

Open Letter to the Candia Municipal Budget Committee

I'm here tonight to speak to your committee about your minutes of May 8, 2013. I'm not here to debate, or even necessarily discuss them with you. My only purpose is to provide you with information regarding my personal reaction after reading them.

Minutes are, by law, governmental records and public documents. As such, they are kept in perpetuity. Their primary purpose, under the law, is to provide a record for the court of the actions taken by a public body at a specific point in time. As we're all aware, or should be, they are also current and future historical resource material. Given just our current levels of technology, whatever we say and do today will be publicly available and subject to review, interpretation and judgment by those that come after us. We are currently in the process of making copies of the Candia Town Reports readily accessible on the town website, going back as far as the late 1800's. It's makes fascinating reading.

It's my understanding that your May 8, 2013 minutes were transcribed from a tape of that meeting by your former Recording Secretary, immediately prior to her resignation. As such I viewed them as a verbatim record of both the discussions that took place as well as the "sense of the meeting" that can only be captured by actually attending or being familiar with the individuals participating and the matters being discussed. I didn't attend your April meeting but I'd read the minutes earlier this month, understood the issues discussed and noted the political posturing common immediately after an election. I've been at this since 1982, respect the first amendment rights to free speech, understand and accept that elected officials have to put up with public displays of displeasure that the general public doesn't have to. Hopefully, we all understand that difference. In reading your May meeting minutes, my sense of that meeting was that some of your discussions went beyond acceptable limits, even to the point of defamation, of not just several present and past elected officials, but of the entire administration of town government.

Despite concerns raised by other individuals, it's only been two days since I was able to actually read the minutes and fully comprehend their concerns. Again, I'm not here to debate the issue, just provide you with some information that may help us move forward. I've had discussions about the issue with Town Counsel. I've spoken with your Chairman, who also is a lawyer. He and I discussed, and agreed, that there is a difference between the discussion of process and politics. I also understand that my political sensibilities are significantly more sensitive than those of the general public. Again, I've been at this for a long time. I have more experience, education and institutional knowledge about public affairs and town government than most. I'm also a practical, prudent and reasonable individual.

I will be further reviewing your minutes and will, in the future, provide you what information I can, to explain the issues raised and refute what I perceive as politically motivated allegations of impropriety on the part of past town administration. I do want to state, categorically, that the information provided to the State of NH, the public and the Candia Town Meeting about fiscal year 2012 was, to the best of my knowledge and belief, as complete, accurate and timely as was humanely possible given the circumstances we labored under. I also have information for each of you tonight that will, hopefully provide you with additional knowledge about the issues raised.

I don't know where this issue is going from here, because I can't predict the future. But, it's my personal opinion that this political graffiti (for lack of a more salient phrase which might be politically offensive) is consuming an inordinate amount of our time and energy that could be spent in more productive efforts to improve the functioning of our town government. I will also tell you that it is impeding the effective implementation of necessary public services and it is costing the town money. The message is very simple. Cooperation will yield more positive results for the town than contention.

6/12/2013

Subject: Departmental Responsibilities

From: "Richard H. Snow" <rherbertsnow@netscape.net>

Date: 6/10/2013 10:18 AM

To: Carleton Robie <AHansen@TownofCandia.org>

CC: Fred Kelley <bosfredk@yahoo.com>, Dave DePuy <david.depuy@me.com>, Amanda Soares <soaresama@yahoo.com>, Matt Broadhead <mtbroadhead@gmail.com>

BCC: rherbertsnow@netscape.net

Carleton...

I've been reviewing our recent minutes, MBC minutes and the agenda for tonight. I see that we have an item on the agenda regarding the Moore Highway Fund. Based on four years of participating in discussions and decisions on our board, I first want to make it clear to you that I am the liaison to the Road Agent and that he and I will make the decisions about all matters under his jurisdiction, with the concurrence of the **Full Board**, if and when necessary. Please refrain from interfering in the operation of the department. If you have any issues with that department, discuss them with me first. The only reasons that I haven't told him not to discuss matters with you are that he is an elected official with specific statutory duties and responsibilities and I neither micromanage as a manager, nor do I feel a need to with this department. The Road Agent does a marvelous job of taking care of our roads within his budget. If I had any complaint, it would be that we don't adequately fund the highway budget.

Second, you are the Selectmen's representative to the MBC, not the MBC's representative to the Board of Selectmen. Please stop criticizing past decisions and denigrating specific individuals. Even a cursory review of last years numbers shows that the efforts of **ALL** parties last year resulted in almost a half million dollar increase in the unreserved fund balance. Further, the standard procedure for the MBC/BOS interface is that the questions/concerns of the MBC get brought back to the BOS. I haven't heard of any of these concerns from you. If you need information or assistance understanding, feel free to contact me, but don't speak for me. I've been at this since 1982 and I do have some degree of experience and expertise. Please also carry the message to the MBC that each of our boards have different duties and responsibilities and that cooperation will yield more positive results for the town than contention.