

## Scott Chapman

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**From:** Michael Dubreuil <dubreuilm@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 25, 2024 7:42 PM  
**To:** Scott Chapman; Karen Belding; John Thomas; Mike Hayes; Mike Egan; Tim Vaillancourt  
**Subject:** Fwd: BOF Correspondence

FYI... the group email didn't work.

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Michael Dubreuil <[dubreuilm@gmail.com](mailto:dubreuilm@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** Sun, Feb 25, 2024 at 10:48 AM  
**Subject:** BOF Correspondence  
**To:** <[bof@colchesterct.gov](mailto:bof@colchesterct.gov)>  
**Cc:** Scott Chapman <[schapman@colchesterct.gov](mailto:schapman@colchesterct.gov)>

To the Board of Finance,

On February 21, 2024 the Board of Finance held Budget Forum #1. One of the topics of discussion was how the BOE budget was presented to the BOF. I think some board members wanted finer detail and others felt the BOE could provide their budget in whatever format the BOE would prefer.

Conn. Gen. Stat. Sec. 7-344, reads in part, "*The board shall prescribe the method by which and the place where all records and books of accounts of the town, or of any department or subdivision thereof, shall be kept.*"

Conn. Gen. Stat. Sec. 7-345, reads "Each town agency which has expended any appropriation during the past year or is requesting any appropriation for the ensuing year shall report to the board of finance such information as said board requires for its purposes under section 7-344, and said board shall, for such purposes, have access to the books and records of any such agency."

One could argue the BOE proposed budget is a record of the town and therefore the BOF has the authority by 7-344 to prescribe the method by which the BOE shall present their proposed budget. I think it's something to consider and perhaps have the Town's legal counsel offer an opinion on the matter.

Sincerely,  
Michael Dubreuil

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## Scott Chapman

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**From:** Bernard Dennler  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 7, 2024 2:39 PM  
**To:** Scott Chapman; Mike Egan; Karen Belding; Mike Hayes; Tim Vaillancourt; John Thomas  
**Cc:** Michelle Marceau; Maggie Cosgrove; Demian Sorrentino  
**Subject:** FW: Capital Reserve Request for EV Charger  
**Attachments:** Dennler Memo EV Charger for BoF 2\_7\_24 with attachments.pdf; transferpolicy10\_6\_2015.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Good afternoon,

Last summer, the Board of Selectmen approved a contract for a new EV charging station at Town Hall and designated the Equipment Reserve as the funding source for the Town's portion of the project. However, the Town's Capital Reserve Policy requires that the authorization for expenditures over \$10,000 be approved by the Board of Finance at the First Selectman's recommendation.

In our review of minutes, we did not locate such a request or approval related to this project from the BOF. However, the Town has begun receiving invoices which will need to be paid. Therefore, I am recommending that the Board of Finance authorize the use of \$19,250 to fund this project as approved by the previous Board of Selectmen.

Please see the attached memo from Planning Director Demian Sorrentino for more details on the history of this project.

I respectfully request that the Board consider this at their next regular meeting.

Thank you,  
Bernie

Bernie Dennler  
First Selectman  
Town of Colchester  
127 Norwich Ave  
Colchester, CT 06415  
Phone: 860-537-7222

“Colchester, Connecticut: Where tradition meets tomorrow.”

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**From:** Demian Sorrentino <dsorrentino@colchesterct.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 7, 2024 1:09 PM  
**To:** Bernard Dennler <BDennler@colchesterct.gov>  
**Cc:** Taryn Scott <tscott@colchesterct.gov>  
**Subject:** Funding - ChargePoint CT4000 Dual-Port Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger for Colchester Town Hall

Good Afternoon Bernie-

Memorandum is attached regarding recommendation to BoF for approval of expenditure for the EV charger at Town Hall.

LMK if you have any questions or concerns.

Thanks & Regards-

Demian

Demian A. Sorrentino, AICP, CSS  
Planning Director  
Town of Colchester  
127 Norwich Avenue  
Colchester, CT 06415  
T: (860) 537-7282  
E: [dsorrentino@colchesterct.gov](mailto:dsorrentino@colchesterct.gov)  
[www.colchesterct.gov](http://www.colchesterct.gov)

## Scott Chapman

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**From:** Jason L. <jaylach@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 29, 2024 5:25 PM  
**To:** Scott Chapman  
**Cc:** Board of Finance  
**Subject:** Re: Are you astroturfing All Things Colchester?  
**Attachments:** Screenshot\_20240129\_170722\_Settings.png

Scott-

You can't confirm the validity? If you want to accuse me of lying then have the courage to do that. I might be a lot of things but I'm not one to fabricate screenshots. I've included a more complete screenshot for you.

While I find your response wholly inadequate, I'll provide you something you've never been willing to provide me -- the benefit of the doubt. I really hope you truly are above this type of interference into Colchester politics.

And speaking of appreciation, I don't appreciate your attempt at framing my email as a demand to "display your spouse" to the public, as if that was my motive. I asked for my correspondence, along with the supporting evidence, to be included in the agenda packet. Nothing more and nothing less. This is standard practice.

I understand the desire not to thrust your family into public. I remember getting no support when my families medical inflection was put into correspondence. It sucks. I will supply images with your spouse's information blacked out if you will please include that.

