**Fox News Settled Sexual Harassment Allegations Against Bill OReilly, Documents Show - The New York Times**

In the weeks after Roger Ailes was ousted as the chairman of Fox News in July amid a sexual harassment scandal, company executives secretly struck an agreement with a longtime broadcast personality who had come forward with similar accusations about the networks top host, Bill OReilly. The employee, Juliet Huddy, had said that Mr. OReilly pursued a sexual relationship with her in 2011, at a time he exerted significant influence over her career. When she rebuffed his advances, he tried to derail her career, according to a draft of a letter from her lawyers to Fox News that was obtained by The New York Times. The letter includes allegations that Mr. OReilly had called Ms. Huddy repeatedly and that it sometimes sounded as if he was masturbating. He invited her to his house on Long Island, tried to kiss her, took her to dinner and the theater, and after asking her to return a key to his hotel room, appeared at the door in his boxer shorts, according to the letter. In exchange for her silence and agreement not to sue, she was paid a sum in the high six figures, according to people briefed on the agreement. The agreement was between Ms. Huddy, 47, and 21st Century Fox, the parent company of Fox News. The company and Mr. OReillys lawyer said her allegations were false. In the aftermath of Mr. Ailess departure, executives declared that such behavior would never again be tolerated. Mr. OReilly, 67, has continued to host his show on weekdays at 8 p. m. and has published two more books. Details about the allegations and the agreement between Ms. Huddy and 21st Century Fox are based on interviews with current and former Fox News employees, the letter written by her lawyers to the company, and three pages from the draft of the settlement agreement. The letter was mailed anonymously in December to reporters for The Times its authenticity was verified by several people who have been briefed on it. A person close to Ms. Huddy told The Times that she shared accounts of Mr. OReillys unwanted advances at the time they occurred. Lawnewz. com first reported the existence of the agreement Monday afternoon. In the letter, lawyers for Ms. Huddy also said that a longtime Fox executive, Jack Abernethy, had retaliated against her professionally after she made clear that she was not interested in a personal relationship. Representatives for Fox News and Mr. OReilly dismissed the allegations Monday night. The letter contains substantial falsehoods, which both men have vehemently denied, Irena Briganti, a spokeswoman for Fox News, said in a statement. Speaking for Mr. OReilly, Fredric S. Newman, his lawyer, said, There is absolutely no basis for any claim of sexual harassment against Bill OReilly by Juliet Huddy.  Jeanne M. Christensen, a lawyer for Ms. Huddy at Wigdor L. L. P. declined to comment. Ms. Huddy made her allegations known to Fox News in the letter her lawyers sent to the network in August. The settlement was reached on Sept. 5, at a time when the company was completing other agreements, including one with Gretchen Carlson, the former anchor whose sexual harassment suit forced the departure of Mr. Ailes. (Mr. Ailes has denied allegations of sexual harassment.) The company has not reached an agreement with Andrea Tantaros, another TV personality who raised similar complaints about network executives. About a month before Mr. Ailes resigned, Fox News offered Ms. Tantaros nearly $1 million for her silence and a promise not to sue the network, its executives or its employees, including Mr. OReilly, according to a draft of a proposed agreement. Ms. Tantaros rejected the offer and filed suit against the company in August. Mr. OReilly has a towering presence at Fox News. He was close to Mr. Ailes, and his show generated about $180 million in advertising in 2015, according to Kantar Media, an firm. He was also viewed by employees and program hosts as an influential figure in the newsroom he was the gatekeeper to time on his show, and his support could be crucial to advancement. But Mr. OReilly had run into problems before. In 2004, a producer on his show, Andrea Mackris, sued him, asserting that he had made unwanted sexual advances and lewd comments in a series of phone calls and dinner conversations. According to the suit, Mr. OReilly told her on multiple occasions to buy a vibrator, called her when it sounded as if he was masturbating, and described various sexual fantasies. After two weeks of sensational headlines in New Yorks tabloid newspapers, Mr. OReilly settled for millions of dollars, according to people briefed on the agreement. Both sides said that no wrongdoing had occurred. According to the letter in Ms. Huddys case, her lawyers said that Mr. OReilly began sexually harassing her in 2011. She started her career at Fox News in 1998 