotional distress at the time of the incident.

Immediately following the contact, **Anthony DiMacchia**, who was present in the hallway, stated:

“Rey, let it go.”

In response, I stated:

“Yeah, Rey, don’t be a jerk and shut doors on me.”

The interaction, including my position within the doorway, Carrion’s position on the opposite side, and the door being closed into me, is **captured on video**.

The incident occurred at a **primary public access point, including an accessible entrance**, while I was lawfully using that entrance.

The sequence of actions shows that the door was **closed while the doorway was already occupied by me as I was passing through it**.

The doorway is a standard entry and exit point with a clear line of sight. At the time the door was closed, I was already within the doorway opening and visible. Given my position within the doorway, the act of closing the door required movement into an occupied space. The contact occurred as a direct result of the door being closed into an area that was already occupied, rather than incidental contact occurring during normal passage.

B. AGGRESSIVE ADVANCE AND RE-ENGAGEMENT

Immediately following the door contact described above, **Rey Carrion initially moved away from me**, creating physical distance between us.

Despite having created distance, Carrion **then turned and re-engaged**, moving back toward me.

Carrion **repeated this behavior more than once**, walking away and then **turning back to approach me again**, rather than disengaging from the interaction.

This pattern of movement is visible on the video recording and shows that the interaction was **not a single, continuous approach**, but rather a **series of deliberate re-engagements after separation had already occurred**.

After turning back toward me, Carrion **closed the distance rapidly**, moving into **very close physical proximity**.

The proximity was such that the video captures Carrion's face at extremely close range, including detailed facial features, indicating a distance **measured in inches rather than normal conversational space**.

This level of proximity occurred **immediately after the door incident and as part of the same sequence of events** and was not incidental or accidental contact in a crowded environment.

At this point, Carrion had already had the opportunity to disengage, but instead **chose to approach again and close the remaining distance**.

The repeated approach, combined with the close proximity, **restricted my personal space and created a physically confrontational situation in the hallway**.

This sequence culminated in the subsequent **physical contact described below**, which occurred immediately after Carrion moved back into close proximity.

Carrion's repeated decision to turn back and re-engage after creating distance demonstrates that the interaction was not accidental or unavoidable but involved deliberate choices to continue the confrontation after opportunities to disengage had already occurred.

C. Post Contact Conduct and Observed Demeanor

Immediately following the chest-to-chest contact, Rey Carrion began to disengage and move away from the immediate area.

At that time, my body-worn camera captured Carrion **looking directly at me and smiling** as he stepped away from the interaction.

This expression occurred immediately after the physical contact and while he remained within close visual proximity.

The timing of this conduct, occurring directly after the physical contact and during his departure, is captured on video and forms part of the overall sequence of events.

From my perspective, this conduct was **unnerving given the immediacy of the prior physical contact and the close-range nature of the confrontation**.

Following this moment, I did not pursue further physical interaction. Instead, I remained back and redirected my attention to speaking with Anthony DiMacchia, who was present in the hallway.

The contact occurred after Carrion had approached and closed the distance. There is no corresponding forward movement by me on the video that would account for the contact. The

contact therefore occurred as a result of Carrion's movement into my space, rather than mutual movement.

I did not consent to any physical contact and did not initiate or invite physical interaction. The contact caused physical impact and resulted in discomfort and emotional distress at the time of the incident.

D. Continued Confrontation and Deescalation by Complainant

Following the physical contact and Carrion's departure from the immediate area, the situation remained tense within the hallway.

Multiple individuals were present in close proximity, including City officials and a member of the press.

Anthony DiMacchia was present during and immediately after the contact and engaged in the interaction between myself and Carrion.

After the contact occurred, I **did not advance toward Carrion or attempt further physical engagement**. Instead, I remained in place and continued speaking with DiMacchia.

Carrion continued moving away from the area with Carissa Woytach following the contact.

At no point after the contact did I pursue Carrion, attempt to engage physically, or escalate the interaction further.

At a later point, upon exiting the building, I observed Carrion positioned near the exterior exit area, which continued the presence of the involved party in my path of egress.

The incident occurred within a public government building, at a primary access point to council chambers, during an official proceeding, and in view of multiple individuals.

F. Nature of Speech in a Public Government Setting

The statements attributed to me during the incident were verbal in nature and directed toward a public official performing duties in a public building.

These statements did not include threats of violence or any form of physical aggression. They consisted of questioning, criticism, and commentary regarding the conduct of a public official.

The interaction occurred in a government building during or immediately following a public meeting, in an area open to the public for ingress and egress.

G. LEGAL CONTEXT REGARDING VERBAL SPEECH, TONE, AND VOLUME

During the incident, statements were made by Anthony DiMacchia accusing me of “instigating” based on my verbal conduct. Because this characterization directly relates to the events described above, I am providing the following context regarding the nature of my speech.

My statements during the interaction consisted of verbal questioning and criticism directed toward a public official in a public building. These included statements identifying the official as a public servant and asking questions related to government activity. My speech did not include threats of violence or any form of physical aggression.

The First Amendment protects a significant amount of verbal criticism and challenge directed at government officials, including speech that is assertive, loud, or emotionally charged, so long as it does not constitute a true threat or incitement to imminent unlawful conduct.

The United States Supreme Court has consistently recognized that speech does not lose its protection merely because it is forceful, confrontational, or expressed with elevated tone.

In **City of Houston v. Hill, 482 U.S. 451 (1987)**, the Court held that:

“the First Amendment protects a significant amount of verbal criticism and challenge directed at police officers.”

Similarly, in **Edwards v. South Carolina, 372 U.S. 229 (1963)**, the Court recognized that the Constitution protects speech that is publicly expressed, even when it is passionate or emotionally charged.

The government may impose limited restrictions on speech under “time, place, and manner” principles, but those restrictions must be content-neutral, narrowly tailored, and leave open ample alternative channels for communication.

In **Ward v. Rock Against Racism, 491 U.S. 781 (1989)**, the Supreme Court upheld reasonable regulations on the volume of amplified sound, emphasizing that such regulations must not be based on the content of the speech.

In **Grayned v. City of Rockford, 408 U.S. 104 (1972)**, the Court upheld a narrowly tailored anti-noise ordinance aimed at preventing disruption of a school environment, again focusing on the need for specificity and neutrality.

In **Kovacs v. Cooper, 336 U.S. 77 (1949)**, the Court allowed regulation of “loud and raucous” amplified sound, particularly in residential contexts, while still recognizing that speech itself remains protected.

These cases demonstrate that while the government may regulate excessive noise under limited circumstances, particularly involving amplification or disruption of specific environments, verbal speech that is unamplified, critical, or assertive remains protected.

My statements during this incident were unamplified, consisted of verbal questioning of a public official, and occurred in a public government building following a public meeting. There were no directives issued to me to lower my voice, cease speaking, or relocate prior to the physical confrontation.

At no point did I engage in conduct that constituted a threat of violence or physical aggression toward any individual.

H. RELATION OF SPEECH TO THE PHYSICAL CONTACT

The allegation that I was “instigating” appears to be based on my verbal speech. However, verbal speech alone does not justify physical contact or escalation.

The physical contact described in Sections VIII.A through VIII.C occurred after verbal exchanges and was initiated by Rey Carrion through:

- Closing a door into me while I was occupying the doorway
- Advancing into my personal space
- Making chest-to-chest physical contact

The video evidence shows that the physical escalation was not the result of any physical movement or contact initiated by me.

My rear-facing body camera footage shows no substantial forward movement by me during the relevant time frame that would account for the chest-to-chest contact. The contact occurred following Carrion’s approach and re-engagement.

Verbal speech, even if critical or assertive, does not provide legal justification for physical contact or the use of force.

IX. PRIOR INCIDENT, NOTICE, AND KNOWLEDGE OF RISK

A. Prior Documented Incident Involving Rey Carrion (October 20, 2025)

On or about October 20, 2025, I was present at a Lorain City Council meeting during which Rey Carrion engaged in conduct that I perceived as verbally aggressive and confrontational toward me.

During that incident, Carrion raised his voice and engaged in behavior that escalated the interaction beyond normal conversation. The tone and manner of his conduct created a confrontational environment within a public government setting.

Following that incident, I submitted a formal report to the Lorain Police Department documenting Carrion’s conduct. I was advised that the matter was under review. To my knowledge, that review remained pending at the time of the February 16, 2026 incident described above.

As a result of that prior report, Carrion's conduct toward me had already been formally documented with law enforcement prior to the current incident.

The October 20, 2025 incident is relevant because it establishes a prior interaction involving the same individual and demonstrates that concerns regarding Carrion's behavior had already been raised before the events of February 16, 2026.

B. Notice of Disability and ADA-Related Communications

Prior to the February 16, 2026 incident, I had provided written notice to the City of Lorain regarding my status as an individual with disabilities and my need for appropriate treatment within public facilities.

This notice included documentation and communications related to protections under **Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**, which governs access to and participation in public services, programs, and activities.

The documentation provided included information regarding conditions that impact my physical and psychological well-being, including:

Service-connected physical impairments
Neurological conditions
Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) with associated symptoms

These conditions are documented through official disability determinations and were disclosed for the purpose of ensuring appropriate interaction and accommodation within public governmental settings.

The purpose of these communications was to inform the City and its officials that certain forms of confrontation, physical proximity, and aggressive conduct could have a heightened impact on me due to my documented conditions.

C. Knowledge of Prior Conduct and Foreseeability of Escalation

At the time of the February 16, 2026 incident, the following facts were already in existence:

A prior documented incident involving Rey Carrion and verbal escalation
A formal report made to law enforcement regarding that conduct
Written ADA-related communications providing notice of my disability status
Documentation indicating that aggressive or confrontational interactions could have a heightened impact

As a result, there was prior notice both of:

Carrion's prior conduct toward me
The potential impact of confrontational or aggressive behavior

Despite that prior notice, the events on February 16, 2026 involved a progression of conduct that escalated beyond verbal interaction and included:

Physical interference with my use of a public access doorway
Repeated re-engagement after initial separation
Entry into close personal space
Direct physical contact

This sequence of conduct occurred in a public government building, at an accessible entrance, and in the presence of multiple individuals.

Given this prior notice, the escalation from verbal interaction to physical contact was foreseeable, and the conduct occurred with knowledge of both prior interactions and the potential impact of confrontational behavior.

D. Pattern of Escalation

The February 16, 2026 incident did not occur in isolation, but followed a prior documented interaction involving the same individual.

The progression between the two incidents is relevant to understanding the nature of the conduct:

The October 20, 2025 incident involved verbal escalation
The February 16, 2026 incident involved physical contact following verbal interaction

This reflects an escalation in the nature of the interaction, from verbal confrontation to physical contact.

Both incidents occurred in public governmental settings and involved interaction between a public official and a member of the public.

E. Relation to ADA Notice and Public Access

The February 16, 2026 incident occurred at a primary point of ingress and egress to the council chambers, including an entrance connected to an accessible route.

At the time of the incident, I was lawfully using that access point within a public building.

The physical contact and obstruction occurred at the point of access itself, rather than in a separate area, directly affecting my ability to safely use the entrance.

Given the prior ADA-related communications, the combination of:

Physical obstruction of access
Close-range confrontation
Physical contact

is relevant to the conditions under which a member of the public, with documented disabilities, can access and use public facilities.

X. LAW ENFORCEMENT PRESENCE AND FAILURE TO TAKE COMPLAINT

At the time of the incident, the only law enforcement officer present was Chief of Police Michael Failing. I attempted to report the incident to Chief Failing in real time, including the physical contact described in Section VIII. I was reporting a criminal incident that had just occurred in the officer's presence and requested that a report be taken at that time. I also expressly requested to make a report on site at City Hall. My complaint was not formally taken or documented at that time, and I was not provided with a clear or immediate procedure for submitting the complaint in the moment.

