



MEDIA RELEASE

March 6, 2018

***** For Immediate Release *****

VILLAGE OF RIVER FOREST STATEMENT REGARDING KEYSTONE MONTESSORI SCHOOL LAWSUIT

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RIVER FOREST, IL -- The Village of River Forest has received notification via email that Keystone Montessori School filed a lawsuit today against the Village making allegations and claims regarding the School's property tax status. The Village is disheartened that the School filed a lawsuit over an agreement the School voluntarily signed and entered into in 1998. The agreement required the School to pay property taxes, given that the School wanted to operate in a zoning district in the Village where its use was not otherwise permitted. Twenty years later, the School no longer wants to abide by the terms and conditions of the agreement so it has sued the Village of River Forest.

The Village has abided by the terms and conditions of the 1998 agreement. The same Administrative Director of the School that signed the agreement in 1998 continues to lead the School today, and she even signed the verification of the lawsuit filed against the Village. The Village will be forced to expend taxpayer resources to defend itself in the lawsuit.

"The Village is saddened that Keystone Montessori has chosen to file a lawsuit against the Village for an agreement that it signed and executed twenty years ago. Why now 20 years later?" said Village President Catherine Adduci. "Through this lawsuit, Keystone Montessori has made it clear they want the residents of River Forest to pay their property tax bill, and the Board and I cannot consciously agree to that. The Village is always willing to work with its businesses and partners in the community, but we also have a greater responsibility to protect the interests of all taxpayers in River Forest."

The Village is disappointed by this lawsuit. Over the years, the Village has worked in collaboration with Keystone, starting twenty years ago, and continuing through 2003, 2010 and 2014, when the Village assisted Keystone in issuing, and then refinancing, \$2,500,000 in bonds for Keystone's benefit using the Village's tax-exempt governmental bonding authority. This was not a required action by the Village, but was done to assist the School in a time of need.

The Village intends to vigorously defend itself from the claims alleged by the School.