

June 20, 2022

Andrew and Deborah,

Per my complaint and by law (1VSA §314) the Weston Conservation Commission had 10 calendar days to respond publicly to my allegation of violations of Vermont's Open Meeting Law. To respond publicly means responding in an open meeting, even if it requires calling a Special meeting to do so. After that public response, the Conservation Commission would have had 14 calendar days to cure any violations.

Responding to complaints of Open Meeting Law violations must be done in an open meeting. Determining if violations occurred and deciding if those violations may have been inadvertent must be done in an open meeting. Review of meetings affected by violations and curing those violations must be done in an open meeting. Adopting measures to ensure future compliance must be done in an open meeting.

Your response is the antithesis of an open meeting. Please do not let this become something it is not and do not make it more difficult than it already is. Call a meeting, post an agenda, and gather a quorum. Determine if any violations were inadvertent, cure them, and move on. It would be an important first step toward addressing some of the issues affecting the Conservation Commission.

As a courtesy, I am resetting the 10 day clock for a public response to my complaint to start today, June 20, 2022, at 12:00 noon.

In your letter, you ask for a specific suggestion regarding a training session on requirements of the Open Meeting Law. As the co-chairs of a public body, that is your responsibility, not mine. The Vermont League of Cities and Towns would be a good place to start. Check the Secretary of State's website. Ask the Selectboard. I will not do your homework for you.

The same goes for the adoption of policies and procedures to ensure future compliance, although the last sentence of your letter is very nearly a policy statement that is ready for adoption during an open meeting. Again, the Vermont League of Cities and Towns would be a good place to start, as would the Weston Planning Commission's bylaws or the policies and procedures adopted by hundreds of other boards and commissions across the state.

Not only did I provide copies of statutes at the June 2nd meeting, I also offered ways to address this issue proactively. In response, I was interrupted, cussed at repeatedly, and told that the Conservation Commission didn't need policies. I find the implication that I have somehow not done enough to be as insulting as the language that was used toward me during that meeting. You are the co-chairs of the Conservation Commission; the obligation to do more is yours.

Your reluctance to put forth anything more than a token effort to resolve this is deeply frustrating and more than a little disappointing. I believe the Selectboard expects better. The Conservation Commission certainly deserves better, as do the residents of Weston.

Please convene and conduct the required meeting before noon on June 30th.



Ken Hall
P.O. Box 31
Weston, VT 05161
802-824-5130
hall.kenneth.e@gmail.com