

December 29, 2022

Board of Selectman,

I have made the decision not to appear in person this evening to preserve my mental health. I do have a short statement that I am requesting be added to the meeting minutes.

Leading off with the fact that yesterday, Attorney Katherine Rule, who represents the town of Brooklyn, emailed a request to our attorney, “to push things out for six months” when we opposed 3-4 months was requested to which we have objected. Of course, it is up to the court, but it is another upsetting request to continue this case well into 2023 considering pre-trial meetings are set for April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Secondly, I want to publicly express my frustration with the behavior of Third Selectman Joe Voccio at the December 8, 2022 Board of Selectman meeting. I completely understand that Mr. Voccio does not agree with our positions. What I do not understand, is that an elected official can lose their cool at members of the public without any recourse. My husband, Attorney or I have not experienced that lack of decorum since our last interactions with the former First Selectman Ives.

I was also disappointed to see all the comments that Mr. Voccio – again, an elected official was sharing personal comments on the Residence of Brooklyn Facebook page. The date that the comments were made was December 16, 2022. On that date there were 4,200 members of this private Facebook group which is obviously primarily made up of Brooklyn, CT residents. I do not recall previously seeing other elected local officials sharing their own opinions on a resident’s group before. The danger here is that people know that he is an elected official who has purported knowledge of cases. When he shares his personal position on a matter it can be taken to some as, “fact.”

Two, specifically frustrating, back and forth discussions are attached below. Saying that I/we am/are creating a “victim narrative being crafted” and saying that there is plenty of “blame pie to be sliced up.” Again, nearly every meeting I am assured verbally, that this board has my back and is working to right the wrongs that were done to us. Then I have an interaction like the one Joe and I shared at the 12/8 meeting or see these comments on Facebook and you guys wonder why I struggle to believe that.

So, the current action items that we would like a public comment from this Board on:

Response from the Brooklyn Fire District regarding the mortgage documents for 15 South Main Street;

A public comment on the last date any member of the board had an interaction with the town attorneys. I don’t want/need details of the discussions I just want some sort of

evidence that you are even discussing this matter and attempting to stop it from taking up all of 2023 and beyond;

Any statement from the board regarding the behavior of Third Selectman Voccio;

During the 2023 budget discussions coming up the Town to take a hard look at the budget for the EBFD and Brooklyn Fire District. I will share more detail on that request if needed in January;

Clarification for the record that item #8 on tonight's agenda is regarding the EBFD/Brooklyn Fire District lawsuit. Renaming agenda items can make it confusing for members of the public who scan agenda items for things that they'd like to participate in. I've noticed major inconsistencies in how agendas are promoted from the Town and I think a standardized procedure going forward should be adopted. I am referring to both our case now being changed to "South Main Street Dispute" suddenly AND how P&Z sends out regular meeting minutes vs. when high profile applications are on the agenda and their name is in bold in subject line. It shows favoritism, which should not have a place in a fair process.

To wrap up, I'd love to be optimistic that 2023 can/will be the final year that there is legal proceedings between the EBFD/Brooklyn Fire District, our business et al. are "a thing." I'd also love the new year to be the year that the town of Brooklyn gets its act together. I'd even more love to think that I live in a town where suggestions about consistency in town government, adding details to regulations, having the attorneys involved in tenuous disputes doesn't get you labeled as a "problem." Perhaps there are more institutional problems at hand. In addition, it should be noted that accusations and active litigation/investigations are not in any way threats. We're days away from 2023 and the Town of Brooklyn best start acting like it.