During the exchange captured on video, Chief Failing stated, "You can go to the police department and make a report," and then stated, "I don't do reports," and directed me to "Go to the lobby," while I continued to state that I was reporting the incident to him as the only law enforcement officer present. Chief Failing also stated, "Well, report it to the safety service director today," referring me back to the very official I was attempting to report for initiating the confrontation and physical contact. From my perspective, this refusal to take the complaint, combined with the direction to report the incident to the alleged actor's office, functioned as an immediate barrier to reporting and resulted in no contemporaneous police documentation at the time the conduct occurred.

At the time of the reporting attempt, the alleged conduct had just occurred, the involved parties remained present, and multiple witnesses were in the immediate vicinity. The incident was being contemporaneously captured on video, and the location was a public government facility under controlled conditions. These circumstances provided an opportunity for immediate documentation, identification of witnesses, and preservation of evidence at the scene. No such documentation or investigative steps were initiated at that time.

Under R.C. 2935.03, a law enforcement officer has a duty to keep the peace, enforce the laws, and respond to criminal conduct, and under R.C. 2935.04, a private citizen may seek action for

an offense committed in their presence. I was attempting to report conduct that had just occurred, that was contemporaneously captured on video, and that involved non consensual physical contact and escalation by a public official inside a government building. The failure to take or document the complaint in that moment prevented immediate investigation, immediate witness identification and separation, and immediate evidence handling, including preservation steps that are typically taken when physical contact is alleged.

In addition to statutory authority, standard law enforcement practices and departmental policies require that officers respond to reported incidents, identify involved parties and witnesses, and create or initiate documentation of events when potential criminal conduct is alleged. The absence of any contemporaneous documentation or investigative action at the scene resulted in the loss of an immediate, neutral record of events and required that the reporting process occur at a later time, outside the context of the original incident.

The failure to document or accept the complaint at the time of the incident interfered with my ability to report a criminal offense and seek immediate law enforcement action, and it delayed the creation of a neutral contemporaneous record at the scene.

The exchange described above is captured on video, which reflects both my contemporaneous attempt to report the incident and the response provided by the only law enforcement officer present at the scene. The video documents that no report was initiated, no witness identification was conducted, and no investigative steps were taken at that time despite the immediacy of the incident and the presence of involved parties.

X.A. DEPARTMENT POLICY REGARDING ACCEPTANCE AND DOCUMENTATION OF COMPLAINTS

The Lorain Police Department's written policy governing the acceptance and handling of complaints establishes that complaints from the public are to be accepted, routed, and documented. Under the Department's Personnel Complaints policy, individuals from the public may make complaints in any form, including in writing, by email, in person, or by telephone.

The policy further provides that all complaints will be courteously accepted by any department member and promptly given to the appropriate supervisor.

The policy also confirms that while written complaints are preferred, a complaint may be filed orally in person or by telephone, and such complaints are to be directed to a supervisor. Where a supervisor is not immediately available, the receiving member is required to obtain contact information sufficient for the supervisor to contact the complainant, and the supervisor is required to complete and submit a complaint form as appropriate upon contact.

In addition to acceptance, the Department's policy requires documentation. The policy states that supervisors shall ensure that all formal and informal complaints are documented on a complaint form. It further requires that complaints and inquiries be documented in a log that records and tracks complaints, including the nature of the complaint and the actions taken.

In the context of this incident, I attempted to report the conduct immediately to the only law enforcement officer present, the Chief of Police, while the involved parties were still present and while the event was being contemporaneously recorded on video. The statements captured on video, including “I don’t do reports,” the direction to “go to the lobby,” and the direction to report the matter to the Safety Service Director’s office, resulted in no contemporaneous police documentation at the scene.

My concern is not simply that I was told to report elsewhere, but that the refusal to accept and initiate documentation at the scene conflicted with the Department’s own written policy requiring acceptance, routing, and documentation of complaints. The absence of contemporaneous documentation eliminated the opportunity for immediate identification of witnesses, preservation of scene conditions, and creation of an official neutral record at the time the alleged physical contact occurred.

The circumstances described above involved an in person complaint made immediately following an alleged physical contact incident, in the presence of the only law enforcement officer on scene, with multiple witnesses available and video evidence already being recorded. These circumstances fall within the types of situations in which immediate acceptance, routing, and documentation of a complaint directly affect the integrity of the investigative process.

X.B. STATUTORY CONTEXT AND POTENTIAL DERELICTION CONSIDERATIONS

Ohio law assigns peace officers duties related to preserving the peace and enforcing the law. R.C. 2935.03 is commonly cited for the duty of officers to keep the peace and enforce the laws of the state. In addition, Ohio law recognizes circumstances in which a private person may initiate action when an offense is committed in that person’s presence under R.C. 2935.04. I raised these provisions because I was attempting to report alleged criminal conduct immediately after it occurred, in the officer’s presence, in a controlled government facility with available witnesses and video evidence.

To the extent any reviewer considers whether a refusal to act implicates criminal exposure for a public servant, Ohio’s dereliction of duty statute, R.C. 2921.44, generally addresses the reckless failure to perform a duty imposed by law. I am not asking Amherst to pre-judge that issue. I am documenting that the refusal to accept and document the complaint at the scene delayed the creation of a neutral contemporaneous record and impaired immediate evidence-handling steps that are standard in alleged physical-contact incidents, especially where multiple witnesses were present and video existed. This report does not assert that any particular statute has been violated, but is submitted so that the appropriate investigative authority can evaluate the facts, the applicable duties, and the conduct described.

This report does not assert that any individual committed a criminal offense solely by declining to take a report at the scene. Rather, it documents the factual circumstances of the reporting attempt, the response provided, and the resulting absence of contemporaneous documentation, so that the reviewing agency may determine whether the conduct was consistent with applicable law, departmental policy, and the duties assigned to a peace officer under Ohio law.

X.C. VICTIMS' RIGHTS UNDER THE OHIO CONSTITUTION

Article I, Section 10a of the Ohio Constitution, commonly referred to as Marsy's Law, establishes constitutional rights for victims of criminal conduct. A "victim" is defined as a person against whom a criminal offense is committed or who is directly and proximately harmed by the commission of the offense. These rights attach at the time an individual is a victim of criminal conduct and are not limited to post charging proceedings.

The Ohio Constitution provides that a victim has "the right to be treated with fairness and respect for the victim's safety, dignity, and privacy." The Constitution further provides that a victim has the right to reasonable protection, to be informed of their rights, and to participate in the criminal justice process.

At the time of the incident described in this report, I was attempting to report conduct that had just occurred and that I believed constituted a criminal offense. The reporting attempt occurred in a government facility, in the presence of a law enforcement officer, and while the involved parties and potential witnesses remained on scene. The incident was also being contemporaneously recorded.

No report was taken at that time, no documentation was created, and I was not provided with information regarding victim rights or the reporting process in that moment. From my perspective, the lack of contemporaneous acceptance and documentation of the complaint delayed my ability to access the protections and processes associated with reporting a criminal offense, including the creation of an official record and the identification of involved parties and witnesses.

I am not making a legal conclusion regarding whether any constitutional violation occurred. I am documenting that the inability to make a contemporaneous report at the scene affected my ability to engage the criminal justice process at the time the incident occurred.

XI. SUBSEQUENT COMPLAINT AND REFERRAL

On February 26, 2026, I submitted a written complaint to Chief Michael Failing documenting the incident and requesting formal action. Chief Failing acknowledged receipt of the complaint in writing and arranged for the matter to be referred for independent investigation to Amherst Police Department Detective Zac Horning, with coordination occurring by email. This report is submitted pursuant to that referral and is intended to serve as the consolidated written narrative of the incident, including the prior notice and escalation context described above.

XII. EVIDENCE AND PRESERVATION REQUEST

Evidence includes video recordings capturing the door being closed while I was in the doorway, the subsequent close range confrontation, and the chest to chest contact. Evidence also includes still images derived from the video, including images demonstrating the extreme proximity of Carrion's face to the camera and images reflecting his demeanor immediately after the physical contact. Witnesses present in the hallway include Anthony DiMacchia and Carissa Woytach. Additional evidence includes email correspondence documenting my initial written complaint, Chief Failing's acknowledgment of receipt, and Chief Failing's referral of the matter to Amherst Police Detective Zac Horning.

I request that all video recordings, body camera footage, and internal communications related to this incident be preserved, including any recordings from City Hall security systems, any recordings maintained by the City relating to the hallway and chamber access points, and any communications or messages generated by City officials concerning this incident before or after it occurred. I also request preservation of any records relating to the October 20, 2025 complaint that was reported as "under review," to the extent that those records are maintained by the City or referenced in any internal communications, as they relate to notice, pattern, and escalation.

This request is intended to preserve all evidence related to this incident, and any destruction, alteration, or failure to preserve such evidence after notice may constitute spoliation.

XIII. REQUEST FOR ACTION

I respectfully request that Amherst Police Department take the following actions:

Conduct a full investigation into the actions of Rey Carrion

Review all available video evidence

Interview all witnesses present

Determine whether criminal charges under R.C. 2903.13 are appropriate

Evaluate the handling of my initial attempt to report the incident

Ensure preservation of all evidence, including video and internal records

Provide written confirmation of investigative actions

Evaluate whether the conduct described reflects retaliation or interference with protected activity.

Evaluate whether the conduct described constitutes menacing, intimidation, or related offenses under Ohio law.

Evaluate the conduct of all individuals present, including Anthony DiMacchia and Chief Michael Failing, in connection with the events described.

Evaluate whether the conduct described implicates constitutional protections, including First Amendment rights.

Review the actions of responding personnel for compliance with applicable law enforcement policies and procedures.

This report is intended to provide a complete factual record of the incident, the immediate reporting attempt, and the subsequent actions taken. It is submitted for review by the appropriate investigative authority so that determinations can be made based on the evidence, applicable law, and departmental policy.

XIV. CERTIFICATION

I certify that this statement is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Aaron Christopher Knapp, BSSW, LSW

Investigative Journalist, Government Accountability Reporter

Editor-in-Chief, Lorain Politics Unplugged

Licensed Social Worker (LSW) Active Member of Cleveland Press Club

Public Records Litigant & Research Analyst

Date: 03/01/2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the letters 'AK' inside a circle, with a horizontal line extending from the bottom of the circle.

EXHIBIT SECTION

INVESTIGATOR SUMMARY

This report concerns an incident that occurred on February 16, 2026 inside Lorain City Hall at a primary public access doorway to the council chambers. The complainant alleges that a City official engaged in a sequence of conduct that included closing a door into an occupied doorway, re engaging after an opportunity to disengage, advancing into close physical proximity, and making nonconsensual chest to chest contact.

The incident is documented by multiple sources of video evidence, including front facing camera, rear facing camera, and additional footage showing movement before and after the contact. Still images derived from that footage are included as exhibits. The evidence collectively captures positioning, movement, proximity, and post contact demeanor.

The complainant further alleges that an attempt to report the incident to the only law enforcement officer present was not accepted or documented at the scene, resulting in a lack of contemporaneous reporting and delay in investigation.

This packet provides a timeline, narrative, and supporting exhibits for review.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS

February 16, 2026

Location: Lorain City Hall hallway adjacent to council chambers

Complainant lawfully present inside City Hall for public governmental activity

Approach to doorway used for public ingress and egress

Door is closed while complainant is occupying doorway

Initial physical contact occurs

Subject moves away, creating distance

Subject turns back and re engages

Subject approaches into extremely close proximity

Chest to chest contact occurs

Subject disengages and walks away

Complainant does not pursue or escalate

Attempt is made to report incident to Chief of Police at scene

Report is not taken at that time

February 26, 2026

Written complaint submitted

Matter referred for outside investigation

EVIDENCE INDEX

Exhibit A

Audio recording capturing verbal exchange including statements made during reporting attempt

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LupHKFqExeU>

This recording captures my contemporaneous attempt to report the incident and includes the statements, 'I don't do reports,' 'Go to the lobby,' and 'Report it to the safety service director,' which resulted in no report being initiated at the scene.