Thanks,

Jason LaChapelle

On Mon, Jan 29, 2024, 4:12 PM Scott Chapman <[schapman@colchesterct.gov](mailto:schapman@colchesterct.gov)> wrote:

**\*\*MEMBERS OF THE BOARD – DO NOT REPLY ALL\*\***

Jason –

I can't confirm the validity of the image of the period in quotes, but I can confirm that this looks like my spouse's actual Facebook account. Further, I cannot confirm if she replied incorrectly and removed the reply. It isn't very likely, but I will inquire. I can confirm that she would not know what "astroturfing" is, nor would she be interested in such activities.

Moving on, as an elected official, I have put myself out to the public. My family has not. I do not appreciate, nor will I acquiesce to, the demand to display my spouse's personal social media profile and images. Out of respect and decency, family members should be afforded privacy regardless of whether one individual in the home chooses to volunteer in an elected capacity in their community.

I will add your email along with this reply to the correspondence, but I will not include screenshots that contain her image. If you have any further questions, please feel free to reach out.

Regards,

Scott A. Chapman

Chair - Board of Finance

Town of Colchester

860-608-6546

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**From:** Jason L. <[jaylach@gmail.com](mailto:jaylach@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Monday, January 29, 2024 1:56 PM

**To:** Scott Chapman <[schapman@colchesterct.gov](mailto:schapman@colchesterct.gov)>

**Cc:** Tim Vaillancourt <[tVaillancourt@ColchesterCT.gov](mailto:tVaillancourt@ColchesterCT.gov)>; Mike Egan <[megan@colchesterct.gov](mailto:megan@colchesterct.gov)>; John Thomas <[jthomas@colchesterct.gov](mailto:jthomas@colchesterct.gov)>; Karen Belding <[kbelding@colchesterct.gov](mailto:kbelding@colchesterct.gov)>; Mike Hayes <[mhayes@colchesterct.gov](mailto:mhayes@colchesterct.gov)>; First Selectman <[selectman@colchesterct.gov](mailto:selectman@colchesterct.gov)>

**Subject:** Are you astroturfing All Things Colchester?

Scott -

Today I received a notification on my phone for a comment on a Facebook post by BOF member Tim Vaillancourt in the All Things Colchester group. The post in question has a lot of arguing and fighting, both amongst Republicans and with Democrats. While I question why so many Democrats care so much about the Republican Town Committee, that has nothing to do with this. For clarity, the Facebook post in question was made by Tim in his capacity as a private citizen and NOT as a member of the Board of Finance.

The comment in question was made by someone named Carolyn Chapman and it was simply a ".". When I went to the post to see the comment, Facebook notified me that the comment was deleted. Assuming this was a mistake, I waited for a follow up comment. There hasn't been one. I commented on the thread and tagged your BOF member page, expecting a response. Again, nothing.

There hasn't been any because, as we're all well aware, commenting on a Facebook post "bumps" that post to the top of the Facebook group ensuring people see it and generating more engagement with it. A surefire

way to spot "bumping" is to catch someone commenting something simple (like a period, or "wow", etc) and then immediately deleting it. This pushes that post to the top, artificially generating more engagement.

astroturf (verb): "disguise (an orchestrated marketing or public relations campaign) in such a way as to present it as having arisen from unsolicited public comments"

On a post that has already proved to be contentious and divisive, there's really one reason to bump it: to continue the divide. Astroturfing in politics is a massive problem. Astroturfing with the intent of continuing to sow the seeds of division is not only destructive to our community, but downright gross. One should be able to disagree with someone's beliefs and/or ideas without secretly using the tools of social media to artificially stoke the flames of vitriol against people who hold ideas they don't agree with, or just downright don't like.

As I didn't want to just assume because the commenter's last name was Chapman that you were involved, I went and looked into the profile in question. It appears they are pretty closely connected to you. Seeing as we're all well aware of the numerous fake accounts on All Things Colchester I have to ask -- is this an account of yours, Scott? If not, were you aware the account was being used to help astroturf All Things Colchester? Do you condone it?

I don't expect my elected officials to be quiet about their disagreements, in meetings or on social media. I don't even expect them to be all that nice or perfect about how they handle that disagreement. I'd be a hypocrite to have that expectation seeing as, well, I'm me. I don't expect my elected officials to be interfering in the legitimate legal democratic process of the political party they view as their rival. What I do expect, however, is for my elected officials to be honest, open, and transparent. Underhanded tactics like this are anything but that. I also expect my elected officials to be above the game of astroturfing to artificially drive vitriol and toxicity against people they view as their political opponents. That's especially true for those who for two years did nothing but criticize other people's behavior and made "bringing Colchester together" the central tenet of their political campaign. At the very least I expect my elected officials to hold themselves, and those around them, to the same standard they held everyone else to. Maybe you disagree but I don't feel that is an impossibly high standard.

And to be clear, this one instance is NOT the only instance of this type of astroturfing I've gotten notifications for over the weekend. I don't expect you to answer for all those, though -- only that which appears to be very closely connected to you.

I hope my elected officials had nothing to do with this, but if you did then I would expect both you and the First Selectman to immediately apologize to the people of Colchester.

I ask that this email (with the screenshots) be included as correspondence.

Thank you,

Jason LaChapelle

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