

December 8, 2022

Board of Selectman,

I am here again this evening regarding the lawsuit against us from the Brooklyn Fire District and the East Brooklyn Fire Department (EBFD).

Since I have yet to see any action whatsoever on the action items we have requested of this board, so I decided to switch things up and open with some facts instead.

I want to share a little bit more about Matt and I since I'm not sure you three know about our lives prior to popping up as "the ice cream people who are getting sued by the Fire Department."

Matt and I both took a nontraditional route to our post-secondary education. We both entered the workforce right after high school and spent a decade plus working fulltime and attending college part-time.

I worked for 13 years as the Secretary to the State's Attorney for the Judicial District of Windham. During that time I performed legal research and assisted in voluminous legal trials, and managed a team of 20 plus attorney's. In addition to my on the job training I earned multiple certificates and attended hours and hours of training provided by the State of Connecticut.

Matt originally went to school to be an APRN while working at L&M Hospital and touring as a musician before redirecting and becoming a Small Business Advisor for the CTSBDC – who provided him with years of State and Government trainings. He held that position for seven years – until last year when we opened Sütő, and he joined me in full-time self-employment.

The reason I am bringing up our personal history is to highlight that we did not arrive to this point via the turnip truck. Both Matt and I have lengthy work history with government agencies which provided training in proper research methods, data collection, critical thinking and a provided us a strong set of legal ethics (we already had the moral ethics). Working professional jobs while also raising children, and attending college taught us how to persevere through hard times, to push forward and finish a challenge, how to multitask, and on and on. All assets which have helped us through our current lawsuit battle.

During my time with the Windham State's Attorney's Office, I had the privilege of working directly with two strong female State's Attorneys who taught me so much about seeking justice; not giving up when your gut tells you there is more truth out there; and how to navigate a world where old white men hold the majority of the power and they can try and twist the truth to their benefit. For me, especially after these past few years. Your word means next to nothing and evidence means everything.

Jennifer Nemeth BOS Public Statement 12-8-22

We can't expect everyone to have the training that Matt and I were fortunate enough to have. We don't expect Austin to believe everything we say and side with us. But you know who does have that training and more experience than Matt & I? The town Attorney. Part of my plea again tonight is to really – truly- get the town attorneys involved in this. Have them contact our attorney as soon as possible. Let the people who are trained in this deal with this get heavily involved. For some reason the “wait and see plan” has been the route chosen to date. The bragging about how little the suit has cost the town so far is also presented as a positive. Let me tell you here tonight that that wait and see is not a defense. It is lazy and dangerous, and a shame to the taxpayers who have elected you to act.

It is our understanding that new members of the EBFD have a tentative meeting set with Selectman Tanner for tomorrow. I would again plead with all parties to do whatever they can to control the reckless actions of the Brooklyn Fire District board of directors.

I promised I would give those members a little more time to work with the Selectman before executing my next step. If no action towards the Brooklyn Fire District is announced by Monday, we plan to mail out a letter to all 277 Brooklyn taxpayers who fund the \$69,566 additional Brooklyn Fire Tax annually.

Within that mailing we will be sharing documents and details we have uncovered as during our defense research, most of which we have shared here with you during previous meetings. In addition to sharing our information we will be asking the residents to take the steps they are legally allowed to dissolve the Brooklyn Fire District.

I will leave you tonight not with the aged action items remaining unfinished. I've already beat those requests to death with no response. Tonight, I am begging for some sort of public acknowledgment of the work you are or not doing to end this. I know you three had a discussion in Executive Session during the last meeting, but nothing is ever said on the record for the public. Not even “we get it Jenn, this sucks. We called the town attorney on ____ (blank) ____ date and they said the next step is calling your attorney.” Anything no matter how vague it might be. Something to show the public that there is any action being taken.

I do have a few attachments to add to the public record this evening.

The first is the Town of Brooklyn Fire Ordinances. The section pertaining to Fire Zones is section 11-2 and is two paragraphs long and states in part “no person may park a vehicle or remain stationary in an area that is clearly marked a no parking or fire zone.” *There is no ordinance established at this moment for a fire lane to be legally designated in the Town of Brooklyn.*

In contrast I also submit the Town of Killingly Code of Fire Ordinances. Their section 10-21 is over 10 paragraphs long. It includes details on establishment of fire lanes, the purpose of a fire lane, the definition of a fire lane, etc.

Using the Town of Killingly's Fire Lane Ordinances as an example of how things could be here, I am asking that this Board review their process and compare it to ours to make much needed – immediate updates. If the sword that Austin is willing to fall on is that the Fire Marshal Doug Kramer “thought he designated a fire lane on the easement” then I counter, “I thought I picked my kid up from school today, I thought I stopped at the stop sign, officer...” **Thoughts** in legal matters don't mean anything. Without a procedure to designate a fire lane, and without written proof that it happened, Doug Kramer's thoughts mean nothing and have caused nothing but headache and heartaches.

Yesterday we submitted additional documentation to the Attorney General for our ongoing complaint against the Brooklyn Fire District.

Today we filed a complaint with the FOI Commission about our unanswered request from October 31, 2022 which was made to the Brooklyn Fire District and the Town of Brooklyn.

We also have active complaints in with the Auditor of Public Accounts who has referred us to the FBI to file a municipal corruption complaint.

If Austin Tanner is unwilling to take immediate action I am calling on you two – Lou and Joe to step up. Further delays are not making anything go away. It's not making a single thing better. It's making it much, much worse and inaction is only allowing the alleged criminal activity in town to go unchecked.

I'm not exactly sure how to wrap up tonight's statement. Especially since I did say I was ending it a page or so ago. I want to hear a public comment from this board tonight, and I want to see some sort of action by Monday, or, we will be proceeding with our bulk mailing, and desire to see the Brooklyn Fire District taxpaying residents dissolve the district so that an unchecked political power cannot do this sort of thing again.

Please do not let whatever misgivings are going on down at 15 South Main Street tarnish the legacy of this board. Their bad actions are not a reflection on you. Inaction to controlling their behavior, however is.

I am asking that this entire public statement along with 10 pages of attachments be added into the meeting minutes for tonight.