Exhibit B

Police interview relating to prior incident involving same individual

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FHRPx7nIN4&t=14s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZiZrlMK8Q&t=3s>

Exhibit C

Front facing phone camera footage capturing proximity and contact

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zsn2LZkYe80&t=6s>

Exhibit D

Front facing body camera footage of hallway incident

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LC5rDV93ttk&t=11s>

Exhibit E

Video showing exit from building and door interaction

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Cl85MIUjs4&t=3s>

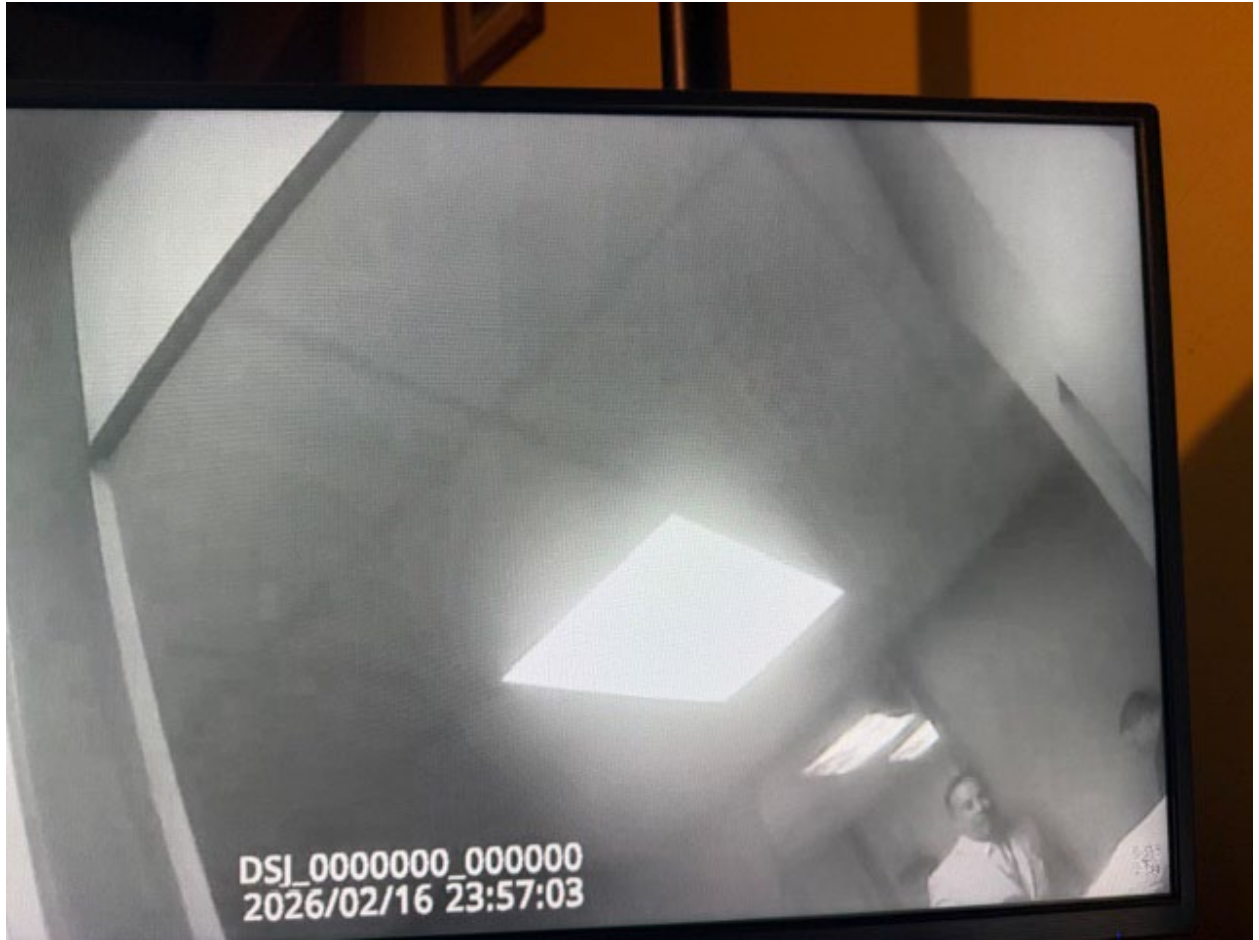
Exhibit F

Rear facing body camera footage capturing movement and lack of forward advance

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCefjG6V7aM&t=56s>

Exhibit G

Still frame showing hallway positioning prior to interaction



DSJ_0000000_000000
2026/02/16 23:57:03

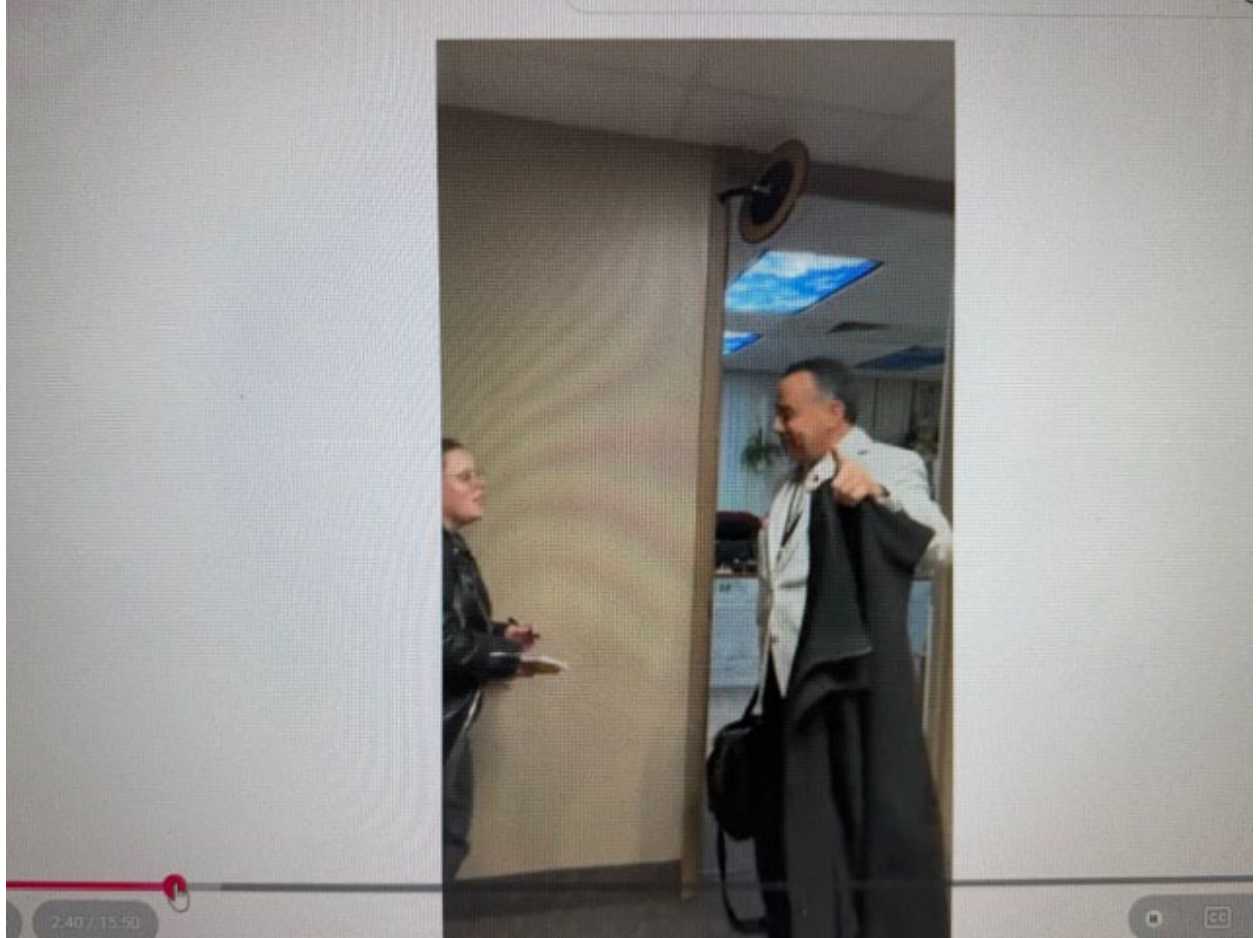


Exhibit H
Still frame showing doorway and access point

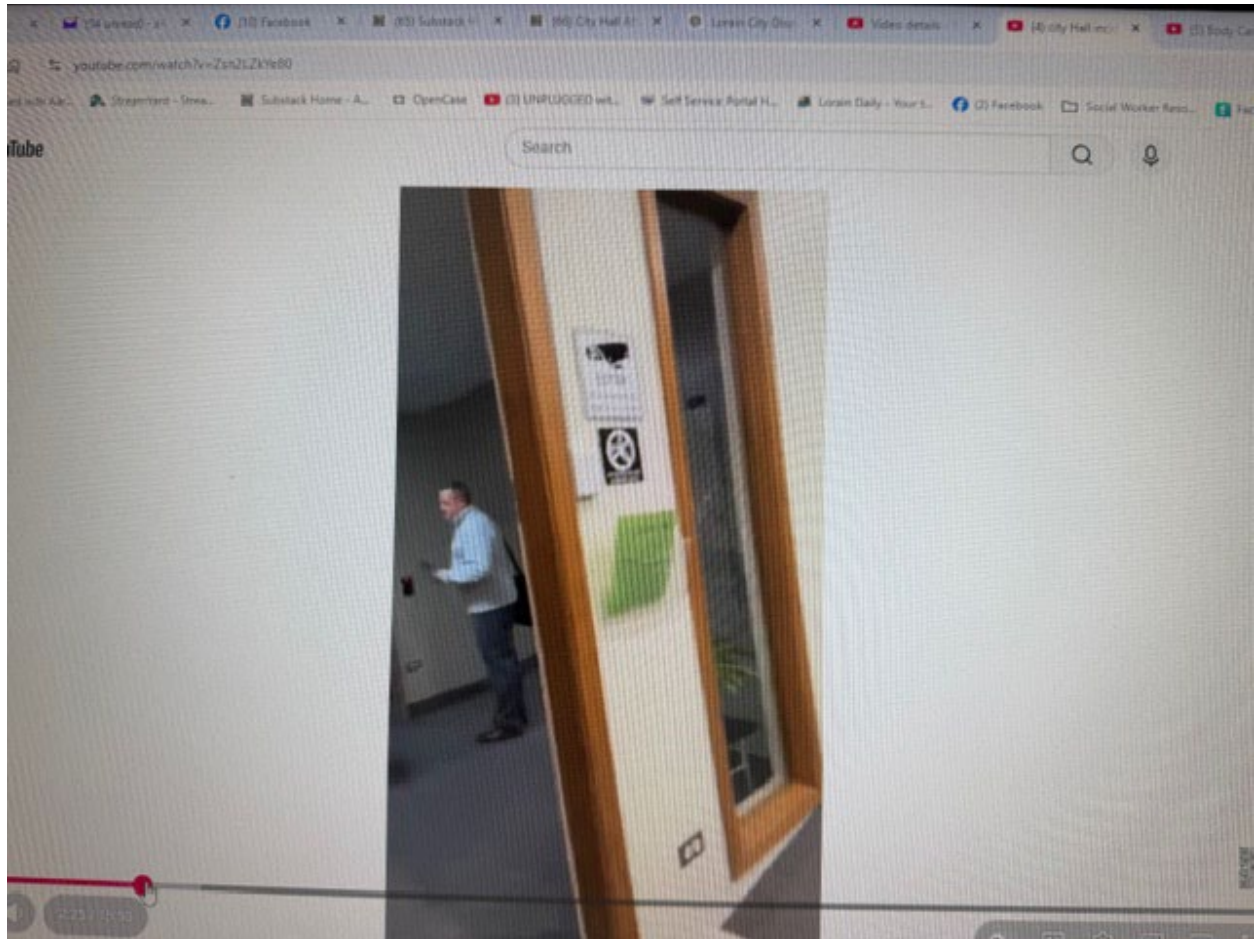
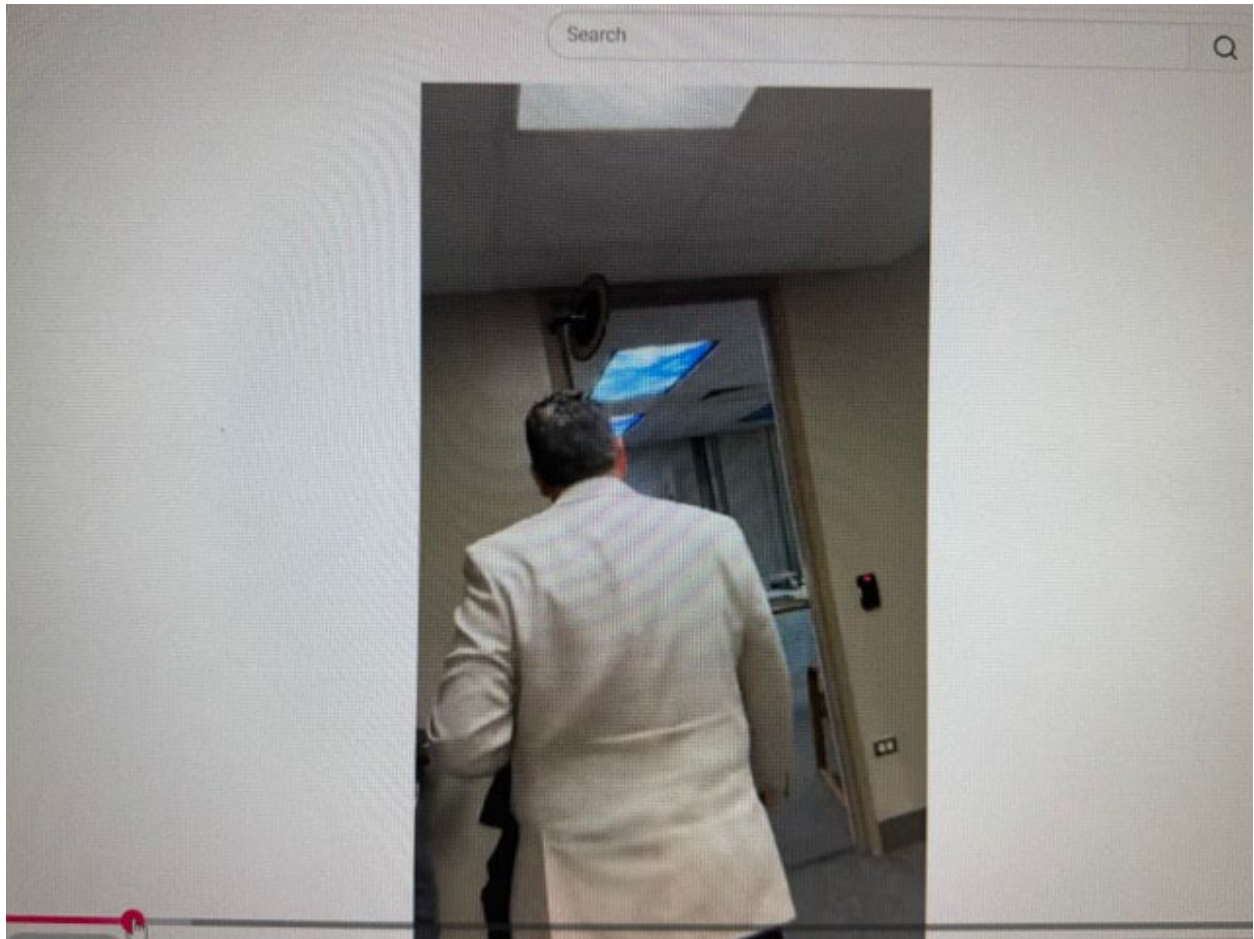


