



EXECUTIVE INVESTIGATION SUMMARY

August 27, 2025

KRAMER WORKPLACE INVESTIGATIONS

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Pursuant to the request of the County of Humboldt, Kate Starkebaum of Kramer Workplace Investigations conducted a fact-finding investigation concerning complaints made against District 2 Supervisor Michelle Bushnell. The County retained Kramer Workplace Investigations on or about May 9, 2025, to investigate complaints that Bushnell acted in a hostile manner. Specifically, the complaints allege that Bushnell raised her voice, made hostile statements, and cursed at employees on May 5, 2025.

The undersigned interviewed six witnesses as part of this investigation. The undersigned also reviewed relevant documents that she relied upon to make her findings.

This Executive Summary makes findings of fact on the complaints made against Bushnell. It does not express any opinion as to whether any of the actions described herein rise to the level of a violation of County policies or State laws. In conducting this investigation, the undersigned did not set out to prove or disprove the allegation, but rather to gather information in a neutral fashion and reach reasoned conclusions. The factual findings were made by carefully analyzing the documentary and testimonial evidence gathered as part of the investigation.¹

The undersigned makes the following factual findings:

- The credible evidence presented establishes that more likely than not, Bushnell accused a County employee of being a liar approximately five times, yelled at her, and did not give her an opportunity to speak.
- Sufficient credible evidence was presented to establish that more likely than not, Bushnell accused another County employee of disloyalty, became angry and yelled and cursed at her, and slammed her door shut as she left her office. Witnesses who overheard this incident corroborated that Bushnell was the aggressor, and reported hearing Bushnell cussing, yelling, and slamming the door.

The allegation that Bushnell raised her voice, spoke in a hostile manner, and cursed on May 5, 2025, is sustained.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kate Starkebaum
Kramer Workplace Investigations



Karen Kramer
Kramer Workplace Investigations

¹ The facts are assessed using a preponderance of the evidence (more likely than not) standard of proof. What might be considered hearsay in a legal proceeding was considered and given appropriate weight in this investigation.