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Supervisor Ousted After Racial Slur

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STAFF WRITER

Nassau County officials yesterday fired Linda Alberti, a labor supervisor in the department of public works who was caught on tape making racist remarks about a black employee.

During an Oct. 24 phone call that was secretly recorded by another public works employee, county officials say Alberti repeatedly used a racial slur to refer to Willie Warren, a

black equipment operator who filed previous grievances alleging racism in the public works department.

County Executive Thomas Suozzi, Warren and his lawyer, Hempstead-based civil rights attorney Fred Brewington, held a news conference after Alberti's dismissal.

Suozzi played the recording for a group of reporters, community leaders and lawmakers, who gathered in the hearing room at the Ralph G. Caso Executive and Legislative Building in Mineola.

On the tape, Alberti is heard

Nassau expanding probe into racial bias beyond county public works department

using a common racial slur seven different times to refer to Warren, with whom she had competed for a promotion.

The tape was secretly recorded by Andrew J. Petti Jr., Warren's super-

visor and an acquaintance of Alberti's. Petti gave the tape to Warren to aid his case.

"This tape illustrates conduct that is totally unacceptable," Suozzi said. "It evidences ignorance, hate and rac-

ist feelings."

Alberti refused to discuss the tape when questioned by a reporter on Friday, and she did not respond to requests to be interviewed yesterday.

Suozzi said he heard the tape late last week and immediately ordered an investigation. When Alberti was confronted with the recording on Friday, county officials said, she admitted making the remarks.

Warren, 36, said during the news conference that he was not shocked when he heard the tape because he has been the subject of racist comments throughout his tenure with the county.

He said he filed five union grievances and a complaint with the state Human Rights Division, saying that he had been denied promotions that went to less qualified candidates.

"They were saying that I was a disgruntled worker," Warren said. "Now the tape explains everything."

Suozzi said yesterday that he was expanding the county's investigation into Warren's case in an effort to find out how widespread bias is in Nassau's various departments. He said every county department would be examined.

Suozzi said Alberti's comments on the tape portray a public works department in which high ranking public works officials conspired to deny promotions to Warren.



Newsday Photo / Dick Yarwood
Linda Alberti



Newsday Photo / Jim Peppler

Willie Warren, left, County Executive Thomas Suozzi and attorney Fred Brewington discuss the firing yesterday of Linda Alberti after she was taped using a racial slur.