Exhibit I
Still frame showing subject moving away from interaction



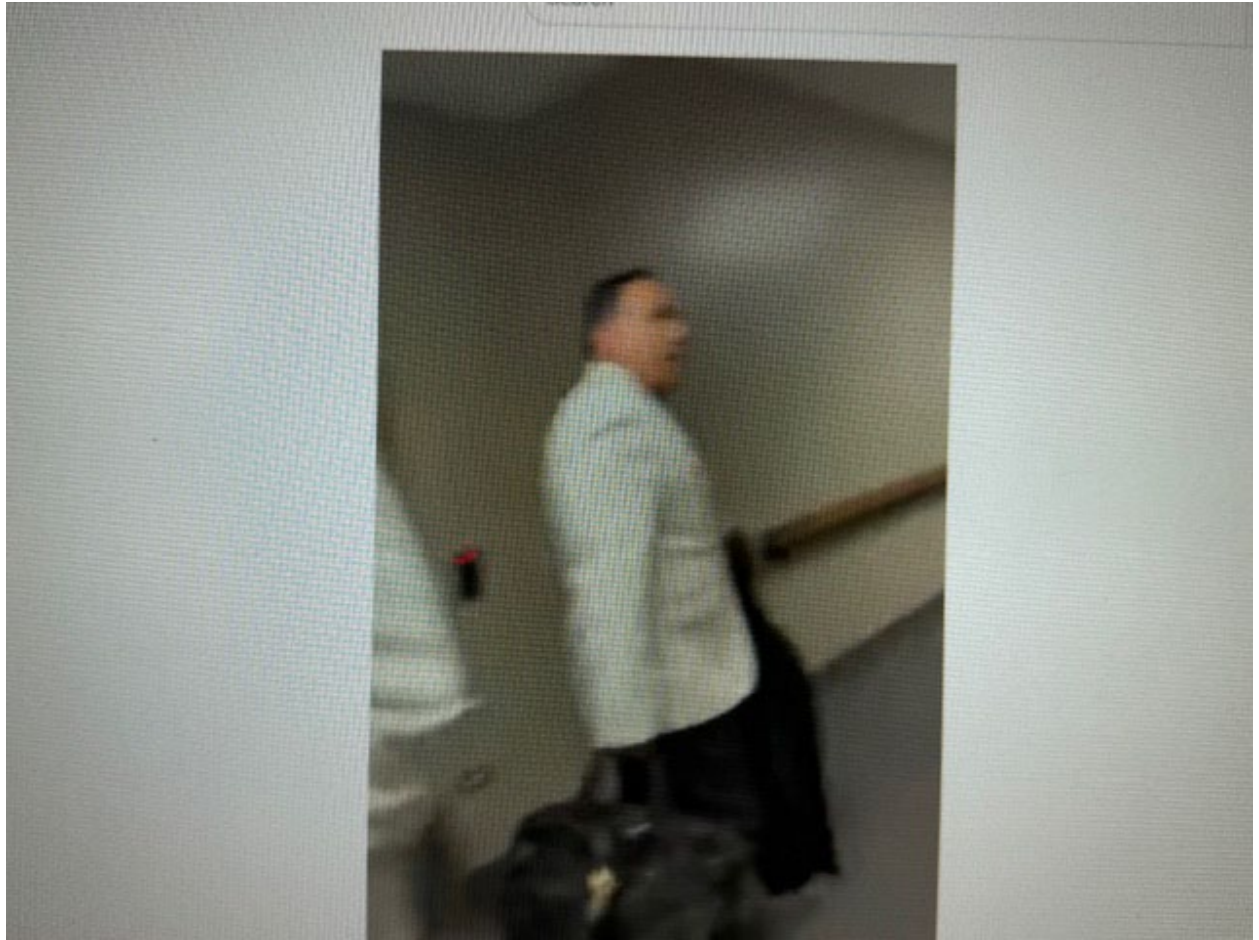


Exhibit J
Still frame showing subject turning back toward complainant

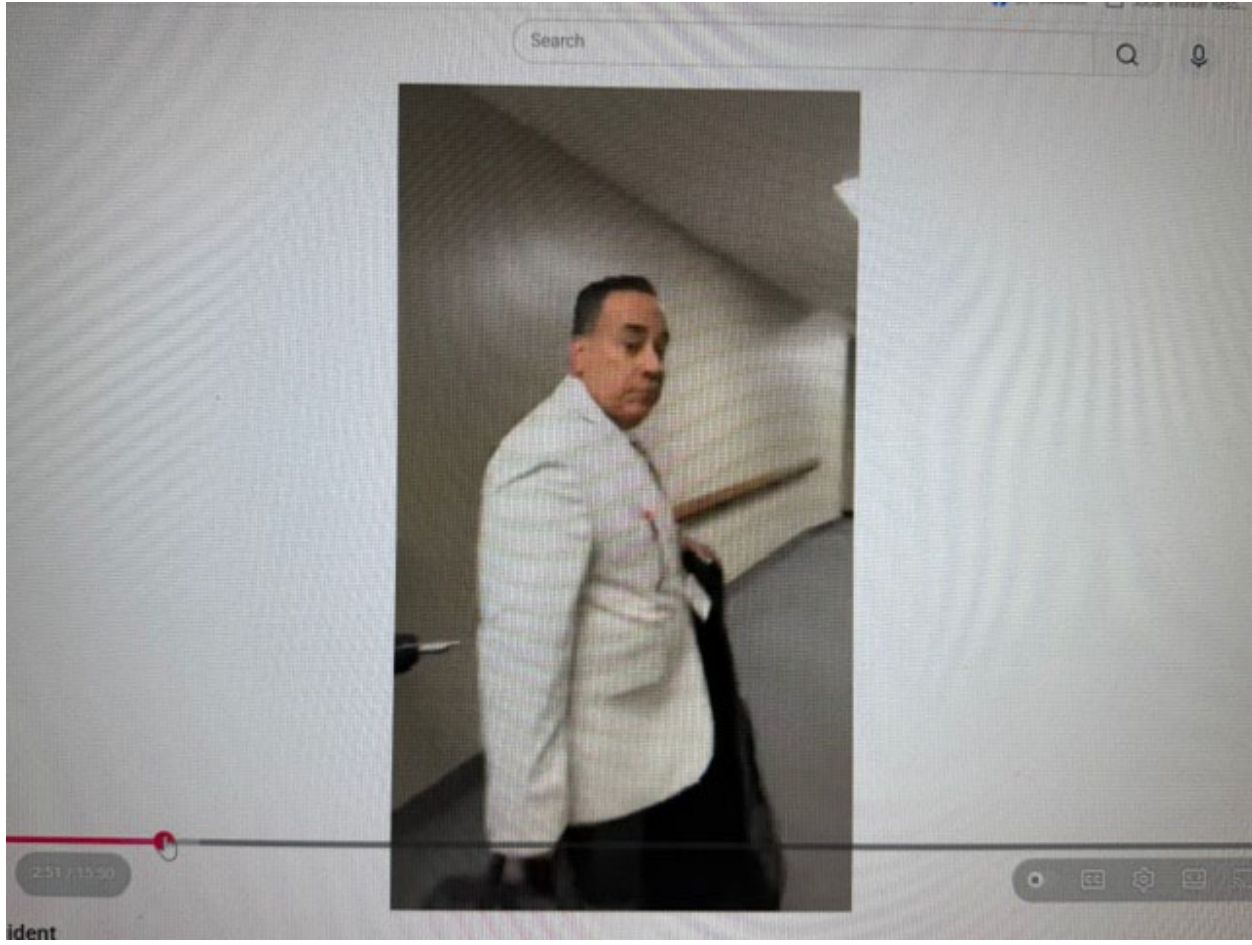


Exhibit K
Still frame showing subject re approaching complainant

