

Translated by Chat cpt:

The Soester Anzeiger violated journalistic principles throughout my entire term in office and continues to remain silent about the lies of the mayor to this day.

1. The Soester Anzeiger has known about the lies of the mayor and possibly other members of the supervisory board from the non-reappointment campaign since at least the summer of 2021 but remains silent, thus protecting him and possibly other supervisory board members from political consequences.
2. Throughout my entire term in office, I repeatedly tried to have my openly lived lesbian relationship included in the Soester Anzeiger as a matter of course. However, against my expressed wishes, the newspaper consistently kept silent about my relationship.

For example, Achim Kienbaum, as described above, replaced the wording "my life partner" in my press release with "a woman from Lippstadt" in the article on December 13, 2019, making my life partner and my lesbian relationship invisible.

Furthermore, an interview offer, in which I wanted to address not only my mid-term review but also the reluctance of Soest's politics towards me and my life partner in the spring of 2019, and in which the editor-in-chief Gökçen Stenzel was initially interested, ultimately did not materialize because the editor-in-chief did not respond.

3. On the day after my incriminating interview on June 22, 2020, Achim Kienbaum made the narratives of the mayor and his circle the focus of the reporting, for example:

- "All parties involved have made efforts in the past to establish a constructive and trusting cooperation with Ms. Prof. Dobberstein. She has now abandoned this path herself with her statements posted on Facebook."
- "Both WMS employees and Hänsch [then chairman of the supervisory board] assured that such allegations had 'never been addressed even once.'"

Achim Kienbaum even adopted the latter statement for himself. In his commentary, he wrote: "Her allegations are downright perfidious, as she uses an absolutely relevant social issue as a justification for her failure in Soest, claiming that reservations against her continued employment in politics are the result of homophobia and discrimination as a woman. Perfidious, because she is abusing an absolutely relevant societal issue as a justification for her failure in Soest. As a self-declared strong woman and leader, she had not only the opportunity but also the obligation, if only for the sake of her colleagues and employees, to address such experiences, at the very least. But she did not. After all, homophobia was supposedly 'palpable everywhere.'"

Achim Kienbaum knew that this narrative was false, as I had engaged in a written debate with him about his own homophobia just a few months earlier, with a copy sent to the mayor as well.

Before claiming that I had never addressed homophobia, he should have asked me if and, if so, to whom I had complained, but he did not. Furthermore, he did not question the obvious reversal of the perpetrator-victim narratives of the mayor and his circle and did not even wonder if my accusations were justified.

In his commentary, Kienbaum also

alleged that I had failed. Earlier in the text, it states: "But in her professional world, as a business developer, a 'constantly eager' comment in a mid-term report is not enough." The wording "constantly eager" comes from the language of job references and is used in the same way here. Translated, this phrase means a grade of "insufficient," synonymous with "has not achieved anything" (source: https://www.t-online.de/finanzen/beruf-karriere/beruf/id_71825108/arbeitszeugnis-geheimcode-entschluesseln-diese-noten-stecken-hinter-den-formulierungen.html). In reality, as documented in my performance record, which was available to the Soester Anzeiger according to the editor-in-chief Gökçen Stenzel, I achieved outstanding results and accomplished a great deal.

1. In the spring of 2017, there was a concerted campaign against me by the "Geschichtswerkstatt frz. Kapelle" association and the Soester Anzeiger newspaper. The Soester Anzeiger repeatedly attributed vulgar language to me and violated my copyright. These articles were later used by the supervisory board to insinuate an inappropriate tone for a municipal corporation and thus push for my non-reappointment.
4. In comments under the articles "Museen der Adam-Kaserne sollen unter das Dach ziehen" and "Wohnungen werden benötigt, um Soester Kasernenblock zu erhalten," I particularly objected to the vulgar language that was attributed to me.

The phrases attributed to me by Astrid Gunnemann and Holger Strumann also caused significant outrage among the association's chairwoman, Barbara Köster, and her circle. As a result, there were reader letters that the newspaper should never have published because they contained insults and defamation.

When I contacted the letter writers and sent them my original post, one letter

writer withdrew her insults and apologized:

However, Holger Strumann refused to publish this apology. The Soester Anzeiger also denied my request to respond to the letters published in their newspaper.