as a reporter based in Miami and went on to be a host of a syndicated morning show in New York that was canceled in 2009. In the months afterward, Ms. Huddy tried to find a landing place at the network and appeared as a guest on Mr. OReillys show. Ms. Huddys father, John Huddy Sr. who was a confidant of Mr. Ailes and a consultant to Fox News, left the network in July. Her brother, John Huddy Jr. continues to work there as a correspondent based in Jerusalem. In January 2011, Mr. OReilly invited Ms. Huddy to lunch near his home in Manhasset on Long Island, according to the letter. After lunch, he drove her back to his home, where he showed her every room, including his bedroom, and his collection of presidential memorabilia. To shock and disgust, as Ms. Huddy was saying goodbye to Mr. OReilly, he quickly moved in and kissed her on the lips, the letter said. Ms. Huddy was so taken aback and repulsed that she instinctively recoiled and actually fell to the ground. Mr. OReilly, looking amused, did not even help Ms. Huddy up.  The next week, Mr. OReilly asked her to join him for dinner at the Harvard Club, followed by a Broadway show, according to the letter and to current and former Fox News employees. Ms. Huddy was not interested in having a romantic relationship with Mr. OReilly but, the letter said, she felt compelled to comply with Mr. OReillys request, given that he had total control over her work assignment.  During the Broadway show, according to the letter, Mr. OReilly moved close to Ms. Huddy in a way that made her feel uncomfortable. He tried to hold her hand, but she pulled it away. Then he dropped a key to the room at a Midtown Manhattan hotel he was staying at into her lap, and told her to meet him there after the show. He stood up and left, the letter said. Ms. Huddy went to the hotel to return Mr. OReillys key, according to the letter. She asked him to meet her in the lobby, but he refused and asked her to join him in his room. Ms. Huddy declined and explained that she was not interested in Mr. OReilly on a personal or sexual level, the letter said. Mr. OReilly persisted and again asked that Ms. Huddy come up to his room, and she ultimately went up to give him the key, according to the letter. When Mr. OReilly opened the door to his room, he was wearing only boxer shorts, according to the letter. Ms. Huddy was very embarrassed, handed Mr. OReilly his key and quickly left, the letter said. In the months after Mr. OReilly and Ms. Huddy went to the show in Manhattan, his obsession with her only escalated, the letter said. Mr. OReilly started calling Ms. Huddy at all hours, even while he was on vacation. At times, the calls were about work, but they were sometimes highly inappropriate and sexual, the letter said. On some occasions, it sounded as if Mr. OReilly was masturbating, the letter said. Disgusted, Ms. Huddy came up with an excuse and hung up the phone, the letter said. As Mr. OReillys pursuit continued, Ms. Huddy answered and returned fewer of his calls. Ms. Huddys rejection of Mr. OReilly apparently did not sit well with him, as he began to retaliate against her both on and off air, the letter said. Mr. OReilly nitpicked her work and would berate Ms. Huddy for minor mistakes, according to the letter. Mr. OReilly stopped preparing her for segments and would surprise her with story angles that they had not discussed. In 2013, Ms. Huddy was replaced on one segment of his show. Another segment that she was featured in, called Mad as Hell, was canceled. She did not complain, fearing retaliation, she told current and former Fox News employees at the time. The letter also included a series of accusations by Ms. Huddy against Mr. Abernethy, including that he started trashing her after she rejected his attempts to pursue a personal relationship. Mr. Abernethy signed a new multiyear contract with Fox News in September, after having been named a president of the network in August. At the time, the company was aware of the allegations against Mr. Abernethy, which it has said are false. As part of Ms. Huddys confidential agreement with 21st Century Fox, she agreed not to disparage, malign or defame the parties the company, on its behalf and on the behalf of Mr. OReilly and Mr. Abernethy, agreed not to disparage, malign or defame Ms. Huddy. The consequences for breaking confidentiality are severe, costing either side $500, 000 per infringement, according to the document. Ms. Huddy is also liable if her lawyers or a person close to her discloses the terms of the agreement. On Sept. 7, Ms. Huddy, who had hosted Good Day Early Call on WNYW, a Fox affiliate, went on the station and gave a tearful goodbye. Thank you to everyone who has made the last 20 years the most challenging but best of my life, she said. Perhaps someday, even someday soon, youll see me on television again. 

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