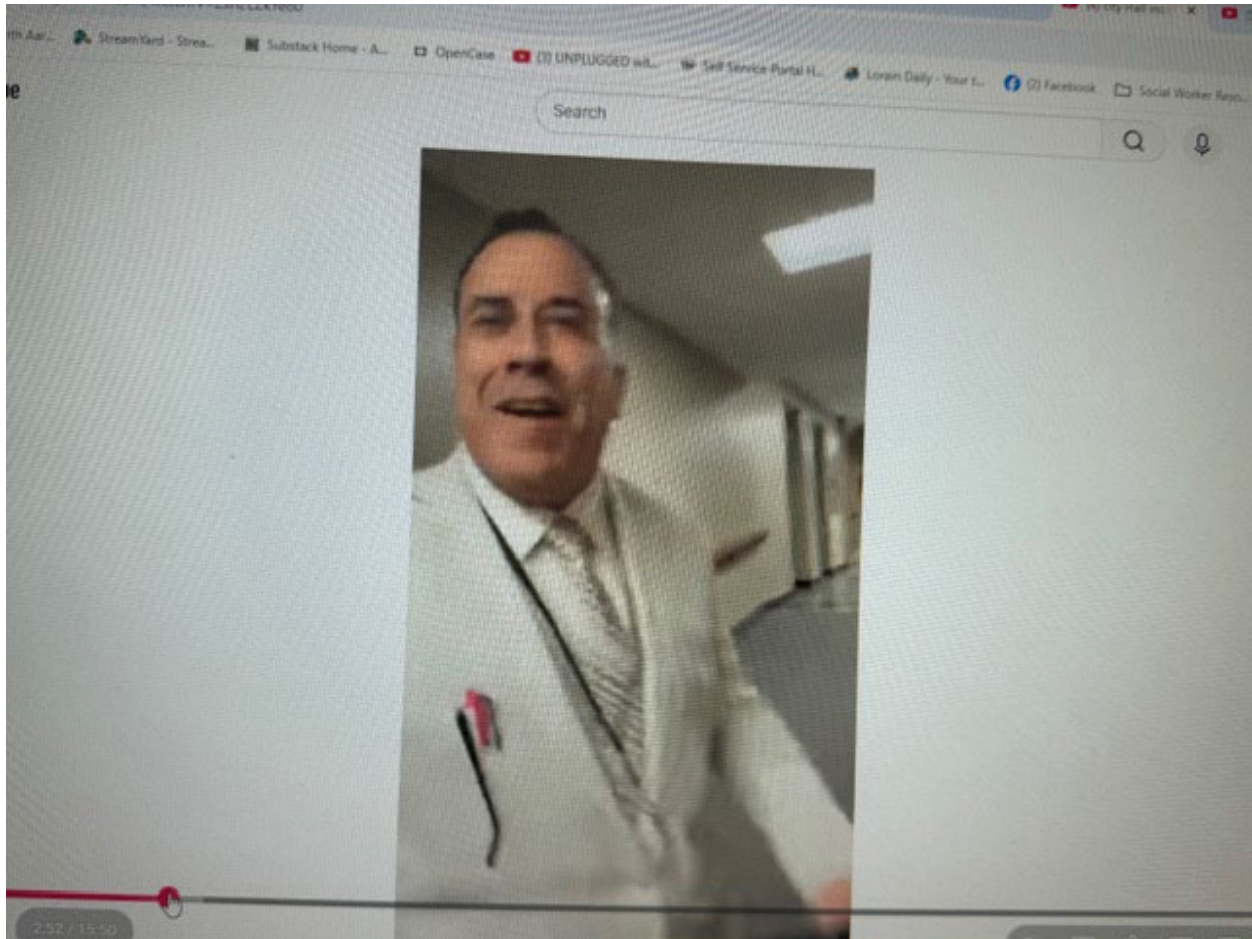
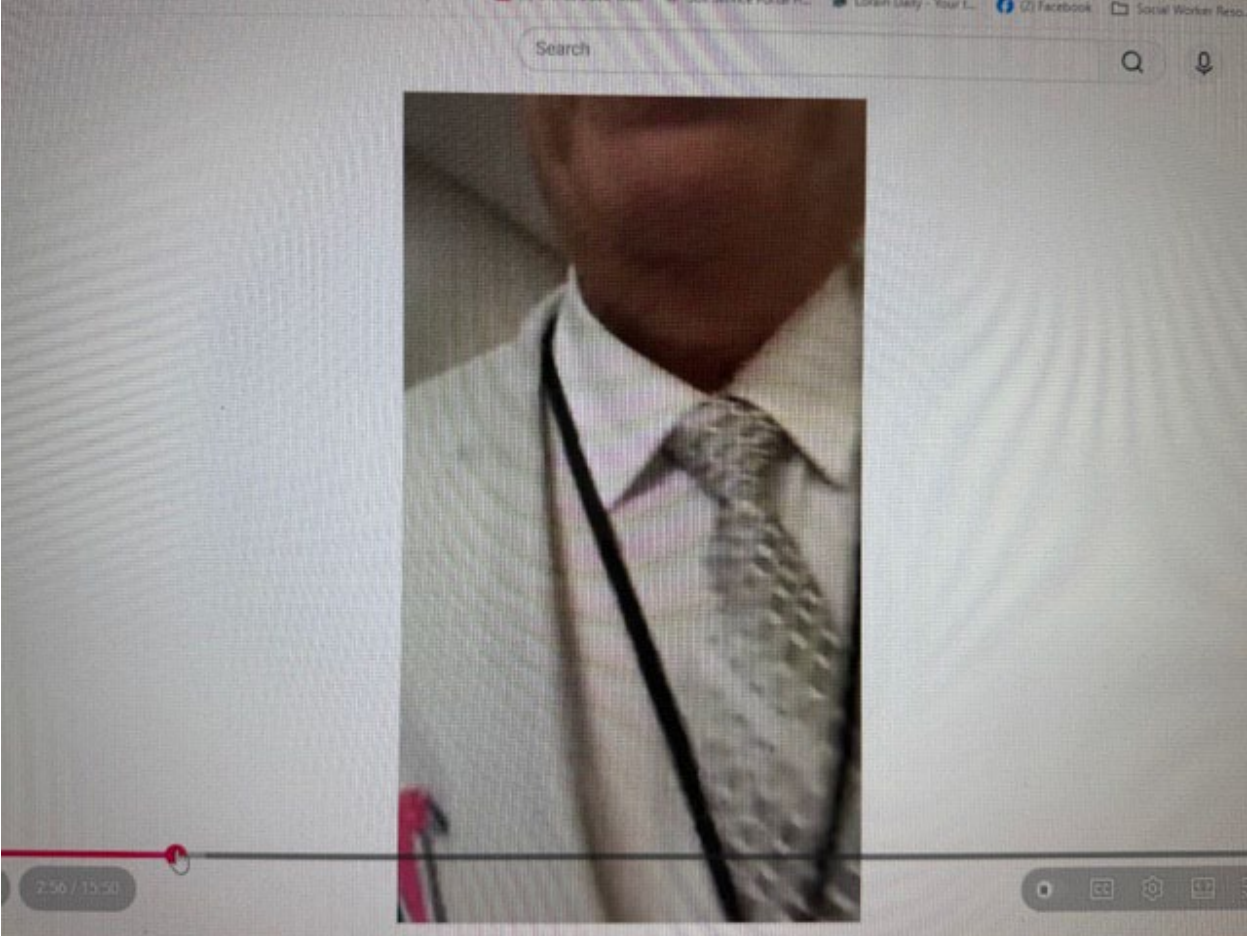


Exhibit L

Still frame showing extremely close proximity measured in inches





Search



Exhibit M
Still frame showing positioning at moment of contact

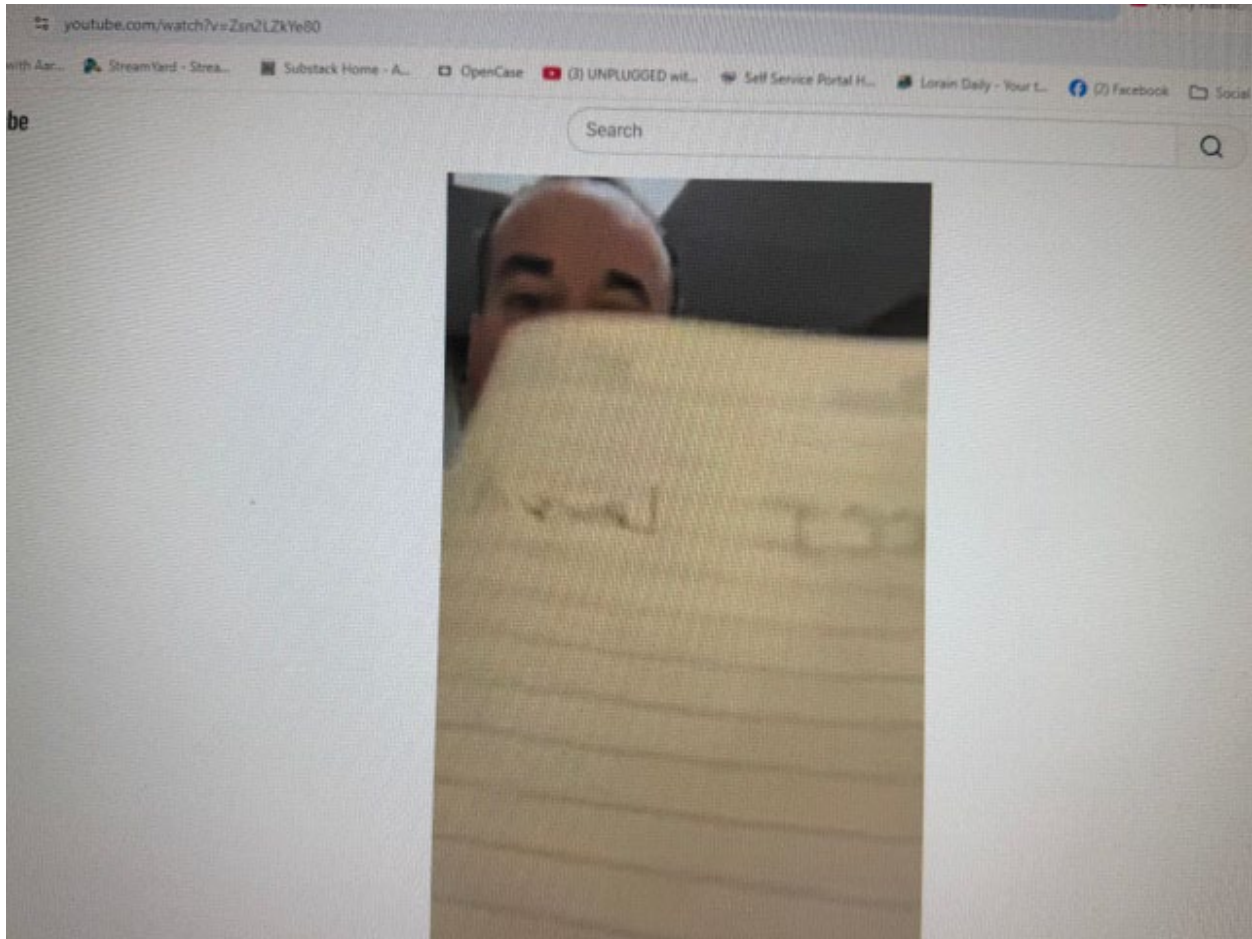
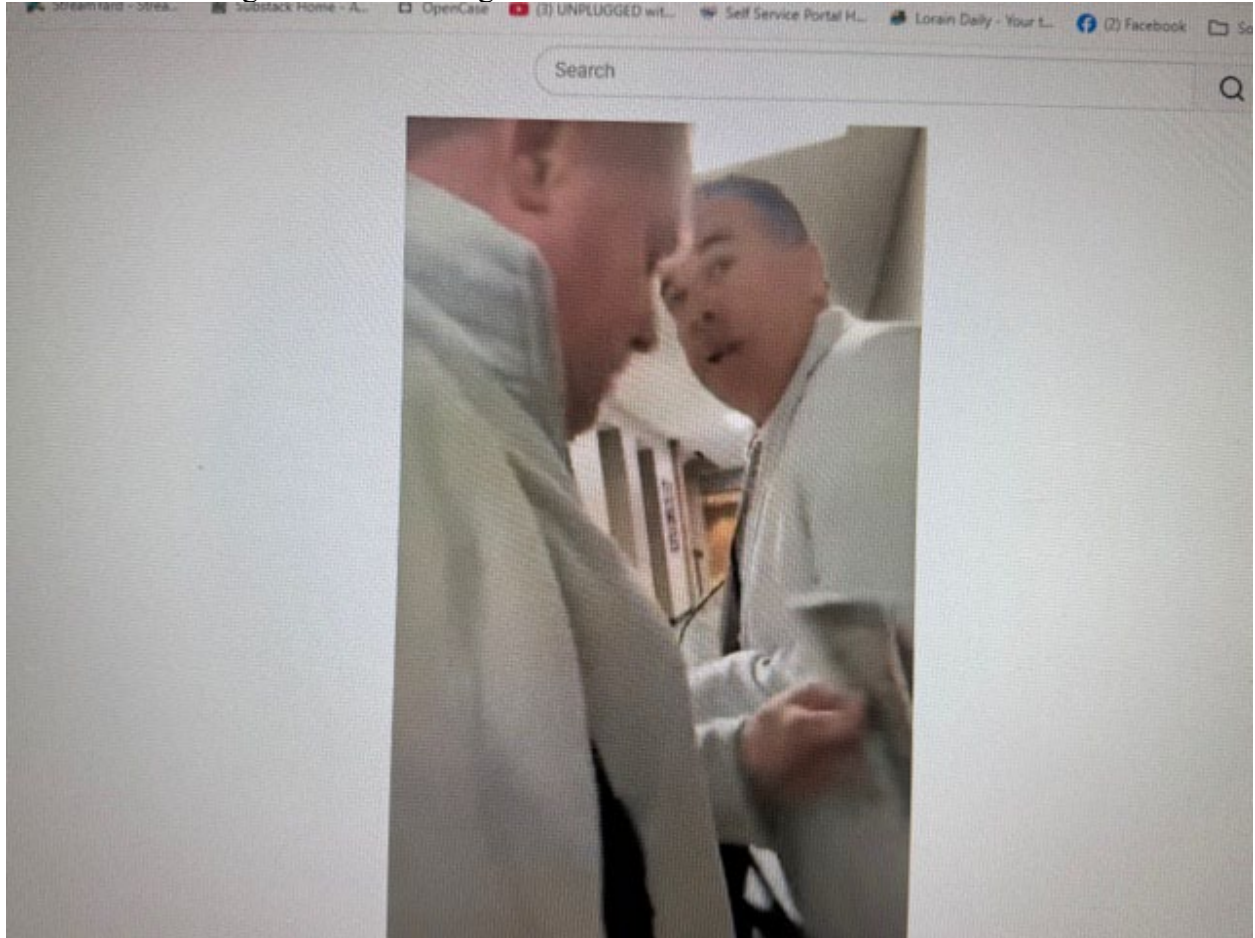