I then posted the following on the Soester Anzeiger's Facebook page under the title "Block 3, Adam-Kaserne: What the Soester Anzeiger Refuses to Publish":

"On March 30, I posted under the article 'Museen sollen unter das Dach' from the Soester Anzeiger, reporting some errors in the article and explaining why expanding the roof for the museums is a good solution. The Soester Anzeiger 'cobbled together' this post as an editorial titled 'alle-mal genug,' which caused so much upset that a series of reader letters appeared, mainly demanding respect for Ms. Köster.

In contrast, these letter writers treat me with more than disrespect. For example, Mr. Etter's first letter describes me and my statements as arrogant, disgusting, inappropriate both in terms of facts and humanity, and puts my professional title in quotation marks. Mr. Etter gives the impression that my approach is non-transparent, undemocratic, and that I am following my own, politically illegitimate agenda. Another letter writer, Ms. Radermacher, described my statements as malicious. Overall, all the letters depict me as a small economic developer who can barely handle an abacus and steamrolls culture and civic engagement.

This is not only disrespectful but much of it constitutes outright insults and defamation. I could pursue legal and civil action for this, but I have decided not to take this path for now. Instead, I have chosen to engage in dialogue with the letter writers and publicly present my perspective.

After I sent Ms. Radermacher my original post, she withdrew her letter to the Soester Anzeiger. She writes that she initially read the article "as if the critical attitude of the association was attributed to the age of its board members. Upon rereading the article and the information from Ms. Prof. Dr. Dobberstein, I can no longer see this connection and now understand the quote merely as a suggestion for a solution to the issue, and I withdraw the accusation of malice."

Unfortunately, the Soester Anzeiger is not willing to publish this retraction. Likewise, they refuse to publish my response to Mr. Etter's letter. Therefore, here are the key points from my response letter:

- I have respect for the work of Ms. Köster and the Geschichtswerkstatt!

This can be seen in the following story: Shortly before the decision had to be made whether Blocks 4-7 could be preserved, there was an investor interested in Blocks 2-5. There was a chance to save Blocks 4 + 5. However, I had made it a condition for the investor that they must expand the attic of Block 3 for the Geschichtswerkstatt, and I was willing to deduct the expansion costs from the purchase price. Nevertheless, the investor backed out. So, I was willing to sacrifice two monuments for the Geschichtswerkstatt.

- I am not following my own agenda but rather a resolution of the council!

There is a purchase resolution for the Adam-Kaserne, which stipulates that the WMS should examine the retention of the current users, but this should not be subsidized.

- Since the Geschichtswerkstatt cannot remain in the building without substantial subsidies, this

essentially meant closure! Precisely because I value the Geschichtswerkstatt, I still looked for a solution. However, the expansion of the attic will cost at least €500,000. This investment goes far beyond the purchase resolution and must be legitimized in politics and the public.

Among other things, the Geschichtswerkstatt will have to answer who will ensure the long-term operation. This question is all the more justified as the members of the board are of retirement age.

A foundation is a classic way to secure the work independently of individuals. When I hinted at the possibilities of cooperation between the Geschichtswerkstatt and the Bürgerstiftung in the Soester Anzeiger, I by no means intended to sideline Ms. Köster or suggest that I am waiting for her to die. This interpretation of my post is absurd!

- I informed the political parties early on about my considerations, even before the Geschichtswerkstatt. When a concept is developed - of course, in cooperation with the Geschichtswerkstatt - it will be voted on in the WMS supervisory board, the HFA, and the council. This is not undemocratic but rather representative democracy!
- I have been in contact with the 60 users of the Adam-Kaserne for 7 months. Despite all the hardships I had to impose on them, I was always honest and transparent with them. Up until the conversation with Ms. Köster, they all appreciated this.

I have also made all the information public: The renovation of Block 3, including the land, will cost approximately €4.5 million, and the expansion of the attic will cost an additional €500,000. If Block 3 cannot be

used for subsidized housing, then the WMS will have to provide 3 more plots to the housing company elsewhere, resulting in reduced income of €300,000. More transparency is not possible!

