

Statement to the Select Board
about the Solid Waste Committee

My name is Roy Plisko. My family have been citizens of this town for 63 years. I have recently returned to take care of my mother and my family property. I am a member of the Solid Waste Committee and I am also a part-time employee of the town in the Highway Department where I have been mowing the grass and plowing the roads. Since the highway department is also intimately involved with the transfer station I feel like this gives me good insight into the issues being discussed at the Solid Waste Committee. Unfortunately, it also makes it a little awkward for me because it now seems like my civic role on a committee in this town, and my civic intentions as a citizen of this town, are putting me in an unfavorable position with the people who hired me as an employee of the town.

Everything I do for this town, on or off the committee, is in good faith and I have in no way expected that I was taking on an adversarial role. I have always understood advisory committees like ours to be composed of citizen volunteers contributing to the civic process in a semi-independent capacity. Our legally recognized role is to study issues, develop insights, and advise the Board of Selectmen. This was the understanding presented to me when I joined, and it has shaped everything I have observed and done while serving. I do not see advisory committees as subordinate private staff who receive change management, corporate restructuring and orders not to reveal information under BOS directive. I see us as volunteer citizens acting within right to know laws as partners in public service. Ultimately, we all operate at the pleasure of the public.

As public bodies under RSA 91-A, advisory committees are required to meet openly, record minutes, and report findings transparently. NH Municipal Association guidance makes it clear that these committees exist to study complex issues and provide independent recommendations. While the BOS retains authority to approve or disapprove of committee recommendations, the guidelines seem to say that this authority does not extend to pre-approving or suppressing committee content. Attempting to do so would compromise both transparency and the committee's essential advisory function.

Everything I have witnessed as a committee member has remained consistent with the mission statement and charge document. Neither of these documents were made known to the committee until recently and, even though all of our internal work duplicated them, both are now being presented as grounds to question the committee's legitimacy.

Concerns over process have emerged and this is troubling to me because the impression I am getting is that the proper processes we followed are being ignored or misunderstood

while inaccurate accusations about the process are being presented against us. And now here we are under threat of being dissolved if we do not say the right things tonight. This is a very unsettling development to me. The fact that concerns over “process” (and threats to dissolve the committee) emerged only after I, as a concerned citizen, presented a detailed risk analysis about landfill contamination raises serious questions about motive. I did not do this as an assignment from the committee but looking into environmental and economic concerns is written right into the committee mission statement. Regardless of intent, the optics of this development resemble censorship and retaliation, rather than constructive governance.

Thank you