

Rich Marcou Statement at BOS Meeting 6/16/2025 (Transcribed)

You have invited the whole SWC here to your meeting.

I assume you are contemplating as to whether to 1 to disband the committee, 2 remove me as chair, or 3 to seek some sort of common ground.

It is my hope that by coming here today it is the later.

I wish to use some of the time scheduled for the SWC topic to set the record straight and go on record publicly with our side of the story and to specifically address comments made about me personally at the May 19th Selectboard meeting.

I share Scott's frustration that there seems to be a disconnect between the BOS and the SWC.

I've attempted to summarize these viewpoints in conversations including discrepancies, miscommunications, misunderstandings, differences of opinion, and unsubstantiated and publicly recorded slanderous comments.

Beth reported that she sees the disconnect between the BOS and the SWC as a process problem.

The SWC summarizes it as a communication problem.

If the BOS spoke to us directly, this would have eliminated these progressive misunderstandings that have escalated to this point.

The BOS is concerned that the SWC minutes don't delineate the SWC's process for arriving at conclusions and making suggestions, specifically as it relates to relocating the TS.

The SWC minutes do delineate each step of our process.

The conclusion to relocate the TS was widely implied back in October through anecdotal information, but the committee took the extra step and sought input from citizen stakeholders to weigh in using a voluntary anonymous town-wide survey to collect quantitative data.

The data confirmed the SWC conclusions.

In December, the Board listened to that SWC data presentation and conclusions pertaining to the TS and where we were encouraged to present the SWC findings to the Budget Committee.

Our Committee was under the impression that the presentation and data were well received.

However, the SWC did not have all the cost estimate details necessary to present to the Budget Committee.

Calvin and the Budget Committee offered some sound advice for gathering the necessary cost details, so the SWC sought to obtain factual and current data by requesting funds already in escrow to be utilized to conduct a feasibility and sustainability study on the current site.

The final report should be ready any day now.

The BOS has accused me personally of not knowing about a mission statement. That it was my job to know that.

As the Chair of the SWC, I was told by the BOS representative that there were no records or files of any type from the previous SWC. So why would I look for something that I was told that wasn't there?

The BOS then provided a mission statement. When the mission statement was presented to the SWC members it was unanimous that they wanted to change it, with no input from me, the Chair.

The BOS has had a representative attend every meeting for the last three years.

The SWC was told that this rep had agreed to be assigned to most of the town BOS committee assignments because another recently elected BOS member at that time needed to fulfill a commitment to his job at the Fire Academy.

We are questioning if our work on the SWC was reported to the BOS. Were our minutes shared among the BOS? If so, were the minutes enough to keep the members of the BOS satisfied with our process? Did they have questions or concerns?

The Committee didn't know about any concerns until viewing the slanderous comments at the May 19th BOS meeting.

Some of such are, the SWC is demonstrating a lack of process within the SWC meeting minutes.

The process of the SWC work is detailed in the committee's minutes. Did you all read them?

The BOS is wondering how we came to the "unacceptable and irresponsible", those are your words, decision to relocate the TS and why our work on the SWC was not reported to the BOS.

The process was documented. The SWC minutes are not sanitized like the BOS minutes - no disrespect, Kal - often are.

Watch the video of May 19th versus read the minutes, two very different things.

When I asked Beth if she watched the May 19th video, her response was "why, I was there."

You may want to see how you are being viewed by the town.

That I as the SWC Chair am an obstructionist, by Calvin. In opposition with the BOS, Scott has vocalized repeatedly that he is tired of spending his time battling me, not the Committee, me - it's on video - and is very frustrated by it.

Has the BOS even tried to reach out, ask for more details, or even just chat with any one of us, or me?

These frustrations with communication can be easily rectified if one reaches out.

Statements made publicly at the May 19th meeting by Calvin: “to be helpful with the SWC needs to look at things like how to help with taxes, the future, things like trash pickup.”

Calvin, we have. We have investigated those things and more if you've read all of our minutes our process is there.

Calvin also said “they need to be more deliberate in what it is that we ask them to do.”

What does deliberate supposed to look like if we don't have any information communicated to us?

“They are like a bunch of six-year-olds. We need to be direct, cut the task, focus down like ABC instead of A to Z.”

This is simply a disrespectful and belittling comment not worthy of a comment.

Personal slanderous comments on video but not in the minutes, the BOS publicly ridiculed the SWC Chair, who's also a veteran, for holding a Committee meeting on Memorial Day.

Well did you know all of the SWC members were polled in the meeting to see if they had any issues with attending and also to be sure that there would be enough people for a quorum.

Nobody objected. Everybody was willing to attend a meeting on Memorial Day.

The BOS and Town Administrator, Ken, publicly accused me, the SWC Chair, of not being able to work with Dave at the TS.

A couple of years ago Dave showed up to a SWC meeting unannounced and was a little disruptive. The issue seemed to be between Dave and the BOS rep at the time.

But I work well with Dave. I asked him to come here so that he could refute my comment if he wanted to, if he disagreed with that.