In my view, Mr. Etter, Ms. Köster, and the Soester Anzeiger have discredited themselves:

- Mr. Etter, because he did not hesitate to resort to insults and defamation.
- Ms. Köster, because she did not distance herself from the reader letters written in her support.
- The Soester Anzeiger, because it reported one-sidedly and without commentary, consistently favoring the Geschichtswerkstatt. It was even willing to publish Mr. Etter's inflammatory and defamatory writing, enhancing it with the headline "inappropriate both in terms of facts and humanity," while denying me the opportunity for a correction.

Prof. Dr. Monika Dobberstein

5. *The Soester Anzeiger repeatedly published uncritically what those who were pushing for my removal or non-re-appointment dictated to it.*

Example 1: "Scandal in the Supervisory Board of WMS"

In violation of their confidentiality obligations, which are punishable by a fine or imprisonment of up to one year, members of the supervisory board leaked many details about the cost increase of the Gewerbe- und Industriegebiet Wasserfuhr (commercial and industrial area Wasserfuhr) from a supervisory board meeting to the Soester Anzeiger. However, they spun it falsely, portraying the cost increase of the commercial area as a scandal.

This narrative was continued later: the supervisory board conveyed that I had kept silent about the fact that a better result was achieved after the supervisory board rejected the resolutions proposed in the October meeting. This insinuates, and thus establishes the implicit claim, that the supervisory board had legitimate factual criticism of my concept for the Gewerbe- und Industriegebiet Wasserfuhr and that the meeting was postponed to a date one month later because I was instructed to revise the concept. This is a false claim, a lie.

The cost increase occurred because originally only 10 hectares were planned for development, but in the meantime, in conjunction with a neighboring municipality, an expansion to 80 hectares was sought. This required a changed road layout and larger-scale infrastructure for supply and disposal. The cost increase was therefore well-founded and was not a subject of criticism.

The "scandal," if one wishes to follow this choice of wording by Achim Kienbaum, was triggered by my proposal to raise land prices. The supervisory board did not want to take responsibility for this, especially a particular biased supervisory board member who is not named here.

"The supervisory board instructs Prof. Dr. Dobberstein to start discussions with the interested parties with the aim of obtaining their willingness to accept the increase to €59.00 until the next supervisory board meeting. The results of these discussions shall be presented on November 30, 2018. Only then will the supervisory board decide on a price increase." The closing of the minutes states: "WMS is tasked with clarifying with the existing property interests to what extent they are willing to accept a price increase to €59.00/m² by €7.00/m²."

It is true that after this meeting, I took the initiative to discard the existing plans, had the road layout and cost estimates re-planned, relocated the plots of the interested parties, and negotiated these changes and the increase in purchase prices. All of this, and more, happened in less than two weeks, including during the days of the All Saints' Fair, when work is typically not

done in Soest. I even negotiated purchase prices of €70.00/m² with new interested parties, which is expected to result in the commercial area closing with at least a break-even budget, which is unusual. Commercial and industrial areas are usually initially a cost factor for municipalities and only become profitable through later business tax revenues.

So this was a highlight of my term in office, but the Soester Anzeiger did not report on it.

Example 2: "Ban on Out-of-Town Asparagus Vendors Will Have Consequences in the Supervisory Board"

The background of the controversy was that WMS had not allowed two out-of-town asparagus farmers who sold their produce directly from their car trunks to participate in the weekly market in order to protect local vendors who endured the cold, wind, and rain throughout the year with their elaborate stands and whose seasonal business was being taken away by seasonal vendors.

The controversy began on Saturday, March 30, 2019, when an out-of-town asparagus farmer collected signatures against her non-admission to the market without prior notice. This led to an initial uproar on Facebook, which I immediately responded to and managed to calm down on that Saturday. A user wrote: "This is a great, detailed explanation that leaves no questions unanswered. It's also nice that something like this is answered on a Saturday evening (!). Everyone can calm down now ;-)"

Early that day, I also proactively informed the city editorial department of the Soester Anzeiger about the excitement on Facebook. As a result, there was an initial, still calm, article.

