

First Selectman

From: First Selectman
Sent: Friday, September 1, 2023 4:21 PM
To: Jason LaChapelle; Denise Turner; Deborah Bates; Rosemary Coyle
Subject: Statement on the Town Clerk

To the Board of Selectmen,

After an extensive investigation, I have concluded that the Town Clerk willfully and negligently misappropriated funds. While initially I believed that it was wrong to use taxpayer funds for hotel rooms, a deeper investigation identified that the Town Clerk could not use these funds in the manner that she chose.

The Town Clerk has openly disclosed in a public meeting and through documents the use of both the Historic Preservation Fund and the MERS account for various excluded items, with lodging being the most egregious. Through internal investigations it has been identified that the scope of the impact was much greater than initially expected.

On Wednesday, I will be offering three motions to the board. The first two motions will put into place policies preventing this type of abuse from occurring again. The third motion will be to the Attorney General to investigate the Town Clerk for various abuses.

This is a very difficult email for me to write, but I cannot overlook the evidence before me. I have offered the Town Clerk the opportunity to resign. She interrupted my statement, used various curse words, stated she would never resign, and stormed out of the room slamming the door.

Sincerely,

Andreas Bisbikos
First Selectman

First Selectman

From: Denise Turner
Sent: Sunday, September 3, 2023 1:46 PM
To: First Selectman
Cc: Rosemary Coyle; Deborah Bates; Jason LaChapelle; Denise Turner
Subject: Re: Town Clerk

Andreas,

Please let me know if you will be available after 5:00pm on Tuesday so I can view the evidence when I get out of work, or sometime on Wednesday morning. If you should decide to send it to us all as requested by Debbie and Rosemary, then I won't need to come in.

Please include this entire email chain with the correspondence for the next BOS meeting.

Thank you
Denise

Denise Turner
Board of Selectmen

From: Rosemary Coyle <rcoyle@colchesterct.gov>
Sent: Saturday, September 2, 2023 10:21 AM
To: Deborah Bates <dBates@colchesterct.gov>; First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>; Denise Turner <dturner@colchesterct.gov>; Jason LaChapelle <jLaChapelle@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: Re: Town Clerk

Andreas,

I agree with Debbie, please send us all your evidence and documentation prior to Wednesday's meeting.

Thank you,
Rosemary Coyle
Selectwoman

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From: Deborah Bates <dBates@colchesterct.gov>
Sent: Saturday, September 2, 2023 10:14:20 AM
To: First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>; Denise Turner <dturner@colchesterct.gov>; Jason LaChapelle <jLaChapelle@colchesterct.gov>
Cc: Rosemary Coyle <rcoyle@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: Re: Town Clerk

Hi Andreas,

I have a full week with meetings this week and work, can you please see us all necessary documents regarding the Town Clerk to all the BOS members prior to Wednesdays meeting.

Thank you,

Debbie

From: First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>
Sent: Saturday, September 2, 2023 10:11 AM
To: Denise Turner <dturner@colchesterct.gov>; Jason LaChapelle <jLaChapelle@colchesterct.gov>
Cc: Rosemary Coyle <rcoye@colchesterct.gov>; Deborah Bates <dBates@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: Re: Town Clerk

Denise,

Any time after 12 pm on Tuesday works for me.

Sincerely,

Andreas

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From: Denise Turner <dturner@colchesterct.gov>
Sent: Saturday, September 2, 2023 10:05:50 AM
To: First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>; Jason LaChapelle <jLaChapelle@colchesterct.gov>
Cc: Rosemary Coyle <rcoye@colchesterct.gov>; Deborah Bates <dBates@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: Re: Town Clerk

I would also like to have some time to review this information prior to our Wednesday meeting.

Denise Turner
Board of Selectmen

From: First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>
Sent: Saturday, September 2, 2023 9:50 AM
To: Jason LaChapelle <jLaChapelle@colchesterct.gov>
Cc: Denise Turner <dturner@colchesterct.gov>; Rosemary Coyle <rcoye@colchesterct.gov>; Deborah Bates <dBates@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: Re: Town Clerk

Jason,

Any time after 12 pm on Tuesday works for me.

Sincerely,

Andreas

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From: Jason LaChapelle <jLaChapelle@colchesterct.gov>

Sent: Saturday, September 2, 2023 6:33:12 AM

To: First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>

Cc: Denise Turner <dturner@colchesterct.gov>; Rosemary Coyle <rcoyle@colchesterct.gov>; Deborah Bates <dBates@colchesterct.gov>

Subject: Re: Town Clerk

First Selectman-

These are big claims and very serious accusations. I trust you have supporting evidence and would like to see it. Can we schedule some time on Tuesday so I can review?