Exhibit N
Still frame showing chest to chest alignment



t

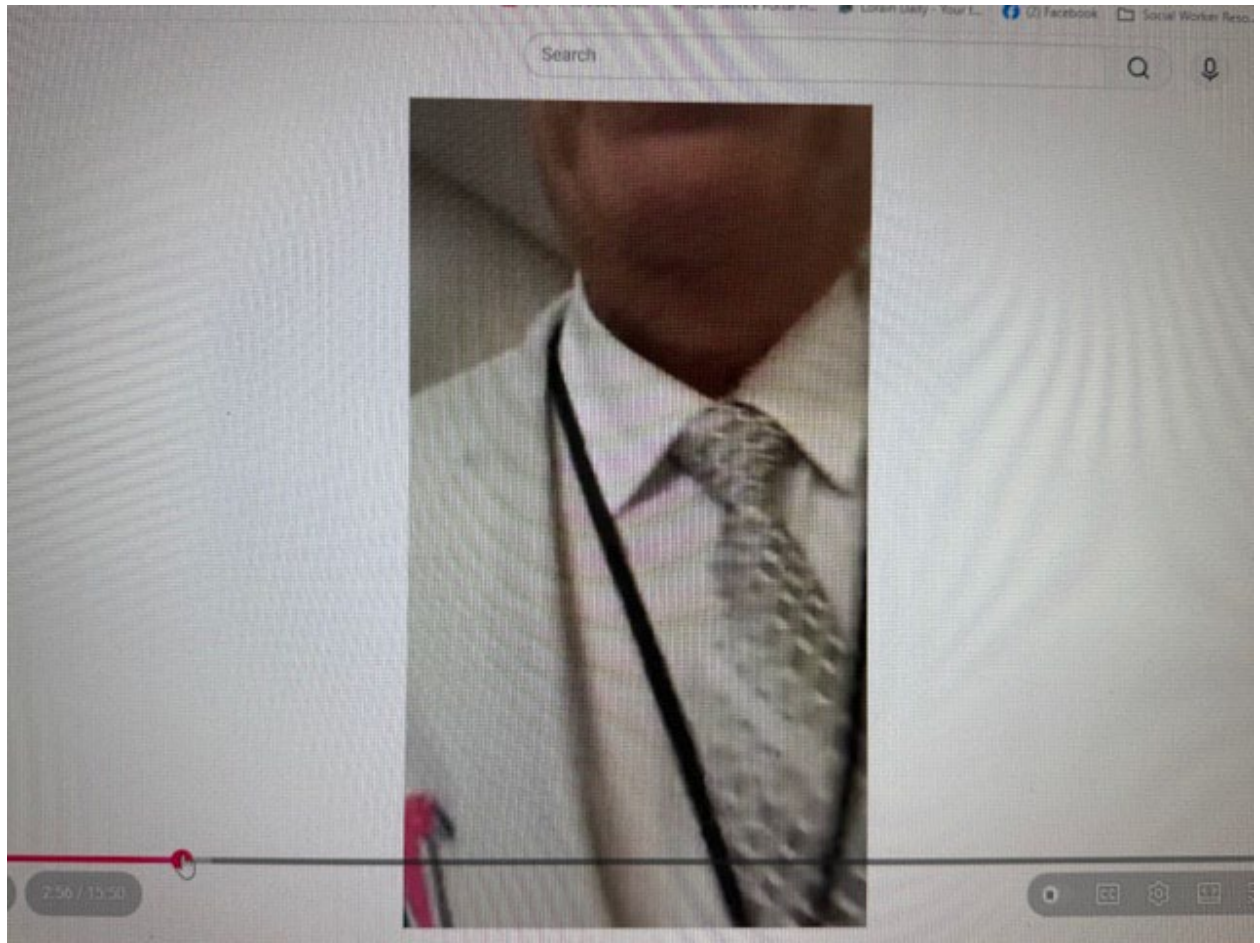


Exhibit O
Still frame showing subject disengaging after contact

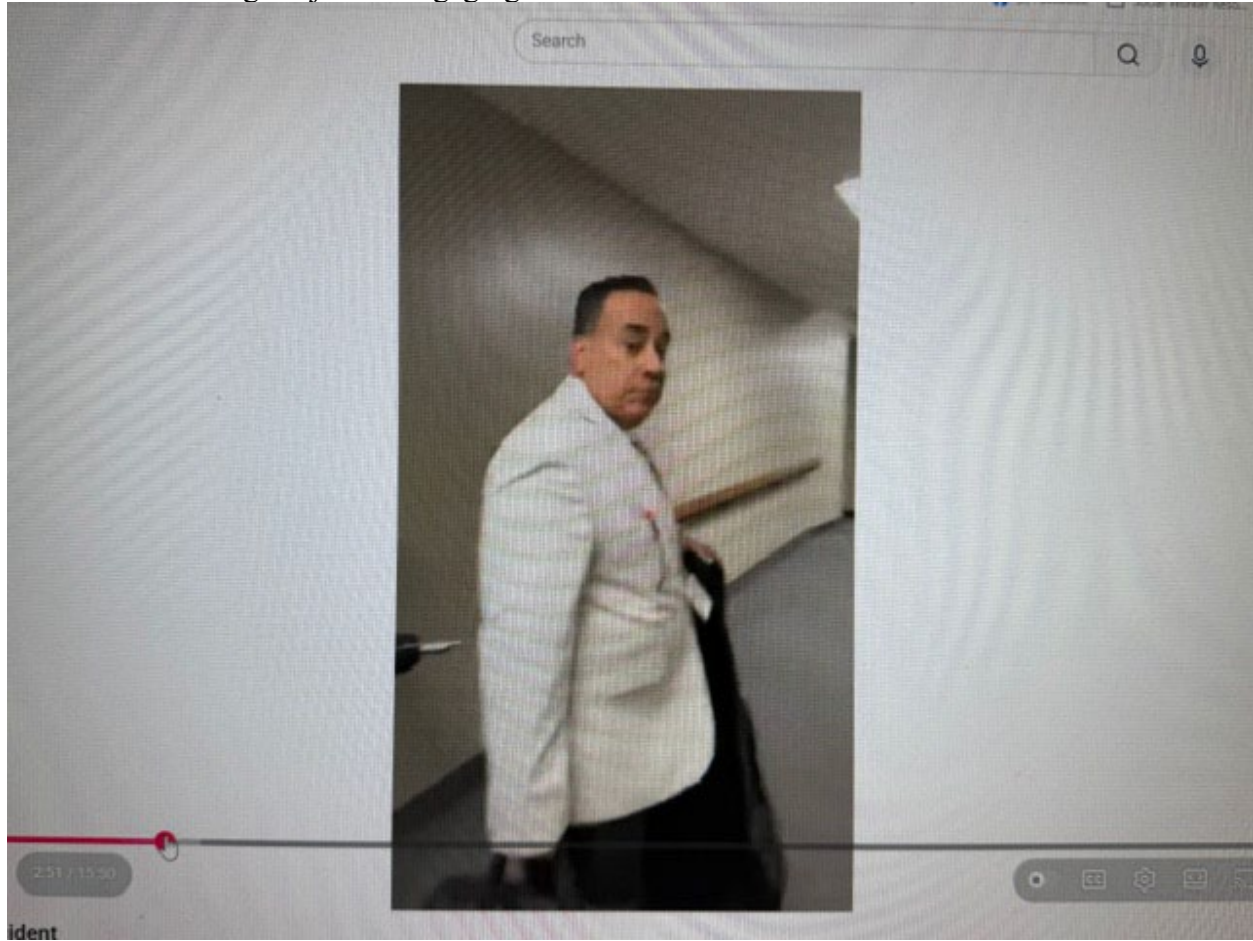
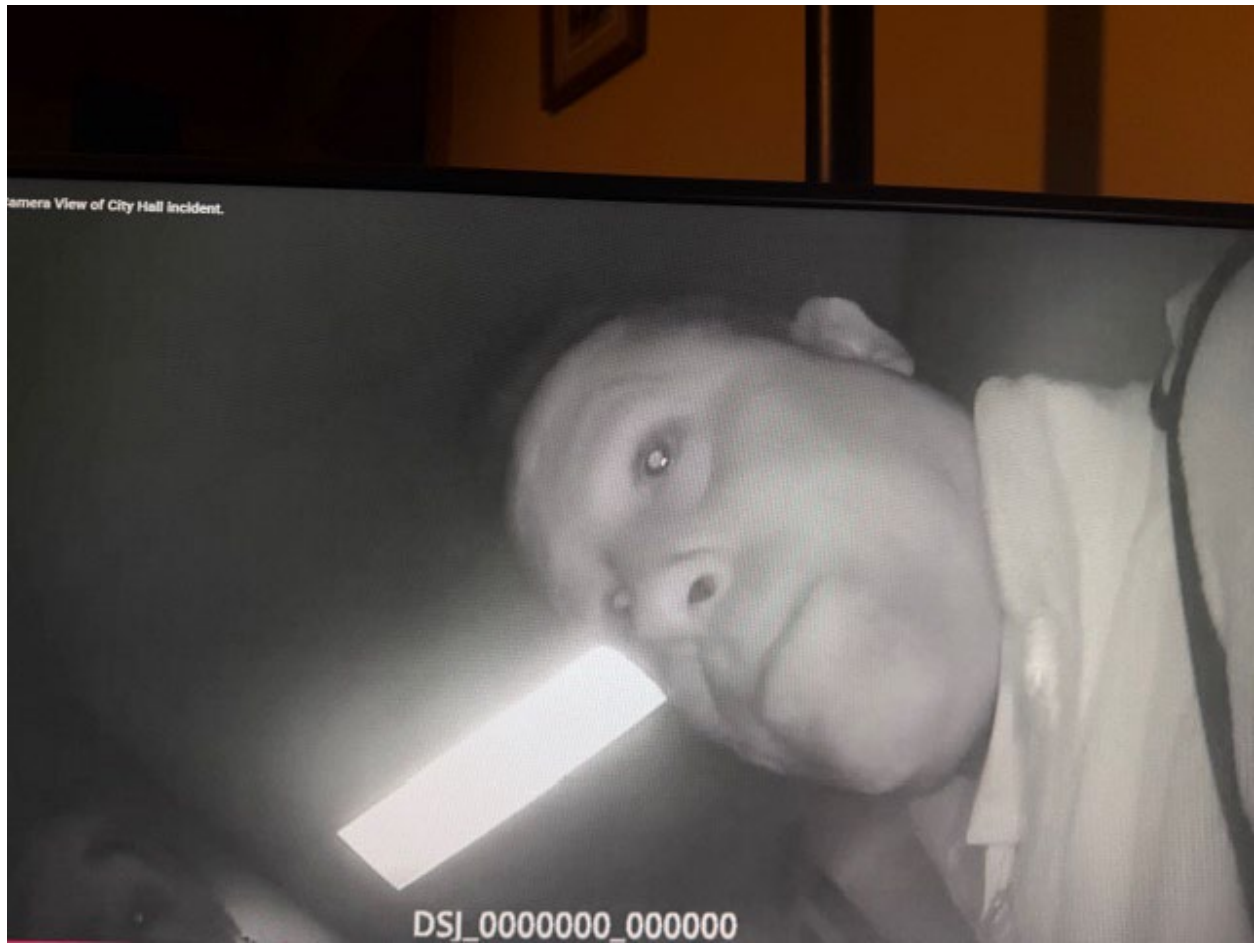


