

**DISARIO v. MIDDLESEX COUNTY IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY**

**SETTLEMENT TERMS:**

Equal Pay Act: Settlement Payment of \$200,000.00 and retroactive salary increase from February 1, 2018

## NJ Democratic official's pay was 51% more than female counterpart, lawsuit claims

By Adam Hochron October 18, 2017 8:10 PM



Share on Facebook



Share on Twitter

PLAINSBORO — A woman who has worked at public golf courses in Middlesex County for more than a decade says she was paid less because she is a woman.

Susan Disario's discrimination lawsuit targets the Middlesex County Improvement Authority, a little-known public agency that runs golf courses and nursing homes. The MCIA has an annual budget of \$64 million and has ties to powerful political figures in the county's Democratic Party.

Disario says she was making almost \$32,000 less than what the agency paid Richard Dalina, who was hired the same year she was and did similar work, but at an even smaller golf course.

Dalina is a councilman in Woodbridge. His brother Stephen is the council president in Monroe. Their father Stephen "Pete" Dalina was a longtime county freeholder before his death.

Disario was hired in February 1999 as the assistant manager of golf facilities at The Meadows golf course. According to the lawsuit, she was promoted to her current role of manager in January 2006, with an annual salary of \$48,271. In January 2015 she received a raise to \$60,616.

Dalina was hired the same year and as of 2015 was making \$89,124, with a \$3,000 car allowance. Dalina serves as manager of the Raritan Landing golf Course in Piscataway, according to the lawsuit, which notes that it is "smaller in size than the Meadows Golf Course that Mrs. Disario manages."

The lawsuit also says that Gerard Brennan, a manager at another of the agency's courses, made \$87,120 in 2015 with a \$3,000 car allowance. Brennan, according to the lawsuit, was promoted to director of golf course after Disario had complained about the pay gap despite the fact that all three people had the same responsibilities.

Disario's salary last year was \$61,826 while Dalina was earning \$90,462 and Brennan was earning \$88,428. Both Dalina and Brennan were getting the \$3,000 car allowance, which Disario said she was not receiving.

Disario's lawsuit says she complained in the past about making less and that the MCIA "refused to remediate the unequal pay." Her lawsuit says that the MCIA was "willfully indifferent" to her complaints, and "did not take prompt and effective remedial action to end its own discriminatory and retaliatory conduct" for the pay gap between men and women.

Disario is seeking an unspecified amount of compensatory damages for lost income, emotional harm, reimbursement for medical expenses and lost pension, retirement and other benefits.

Carol Byrnes, a spokeswoman for the MCIA, called the lawsuit a "personnel matter and is being handled by our legal team. Therefore, we will have no further comment."

In 2013, the MCIA **came under fire** when it was reported that former Monroe Township Mayor Richard Pucci was earning \$210,000 per year as the authority's executive director. That salary was on top of the \$30,000 he was earning as mayor at the same time.

Gov. Chris Christie weighed in on Pucci's salary at the time saying that "feeding at the public trough like that is disgraceful."

Pucci retired as executive director as of January of last year, the same time he opted not to run for another term in office citing health issues. According to state pension records Pucci receives a pension of \$135,841.

*More From New Jersey 101.5*



ThinkStock

Contact reporter Adam Hochron at 609-359-5326 or [Adam.Hochron@townsquaremedia.com](mailto:Adam.Hochron@townsquaremedia.com)

### Sign up for the NJ1015.com Newsletter

Get the best of NJ1015.com delivered to your inbox every day.

**Email**

**SUBMIT**