Thanks,

Jason LaChapelle
Board of Selectmen

Please include in correspondence packet.

First Selectman

From: First Selectman
Sent: Sunday, September 3, 2023 8:08 PM
To: Rosemary Coyle; Denise Turner; Jason LaChapelle; Deborah Bates
Subject: Town Clerk

Hi Everyone,

The previous email chain had FOI violation written all over it, so I want to respond appropriately. Jason is penciled in for 3:30 PM on Tuesday to review the documentation and Denise is penciled in for 5 PM on Tuesday to review the documentation. As the documentation is in the investigative folder and with the consultation of counsel, it is the position of the town that everything related to the matter will not be sent via email nor will copies be made available until after the Wednesday meeting. Rosemary and Debbie are welcome to schedule a meeting with me on Wednesday prior to the Board of Selectmen Special Meeting. Please contact me directly if you want to schedule a review of the evidence. This will be my final email to the Board on the matter.

This email will also be included in correspondence.

Sincerely,

Andreas Bisbikos
First Selectman

First Selectman

From: First Selectman
Sent: Sunday, September 3, 2023 8:47 PM
To: Marli Rudko; Deborah Bates; Denise Turner; Jason LaChapelle; Rosemary Coyle
Cc: Tara Bennett; Mary Jane Slade
Subject: RE: BOS 2023 meeting schedule/public calendar notices/meeting cancellations

Hi Marli,

Thank you for reaching out. The office staff will be preparing an updated FOI book to the Board of Selectmen this week. We will be sending you an updated copy as well. Apologies for any inconvenience.

Sincerely,

Andreas

From: Marli Rudko <marli@rudko.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 29, 2023 12:20 PM
To: Deborah Bates <dBates@colchesterct.gov>; Denise Turner <dturner@colchesterct.gov>; First Selectman <selectman@colchesterct.gov>; Jason LaChapelle <jLaChapelle@colchesterct.gov>; Rosemary Coyle <rcoyle@colchesterct.gov>
Subject: BOS 2023 meeting schedule/public calendar notices/meeting cancellations

Good morning,

I was recently reviewing the August 10, 2023, BOS meeting audio file in which Selectman Denise Turner questioned First Selectman Bisbikos on the reason why the BOS stopped receiving the FOI log. FS Bisbikos responded the reason was they'd been busy and that he would provide her a log. The FS himself clarified and quoted the bylaws "It's actually the second meeting of the month". From what I can see from the BOS town website page, the last time one was provided for public viewing via a BOS meeting was February 16, 2023, six months ago. The bylaws, below, state that the FOI log shall be presented at the second regularly scheduled BOS meeting of each month. Since February, we've had four of those second regularly scheduled meetings. March 16, 2023, was a special meeting and all of August has been special meetings as well. Besides the fact that it's been six months and there have been four regularly scheduled meetings for which the log could have been presented, do special meetings preclude the FOI log from being presented? Why has the FOI log not been provided as outlined in the bylaws below? I also question now whether or not the board has been provided electronically the FOI log on or before the third Thursday of each month because there has been no talk about it since February.

This segues into my next inquiry. I went to August 17, 2023, on the public calendar in anticipation of clicking on the second regularly scheduled BOS meeting to see if there was a FOI log to review. The Meeting Schedule 2023 for the BOS indicates a meeting on August 17. Yet, there was no meeting entry on the public calendar. There was no cancellation of the BOS regularly scheduled meeting anywhere on the town page, which is required under FOI. Is there a reason why this is? That got me wondering about the rest of the year. After reviewing the public calendar, I couldn't find any public calendar entries for BOS meetings for September through December. In my experience, the annual meeting dates for each board, commission, and committee are supposed to be entered into the public calendar at the beginning of each year. This process prevents forcing citizens to go to each individual page of each board, committee, etc., and review their respective calendars for any upcoming meetings. Is there a reason why this isn't being done anymore either for the

BOS? A board that is paramount to keeping citizens abreast of town issues. As a citizen, being able to go to the public calendar and review upcoming meetings is very helpful.

Partial excerpt from the BOS bylaws:

SECTION 7. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS

The office of the First Selectman shall maintain an electronic Freedom of Information (FOI) log that is accessible to the public at their request. This log shall contain the following information:

- *The date the request was received*
- *The name of the citizen making the request*
- *What the citizen has requested*
- *The date the request was acknowledged*
- *The date the request was fulfilled*
- *# of days to complete request*

The FOI log shall be presented to the Board of Selectmen (BOS) during their second regularly scheduled meeting of each month. If, for whatever reason, the second regularly scheduled BOS meeting does not take place then the FOI log shall be provided to the board electronically on or before the third Thursday of each month.

I look forward to a response from whoever will be designated to reply,

Marli Rudko

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