Only when the then Chairman of the Supervisory Board, Jochem, went public and publicly withdrew his trust in me over this trivial matter did the campaign begin, and the issue was sensationalized on the front page of the local section for days with the active involvement of supervisory board members. The level of

excitement generated by the Soester Anzeiger with its reporting on the asparagus affair, with the active help of supervisory board members, was downright hysterical. This is confirmed by an email I received on April 4, 2019, from Horst Bresan of UnnaMarketing GmbH:

"I am following the reporting on the Soest weekly market in the local press attentively and at the same time shaking my head. However, I can confirm your decision: in Unna, over 10 years ago, we no longer allowed so-called seasonal vendors for asparagus and strawberries on the Unna markets. This regulation led to the stabilization of year-round vendors, and investments were made in appropriate technology (such as peeling machines) and expanded offerings (e.g., fruit smoothies). [...]"

When the Supervisory Board Chairman Jochem went public, he even acknowledged that, as Chairman of the Supervisory Board, he was subject to the obligation of confidentiality and then spoke, supposedly in a particularly creative interpretation of his duty of confidentiality, as Chairman of the Soester Wirtschaft (Soest Business Association). But even as the vsw (Soest Business Association) Chairman, he held an unusual view, namely, the protection of out-of-town asparagus farmers. This does not at all correspond to the usual opinion of Martin Jochem, who, as the "chief lobbyist" of Soest's business community, is always ready to protect local vendors. Therefore, it is to be assumed that he gave this interview intentionally to damage me.

The next day, during the supervisory board meeting, I skipped the management report, instead presented my outstanding mid-term review, and addressed the inappropriate treatment I had received. The supervisory board now disputes this course of the meeting and claims that I only requested a general discussion of the collaboration between me and the supervisory board. This is also a lie. The minutes of this supervisory board meeting state:

"[...] she asks the question: how does the supervisory board envision future collaboration? She is repeatedly rebuffed in supervisory board

meetings and supervisory board members participated in a petition campaign against the managing director by asparagus vendors on March 30th at the market in Soest. The chairman of the supervisory board publicly withdrew his trust in her in the press. All of this in the context of a trivial matter. In addition, internal matters are repeatedly leaking to her detriment. She does an excellent job, but the way the supervisory board deals with her is in stark contrast. On the simultaneously available presentation slide, she announces that she will not leave voluntarily and wants to fight for her job. Because one thing must be clear to everyone, if you separate after 2 years, unplanned, she will never get another job for the rest of her professional life. The supervisory board is ending her career and destroying her existence."

The protocol continues as follows:

"Several members of the supervisory board share the opinion that the treatment of the managing director is not correct. One supervisory board member referred to the behavior as bullying."

It is inconceivable that Achim Kienbaum did not inquire the next day about what had happened in the meeting, and given his close contacts within the supervisory board, it is inconceivable that he did not find out what had transpired there. However, he did not report on it.

Publicly, I concluded the affair with the following post:

Political Discourse

In the discussion regarding the admission of two asparagus farmers, the debate over a minor issue has spun out of control.

We make such decisions hundreds of times a year. The Christmas market alone has over 120 stalls and many more applications. How do those who participated in the wave of outrage envision the future? Should we decide whether a stall is allowed at one of our markets through annual referendums?

Our decision was and remains correct from every conceivable perspective.

We used the exact same concept to make the Christmas market successful. To this day, we carefully select the assortment for each stall and only allow as many stalls as are economically viable for the vendors. This is how the Christmas market became attractive to more and more merchants, and it continued to grow. Today, according to Der Spiegel, it is the most beautiful Christmas market in North Rhine-Westphalia. Shopping centers operate on the same principle, and no customer feels patronized in them.

After taking over the weekly market, my team simply followed what other, more successful weekly markets had been doing for a long time. The success of this measure will be widely recognized when the weekly market has been managed by my team for a longer period. This will take a few years, especially as we have to work against a general downward spiral in weekly markets. The Christmas market also had to develop year by year for ten years.

My staff are professionals: They made the Christmas market one of the most attractive in the country, the Fehde is one of the top 5 reenactment events in Europe, with Winterstrahlen, they conceived an event this year that immediately garnered regional attention, the number of participants in Sattel-fest is so large that the streets reach their capacity limits, the Kneipenfestival is sold out every year, and the Winzermarkt, ProbierBar, Bördetag, Bördebauernmarkt, Stoffmärkte, and Altstadtfrühling regularly attract many visitors to the city center. Many, even larger cities, admire Soest for its event calendar. Therefore, my staff deserve the trust that they will also lead the weekly market to success.

