

Town of

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East Lyme

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To Inland Wetlands Commission Members:

For over two weeks, I have asked the Chair of your commission to meet with me, Mr. Goeschel, and the town attorney prior to your next meeting. I was compelled to ask for this meeting after reading a string of emails from your Chair to the town staff where the tone was quite negative, disrespectful and hostile. No matter how frustrated we might be with a person, the "system", or an applicant, we should always remain professional and respectful. I feel that the line has been crossed.

The purpose for the requested meeting was quite clear; to reset communications between the Chair, Staff and Counsel. I also wanted to layout my expectations of following established protocols and the long-standing precedent of scheduling meetings, publicizing public hearings, and the partnership that must be observed between the commission and the town hall staff. This was not a meeting to discuss substance or agenda items...just procedure.

The Chair refused to meet and then became hostile with me.

I would be quite concerned with any commission that displays a renegade/rogue attitude. This is the first time I have witnessed this behavior in the 21 years I have volunteered and worked for the town. There exists an expectation and precedent for the Chair of a commission and the staff to work together. Sadly, this is not happening with your commission.

As commissioners, no one will ever tell you how to vote, but you are expected to listen and consider the advice of town counsel, our professional staff, and state agencies. They have an obligation to guide commissioners on legal matters, on what is required when rendering a decision, and the ramifications of decisions on a broader scale. Disregarding and even resisting this guidance could potentially cost the taxpayers of our town significant damage. That is not what you were appointed to do.

You took an oath to serve our town and make decisions based on what was best for our citizens. I am asking each commission member to keep this in mind when sitting as an Inland Wetland Commissioner.

In closing, I sincerely thank you for your service to our beloved town. I am available anytime for a discussion.

Most Sincerely,

Mark C. Nickerson
First Selectman