

Former town clerk sued

- **Ex-aide in Hempstead** claims sexual harassment
- **Mark Bonilla was convicted** of official misconduct

BY PATRICK WHITTLE

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A former aide to fired Hempstead Town Clerk Mark Bonilla has filed a federal lawsuit against Bonilla and the town claiming he subjected her to repeated sexual harassment when she worked for him.

The lawsuit claims Bonilla made comments to the woman that "were sexual in nature and created an intimidating, hostile and offensive work environment." The aide, who now works for Hempstead in a

different department, is seeking unspecified damages.

Bonilla was convicted in July of one count of official misconduct but acquitted of another count of official misconduct, one count of coercion and a count of attempted petty larceny. The trial centered on allegations Bonilla tried to obtain intimate photos of the woman who had earlier accused him of sexual harassment.

"This young lady, courageously, decided to take a stand and seek retribution for pain and suffering that she ex-

perienced, allegedly, by him and the town," said her attorney, Steven Mitchell Sack of East Meadow.

Bonilla was sentenced in October to 300 hours of community service. He had been removed from office in August. Bonilla could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Hempstead Town spokesman Mike Deery declined to comment on the lawsuit.

The filing details numerous comments Bonilla allegedly made to the woman, including at a town event where he told her, "You can't yell at men for hitting on you" and "you have to be available to them and sell yourself to them."

The lawsuit also states that Bonilla gave the woman an un-

wanted job reassignment after she refused his advances. The filing states that Bonilla told her: "You need to prove yourself to me. How badly you want this job. If you come back, I need to see a change in you. I need to see you're mine."

The lawsuit, filed in U.S. District Court in Central Islip on Tuesday, also states that the woman believes she was discriminated against at work because of her gender.

It is the second federal civil suit brought against Bonilla and the town since his conviction. A lawsuit filed in September by another former aide states that Bonilla made unwanted sexual advances toward her as well.