

From: Porter, Louis [Louis.Porter@vermont.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, February 16, 2016 4:29 PM
To: Gingras, Jessica
Subject: Fwd: Letter from Kevin Lawrence

Follow up.

Lp

Begin forwarded message:

From: kevin lawrence <nedappleman@gmail.com>
Date: February 16, 2016 at 4:27:12 PM EST
To: "Porter, Louis" <louis.porter@state.vt.us>
Subject: Letter from Kevin Lawrence

Hello Louis--

I have some issues which I thought I would express to you directly regarding the role of Board members with community involvement.

1st, I note that there are no written legal guidelines for volunteer Board members for interactions with the public. As well, there are no ethical guidelines published by the Governor's office. Board members, no matter what board they volunteer to serve, are not told to stay out of public life.

For example, can a member of the VT Apportionment Board call out a person at a public meeting and ask if they are a resident voter? Can a Dental Advisory Board member get into a debate in the papers about putting fluoride in public water in a town? Can a Water Well Advisory Committee member ethically turn in a competitor who provides polluted water to a worried customer?

I would suggest that these are citizens board members who are chosen because of their expertise and involvement in issues, not because they are quiet and hold no opinions.

2nd, I do not believe in responding to slights and agitations from a group who is only seeking more written confirmation of a government's callousness or disregard of their minority positions. Anything written will be considered not good enough. Heck, the Governor's office knows how to play politics well. In a small state, access is easy. Conversation is what is lacking. I am willing to converse with this group, to personally meet with them. Appeasing them with official letters will never work. They have a long game in mind. They should contact me directly. Go for a walk and talk. We must make them treat Board members as people, not just positions. We must ask Board members at public forums if they would volunteer to meet with individuals on weekends for

discussions. The Board members of F+W will say yes, they are willing to meet in public places, of course.

3rd-- Appeasement is not a policy. If the Gov's office wants to drive away the public volunteers who are vital to our management of 1000's of issues statewide, Board members need to feel supported and approachable. Board members are willing to engage directly, so make the constituent groups call, talk, meet and greet in small groups. Relationships, as we see in the legislature every day, can include disagreement and understanding simultaneously.

Feel free to share my thoughts. Sorry to tie up more of your time when you could be working with your valued employees or overseeing your multi-million dollar budget.

My best, Kevin Lawrence, VT Fish and Wildlife Board Chair