The SWC is accused of being surprised and defiant of the mission statement. As stated in the BOS meeting: it was my job as chair to find such a thing.

As stated before, I was told there were no files or records of any previous SWC meetings by the previous BOS representative. So why would I look for something that I was told wasn't there?

The BOS, specifically Scott, has accused me, the SWC Chair, of submitting a duplicate warrant article before the town because I didn't trust the BOS.

I attended multiple BOS meetings seeking support on behalf of the SWC for a TS study. I kept asking for an assurance that it would be moved on by the BOS. But I never obtained that assurance even when I asked the Chair directly.

So because of the mandated State deadline to submit petition warrant articles, the SWC felt it was necessary to ensure that something was on the floor for Town Meeting.

This was a Committee effort not a personal one.

Scott continues to belittle me publicly - this is all the May 19th meeting, by the way, watch it great entertainment.

Scott continues to belittle me publicly for what he describes me as “taking it upon myself for walking around Exit 18 looking at properties”.

Did you even know I was there, or who I was with?

Making a public statement like this is purely innuendo and disrespectful without knowing the facts.

No response was received from the BOS, Beth, when attempt was made to improve communication between her and the SWC.

I sent her an email attempting to apologize for interrupting her during the discussion.

Which, by a rumor only, is a behavior that may or may not have been witnessed by Scott at other board meetings.

Why am I being slandered for behavior that only the BOS is offended by?

I tried to offer apologies immediately after the meeting in question.

She found it convenient to talk to somebody else.

And if my behavior is so atrocious, then I asked how was I elected to be Vice-Chair of the Planning Board, by the board members, my peers and fellow citizens, if I'm so unruly?

And referencing the act of resuming oil collection at the TS, Ken stated that most other towns don't even collect it anymore.

And his response to me that “it doesn't work, we gotta figure this out”, his response: “well, you can look for somewhere else to live.”

This was an issue that many town citizens wanted and there were clear options for resuming this.

His negative comments are unprofessional and uncalled for. I was seeking to fix a problem.

Regarding the SWC presentation by Roy Plisko. The SWC, and as Chair I'm being blamed for allowing the presentation to the SWC by Roy Plisko, in essence the BOS is accusing the SWC of using scare tactics as a strategy to move forward with relocating the TS.

It's not true. Roy requested an opportunity to address the SWC a month before he presented it at a meeting.

And he requested an audience with the Town Administrator and the BOS.

His request was discussed between me and Ken prior to him doing it.

And we were both guessing what the presentation would include, and we were guessing water testing maybe. It had to be about the water testing.

It was concluded that neither group could deny the request so in Ken's words "let it happen". That would be the best course action. First amendment rights.

It was discussed in a BOS meeting that the SWC received the report by email, early, Friday May 9th, before the meeting where Roy presented the information. That's also false.

Members of the SWC never saw the report before its meeting on Monday May 12th.

We did learn however that Ken was provided a draft copy from Roy on Thursday May 8th.

Who disseminated it? Not Roy. Not the SWC.

How you got it by email? Right to Know request would find that out I guess.

That publicly stated that the presentation has been shared more willingly than other discussions by the SWC about moving the TS, implying duplicity to push the TS relocation forward.

That's also false.

It was no pre-designed duplicity around the presentation for its contents between the BOS, SWC, Roy, or any other entity.

And the one that probably bothers me the most. Scott has said publicly - again in the May 19th meeting - you have said publicly in response to being informed that the SWC has no Vice-Chair. "So he is a committee of one."

The Committee has had some growing pains in the past, members leave and join for different reasons. We are currently a large group and in my opinion are functioning quite well.

Topic of Vice-Chair has never been suggested before on the Committee.

I even wanted to step down one time and I left the meeting because I was frustrated and they all took a vote of confidence. And they said "no Rich we want you."

Nobody ever wanted to be the Chair. Members have been very vocal about that.

In conclusion, I hope this message doesn't cause the Board to respond in anger and disband the Committee or eliminate me as Chair.

I am just hopeful that I've given you pause, to understand as Paul Harvey said "the rest of the story".

I appreciate the opportunity to publicly state my point of view. It's hard to defend yourself when you watch only one side on a video. And I just hope to set the record straight.

The future of the SWC going forward is in your hands and it's your decision as to how to proceed with it.

It's my hope that you won't throw out the baby with the bad [sic] water after affording this group a mere 30 minutes to meet with the Board via your invite.

If you decide to let this group continue, I suggest improving lines of communication to avoid frustrations. You know how many times you said that on that? At least three times. And enable productive discussions when there are controversial topics.

It is hard to fathom an all or nothing approach.

Lastly I feel that I, and members of the SWC, are entitled to a public apology from each of you for the disparaging remarks coming from the BOS May 19th meeting.

As seen on the video, which is based on personal opinions or incorrect and misleading information.

I don't expect it will be forthcoming, based on the level of frustration emanating from this Board.

I encourage you to watch yourselves on video, Beth and everybody else.

I know you're here, but you need to realize how ugly the optics are that you're presenting to the town.