Exhibit P

Still frame showing subject facial expression following contact



Camera View of City Hall Incident.



DSJ_000000_00000

Exhibit Q
Alternate angle or security footage showing hallway interaction

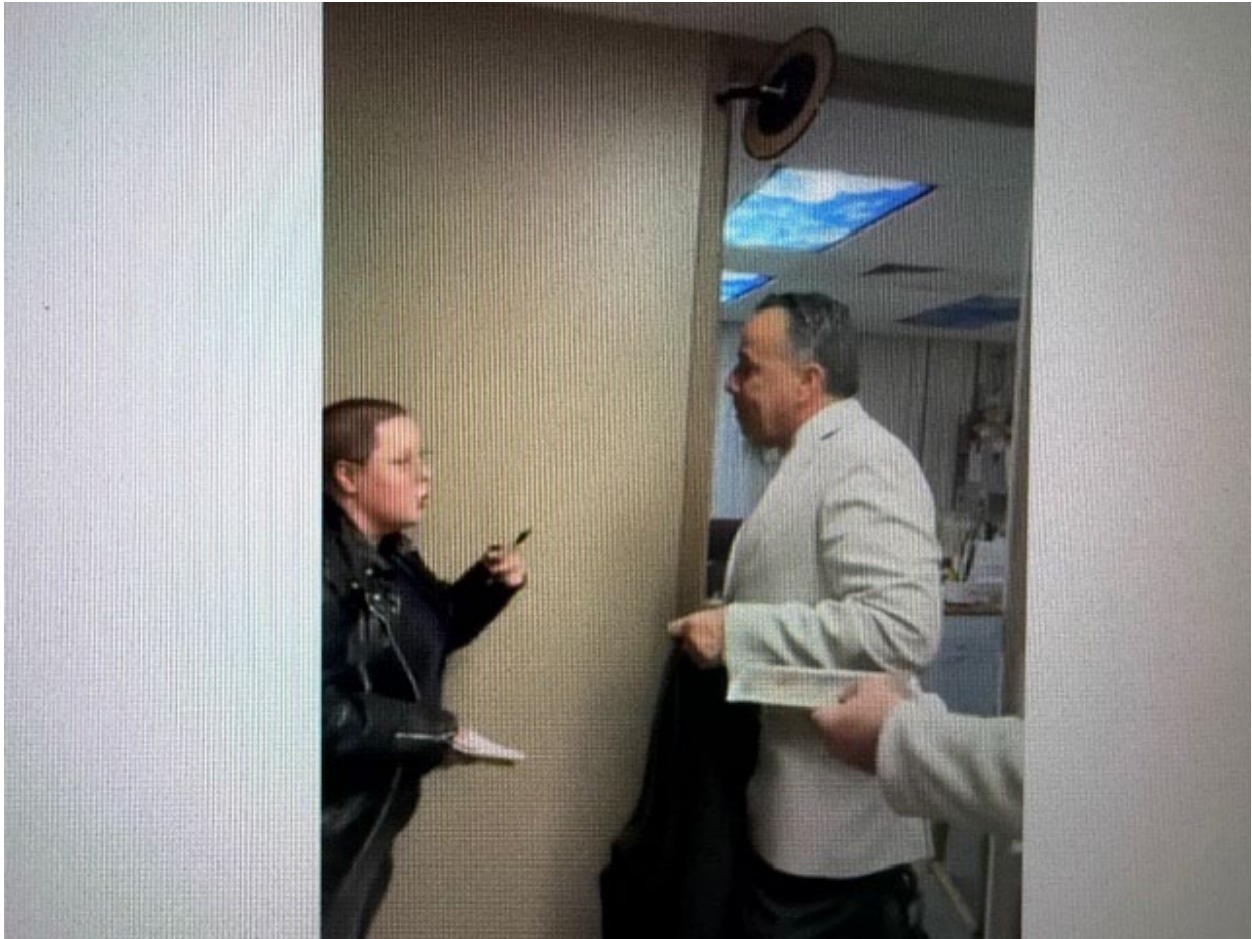


Exhibit R
Alternate body camera angle corroborating proximity and positioning

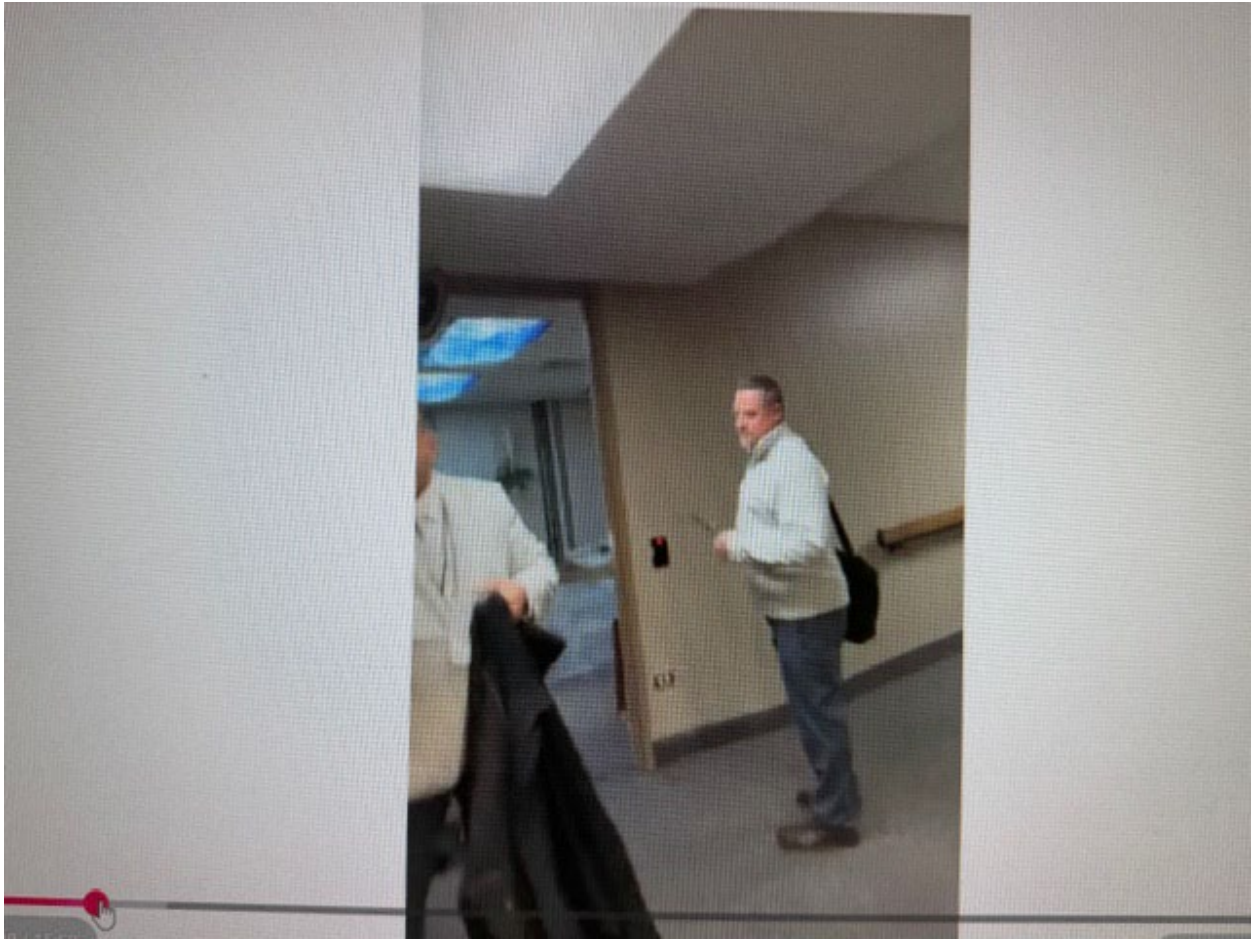


Exhibit S

Still frame showing subject at doorway prior to interaction

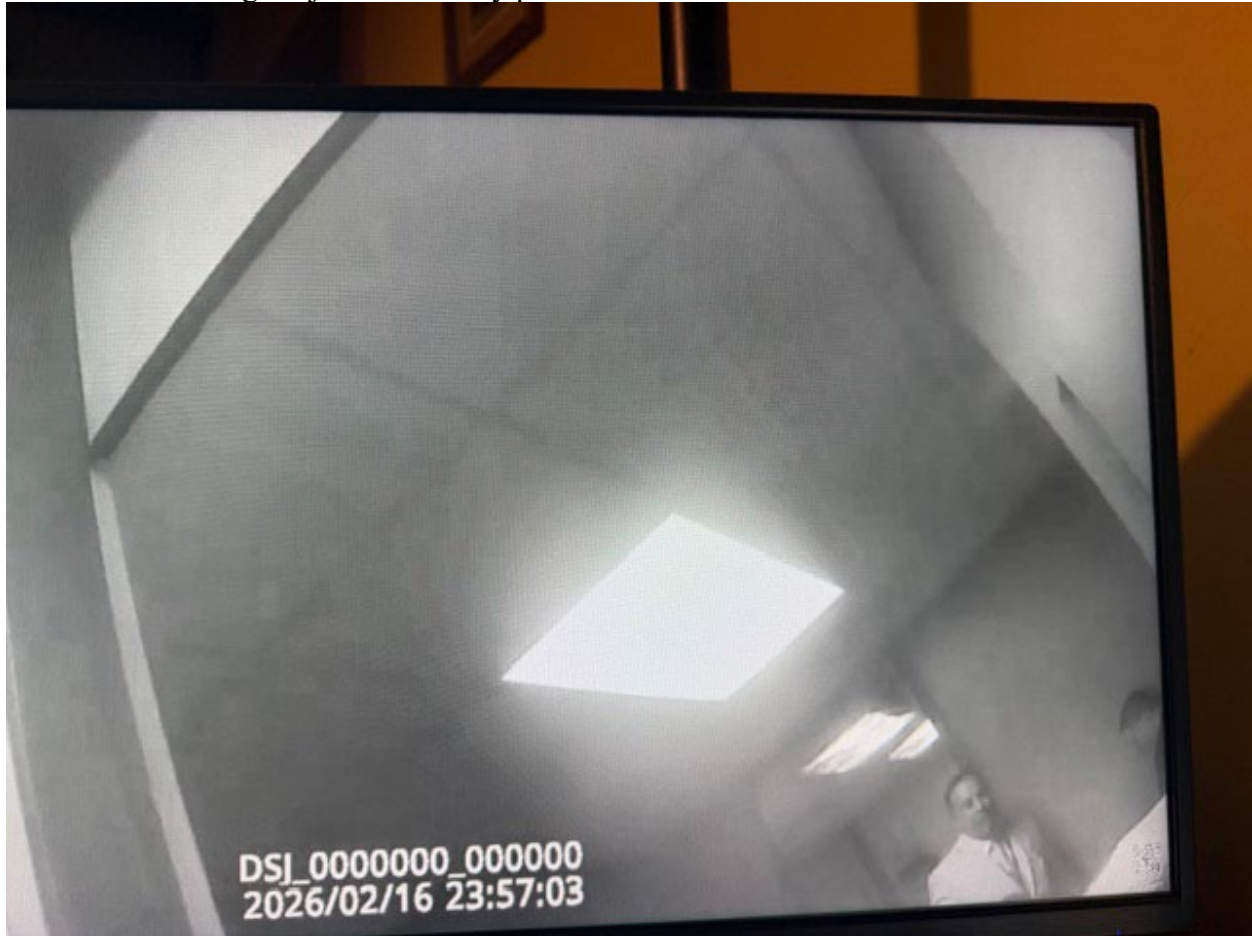


Exhibit T
Still frame showing subject turning away

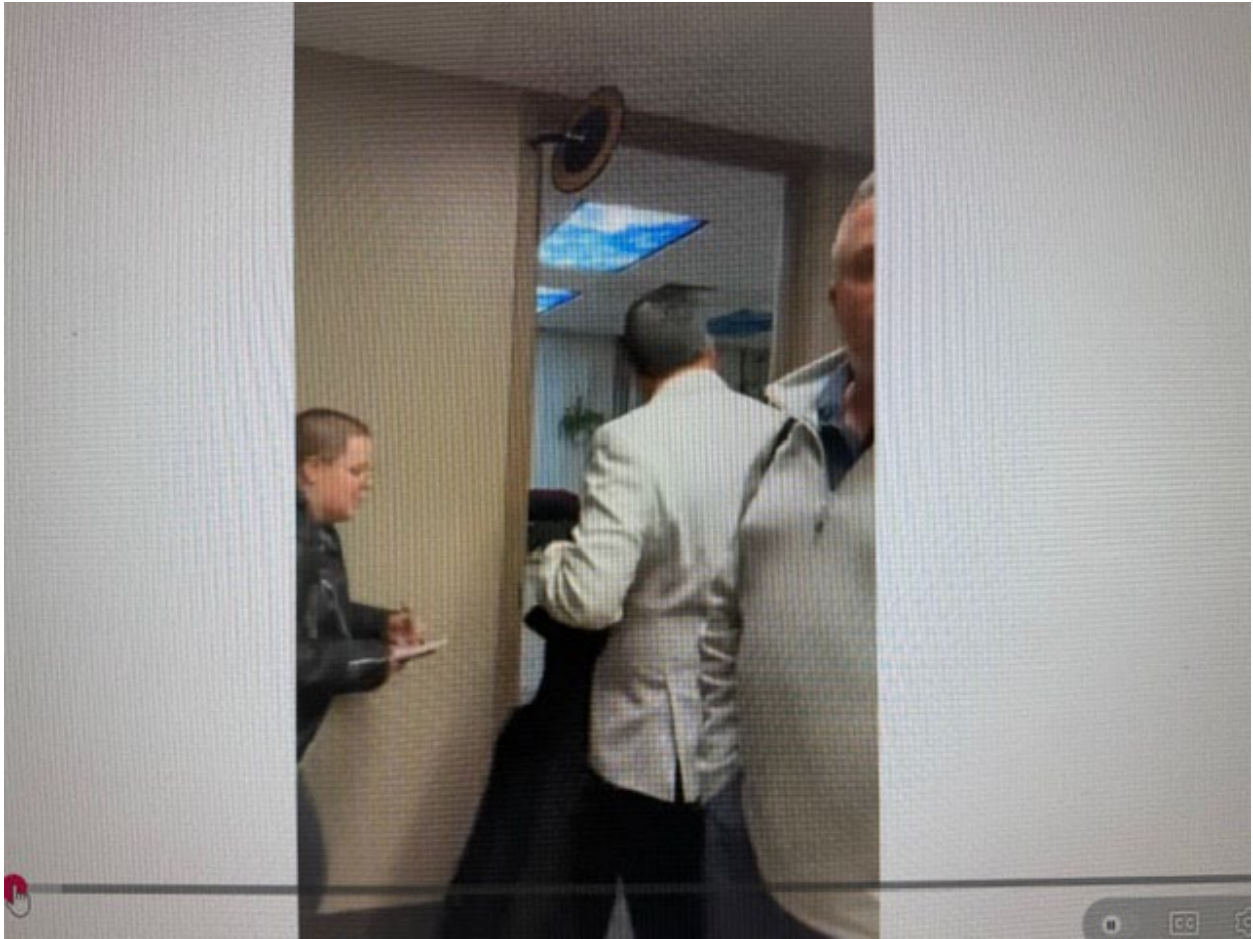
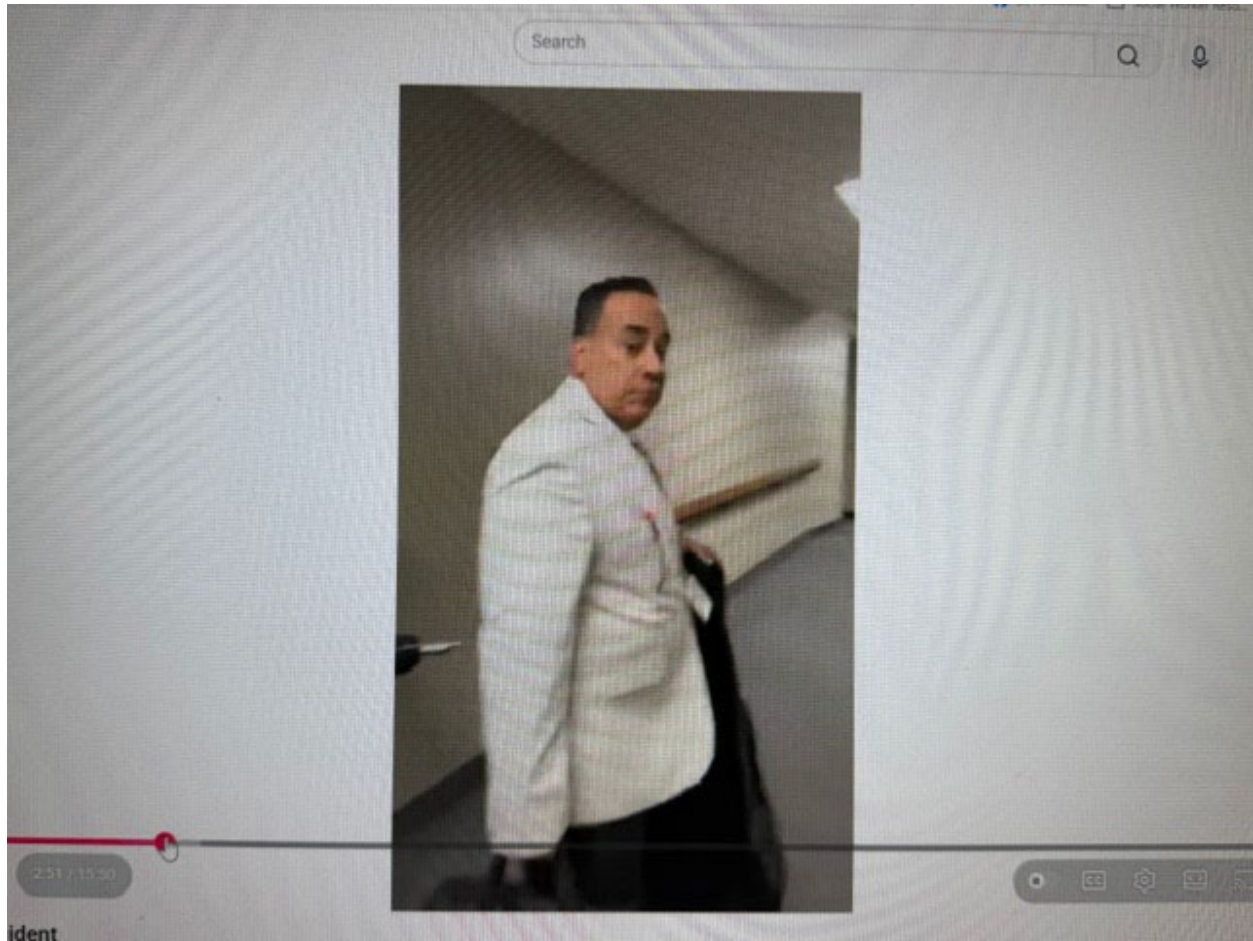


Exhibit U
Still frame showing subject walking down hallway





Exhibit V
Still frame showing subject looking back toward complainant



INCIDENT REPORT AND NARRATIVE

I. Complainant Information

Aaron Christopher Knapp
Investigative Journalist, Editor in Chief, Lorain Politics Unplugged
Licensed Social Worker (LSW)

II. Purpose of Report

This report is submitted for independent investigation following referral. It documents alleged physical contact, re engagement behavior, and interference with the ability to report the incident at the time it occurred.

III. Incident Location and Context

The incident occurred in a hallway adjacent to the council chambers at a primary entry and exit point used by the public, including an accessible route. The complainant was lawfully present for government related purposes.

IV. Doorway Contact

As the complainant was passing through the doorway, already occupying the threshold, the subject closed the door into that space. The door made direct contact with the complainant. The complainant did not initiate physical contact.

This interaction, including positioning within the doorway and visibility, is captured on video. (See Exhibits C, D, H)

V. Movement and Re Engagement

