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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**ISLAND COUNTY PROSECUTOR FILES LAWSUIT TO**  
**OUST LANGLEY MAYOR FROM OFFICE**

**FROM:** Gregory Banks, Island County Prosecuting Attorney  
**CONTACT:** Michele Graaff, Office Administrator 360-240-5506 / m.graaff@co.island.wa.us  
**DATE:** December 20, 2012

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Today I initiated a Quo Warranto proceeding in Superior Court to enforce Washington's law that requires a person convicted of malfeasance of office to forfeit public office and be forever barred from holding public office. I filed the lawsuit against Langley Mayor Larry Kwarsick after he failed to step down from two public offices he holds in Island County, in violation of the law. Mayor Kwarsick is also the Town Planner for Coupeville.

On Monday, December 17, 2012, Mayor Kwarsick pleaded guilty to a charge of False Report by a Public Officer, under RCW 42.20.040. That charge constitutes malfeasance of office. It has been the law in Washington for over a century that those convicted of malfeasance of office cannot hold public office. Our State sets a high bar for the conduct of its public officials, and for good reason.

Mayor Kwarsick was advised of the forfeiture requirement in the charging document, to which he pled guilty. The State extended a plea offer, and complied with the State's end of the agreement. The unmistakable understanding was that Mr. Kwarsick would comply with the law and resign from his public offices. He should have resigned immediately after the plea. It has been three days, and he has not resigned. He is no longer eligible to hold either post.

Those elected and appointed to public office in Washington are entrusted to carry out the public's work without favoritism, and with honesty and integrity. When officials violate those standards in a criminal way, they are deemed to have forfeited their office. All of our State's public officials have the same ethical responsibility. Three days ago Mayor Kwarsick was found guilty of secretly breaking the law. Now he has the audacity to openly break the law. Even a popular mayor must follow the law.

It is distressing to me that some of Island County's elected officials are supportive of Mr. Kwarsick's decision to thumb his nose at the people of Island County, the Prosecuting Attorney,

KWARSICK PRESS RELEASE

December 20, 2012

Page 2

and the Superior Court. By emboldening him, they have undermined the objective work done by the justice system to punish criminals and keep our politicians clean.

The Prosecuting Attorney has authority, under RCW 7.56.020, to seek a legally binding Superior Court judgment declaring Mayor Kwarsick's disqualification from ever holding public office. I am charged with exercising my authority when I believe I have a duty do to so. Here, the principles involved are too important for me not to take action. It must be established with certainty and notoriety that all public officials must comply with the law.

Attached to this press release is the Information filed in Superior Court today.