The decision not to admit non-local asparagus farmers was correct. Equally correct was the decision to postpone the measure

because a rational discussion was no longer possible within the ongoing wave of outrage.

We have contributed to deescalating the situation with this. I would wish that there is a fundamental discussion about our political culture. We seem to have arrived in a time where expert knowledge no longer counts, decision-makers are labeled as corrupt and autocratic, and experts are accused of being bought, and looking to other cities for best-practice examples is considered hostile infiltration.

When only emotions form the basis of decision-making, the door is wide open for populists. Soest will not get the best of all possible policies, not the best of all possible management decisions, and even the best experts will no longer want to work in or for Soest.

Example 3: Holding Back Purchase Prices by Candycorn to Obtain Million-Dollar Concessions

When the purchase prices for Blocks 4, 5, and 7 of the Adam Barracks became due, Candycorn strategically and purposefully withheld the purchase prices to obtain million-dollar concessions (contaminants, monument protection, Block 3) to which they had no entitlement.

In the articles "Is Munich Company Buying Block 3 Now?" and "Why Progress with Adam Barracks Blocks Is Slow and Soest City Council Must Make a Decision on What to Do with the Old Barracks," Achim Kienbaum reported on the withholding of purchase prices and the reasons behind it (remediation of contaminants, monument protection), and the fact that Candycorn also wanted to acquire Block 3.

However, even though Achim Kienbaum had scandalized the non-admission of two non-local asparagus farmers at the weekly market in large headlines just a few weeks earlier, he downplayed the withholding of several million euros as a mere formality, initially, and later as normal saber-rattling in any real estate deal.

I believe that these articles were deliberately steered to convince (supervisory) board

members that it posed no obstacle to sell Block 3 to an investor who had not paid for the first three blocks, and that only I overreacted by deeming such behavior as unprofessional.

I considered any negotiation over million-dollar concessions unnecessary because I had sold the first three blocks to Candycorn only under the condition that WMS assumed no liability for any legacy issues and that the investor provided WMS with guarantees equal to the purchase prices. In addition to the guarantees, I held an enforceable copy of the purchase agreements in my hands. This is how I ensured that the purchase prices were paid out against Candycorn's wishes, without WMS or the city making a single concession. And I found a buyer for Block 3 who - if you compare the offers on an equal basis (including contractual penalties for non-compliance with the price-fixing of half of the apartments) - paid five times the paltry price that Candycorn wanted to acquire the block for.

These were also highlights of my term in office. And, surprise, as always, Achim Kienbaum did not report on my successes."

Press Council

I lodged a complaint with the Press Council about the coverage in the Soester Anzeiger the day after my interview, which was subsequently rejected. In response to this rejection, on May 6, 2021, my attorney filed a complaint on my behalf, which I would like to quote verbatim:

Dear Mrs. Eick,

I would like to take the opportunity to respond comprehensively to your letter dated May 4, 2021, on behalf of Prof. Dr. Monika Dobberstein:

1. *The entire process of the review presents some anomalies:*
 - a. *The review period of 8 weeks for a mere preliminary examination, during which only the question of whether a complaint is not obviously unfounded is considered, appears excessively long*

even under the most generous interpretation. This raises at least the question of whether the German Press Council, as a self-regulatory body of the German press, may have intentionally delayed the complaint examination in my client's case with the aim of finding a way not to address the complaint. In the era of the MeToo movement, it is clear that my client's complaint is a sensitive matter for all involved parties.