Following the initial contact, the subject moved away, creating distance. The subject then turned back and re engaged, approaching the complainant again. This occurred more than once.

The movement away, turn, and re approach are captured in video and still frames. (See Exhibits I, J, K, S, T, U)

VI. Proximity

After re engaging, the subject moved into extremely close physical proximity. Video shows facial features at very close range, consistent with a distance of inches.

This proximity is visible in both video and still frames. (See Exhibits C, L)

VII. Physical Contact

Following the re approach and close proximity, chest to chest contact occurred. The complainant did not move forward into the subject. Rear facing footage shows no forward movement by the complainant that would account for the contact.

The contact and body positioning are captured in multiple angles.
(See Exhibits F, M, N, R)

VIII. Post Contact Conduct

Following the contact, the subject disengaged and moved away. Video captures the subject's facial expression immediately after the contact.

The complainant did not pursue or escalate the interaction.

Post contact conduct is captured in still frames and video.
(See Exhibits O, P, V)

IX. Reporting Attempt

The complainant attempted to report the incident to the only law enforcement officer present at the scene. The complaint was not formally taken or documented at that time. The complainant was directed to report elsewhere.

The exchange is captured on video.
(See Exhibit A)

X. Evidence Preservation

The incident is supported by multiple video recordings and still frames. The complainant requests preservation of all related footage, including internal recordings and communications related to the incident.

CERTIFICATION

I certify that this statement is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Aaron Christopher Knapp
Investigative Journalist
Licensed Social Worker

Date: 03/01/26