- b. After informing my client on May 4, 2021, in response to her inquiry, that no preliminary examination had taken place thus far, and upon her subsequent notification that she had now submitted her complaint online, a thorough examination evidently occurred on the same day, going far beyond a preliminary examination. You, in your letter dated May 4, 2021, also no longer use the term "preliminary examination." Instead, you write, for example, "We are of the opinion that the criticism of your behavior and handling of the non-renewal of the contract remains within the bounds of freedom of expression, is factual, and does not cross the line into defamation." Consequently, you delve deep into the legal evaluation of the matter and no longer merely assess the apparent lack of grounds for the complaint but its merits. Due to the complexity of the required balancing decisions and the potentially far-reaching consequences for the complainant, the examination of the merits is a matter for the Complaints Committee as a collegial body. Therefore, my client's complaint, in our opinion, was not obviously unfounded and should have been submitted to the competent Complaints Committee for discussion and decision-making.*

That you believed you could resolve the - once again, not obviously unfounded - complaint through a staff decision, as if on the fast track, gives the impression that, in this case, the German Press Council is willing to pull out all the stops to avoid a confrontation with one of the major publishing houses, the Ippen

Group.

- 2. Your justification also relies on many misconceptions about facts:*
- a. You claim that the Soester Anzeiger provided my client with an opportunity to respond before the disputed articles were written and published. This assertion is incorrect. My client was given the opportunity to respond after (supervisory) council members had leaked the impending non-renewal to the Soester Anzeiger, but not before she had made allegations of misogyny and homophobia, among others. She was not asked, for instance, whether and, if so, to whom she had made these allegations before the non-renewal, which the Soester Anzeiger insinuated in a commentary by editor Kienbaum, with the insidious implication that she was cynically exploiting a socially relevant issue to distract from her poor performance.*
- b. You further claim that both perspectives on homophobia were presented in the coverage. This assertion is also incorrect. Prof. Dr. Dobberstein had sought discussions with leading Soest politicians, including the Green Party faction leaders, their deputies, the former city association chairwoman, and the deputy faction leader of the SPD since 2016. She also discussed the homophobic atmosphere within Soest politics with the chief editor of the SA and brought up an equally homophobic article by editor Kienbaum from December 13, 2019, to him. The mayor of Soest was copied on these correspondences, so he was aware of the extent of the marginalization and discrimination my client and her partner suffered within Soest politics. Furthermore, my client discussed the issue of homophobia in Soest politics and within the WMS workforce several times with the WMS Prokuristin, Birgitt Moessing, who subsequently, in agreement with my client, approached the homophobic WMS employees with these discussions.*

The Soester Anzeiger uncritically reported the mayor's claim that the council and supervisory board had always strived for a confidential collaboration, which was also an untruth (commonly known as a lie). Moreover, the editor was likely aware that confidential details from supervisory board meetings were consistently leaked to the Soester Anzeiger by members of the business and marketing company in order to sensationalize these confidential details in a manner consistent with the Soester Anzeiger's standard practice. The leaking of confidential content from supervisory board meetings to the press is not a whimsical activity of attention-seeking evening politicians in a legal vacuum; it is a criminal offense under § 89 I GmbHG. Because editor Kienbaum had repeatedly been both a witness and a beneficiary of severe - and also criminal - breaches of duty by Soest local politicians concerning my client and her company, he could easily recognize that the central claim made by the mayor, which was crucial to the narrative he desired, was false and should have been at least critically examined.

- c. *You further contend that my client must accept that her actions are the subject of criticism. For once, this assertion is correct. However, my client does not have to accept untrue factual claims that are capable of damaging her public*

reputation and destroying her livelihood. The allegations that she accepted were publicized - that one should bear in mind - but in public are false and existentially destructive factual claims. The assertion that her actions have always been open to criticism does not, however, excuse the malicious reproduction of false, reputation-damaging factual claims, which, if believed, could destroy a person's life and potentially lead them to commit suicide. Such allegations cannot be qualified as responsible journalism, regardless of your perspective.

In light of the above, I would like to request that you reconsider the outcome of your "preliminary examination" with a degree of self-criticism.

Furthermore, I would like to inform you that my client approached the media magazine Zapp on May 4, 2021. She will not forward your letter dated May 4, 2021, at this time, to provide you with an opportunity to reconsider your judgment.

Yours sincerely

*Claudia Nassibulin MBA
Rechtsanwältin + Wirtschaftsmediatorin*

The Press Council didn't change its opinion.

PS: I hereby prohibit the Soester Anzeiger and other representatives of the press from directly or indirectly quoting or making the content of this compilation, in whole or in part, the subject of their reporting.