

September 22, 2014

Dear Town Council,

I am here to speak in regard to the proposed tree removal on Dog Lane and Gurleyville Road by CL&P. I wish not to offer any opinion to the council on how they should vote in regards to the tree removal. I just hope that this very important factor was taken into consideration by CL&P and our tree warden. I am referring to the loss of another one of our majestic New England trees, Fraxinus americana the White Ash. It is threatened by the Emerald Ash borer an invasive insect which was discovered in 2002 in Michigan. It has quickly spread east killing tens of if not hundreds of millions of healthy ash trees in 25 states and 2 provinces in Canada. It was discovered in Connecticut in 2012 and expected to wreak havoc on our forests. It looks as though the ash will go the way of the mighty chestnut in the early 20th century. This should sadden us all.

The approach in neighboring states has been to eradicate the healthy ash trees and use it for lumber and fire wood before it becomes infested and is rendered uneconomical. There is some hope for the ash tree in our landscape though, through the use of systemic pesticides but it can be costly.

It may be prudent for the property owners that have white ash near the power lines to investigate the use and economics of systemic pesticides or consider the complete removal of the ash trees.

Brian Coleman

Centre St.

Arthur A. Smith
74 Mulberry Road
Mansfield, CT 06250

September 22, 2014

Dear Town Council Members:

I was in attendance at the Special Finance Committee Meeting held last Tuesday, September 16, 2014 and was flabbergasted when former Deputy Mayor Toni Moran, now the current ^{Democrat} chairperson told those in attendance the voting public didn't know and I quote "what to think until we tell them."

This posturing puts into perspective the difficulty the public has had in recent years in obtaining information in this public forum, control of information is control of the narrative which appears to be more important than transparency in local government.

But questions remain and since information is the currency of democracy and not control of the narrative, the story line, I will continue to ask them.

- 1) Have either Cherie Trahan or Matthew Hart given our town attorney or the investigating police notice that they have retained legal counsel to assist them as the police investigation of our town's finances is pursued?
- 2) Is the Town Council willing to disclose the performance measures used to evaluate the performance of the town manager?
- 3) Was a secret meeting held to which the town was not given notice when Matthew Hart gave authorization to assume the operating cost of the pumping station near the post-office condominiums, if not how did the obligation without Town Council approval, and the cost associated with the obligation get past the scrutiny of our CFO, Cherie Trahan?
- 4) Our Town Manager, appears to take down the questions raised during these public comment periods but since we fail to receive replies, can his notes be subject to FOIA retrieval, as documents with a public interest that outweighs an interest in withholding?
- 5) Has the University of Connecticut in any forum, Town and Gown meetings included, stated that they have not and will not consider partnering or constructing ~~with~~ state money Biosafety level 4 Laboratories in the Storrs/Mansfield area?
- 6) I have noticed that the Mayor and the Town Manager inaudible conversations during these Town Council meetings and the public is unable to hear their conversations, given the final ruling in Docket #FIC 2013-221, are you in compliance with CTFOIA mandates?

I look forward to hearing back from you on all of these issues raise at your earliest convenience.

Thank you,



Jeffrey Ziplow in attendance

Blum & Shapiro has completed the fiscal auditing for the town of Mansfield for the last two years.

Blum & Shapiro audits are based upon the Yellow Book Standard

Blum & Shapiro would be answerable in the proposed Financial Operations Controls Assessment not to the Town Manager but to the Finance Committee

Ziplow... "honesty and direct information... more than pointing fingers... I look for remedies... you will know as soon as I know... wouldn't be sitting across the table today if you wanted it [my work] sugar coated."

There is no contract with Blum & Shapiro for this consulting at this time.

How is this Contract to be obtained? Trahan, the Purchase Ordinance specifies that contracting is based on "best value" for the town not lowest bid. RFPs or REQs can be used but are not required. We usually piggy back the state process threshold costs.

What was the selection process here based on, Jeff gave proposal after being asked to do so from our last meeting.

Qualifications: no head-time/per hour allocation is in place in Mansfield for shared services, shared services are not currently included in the proposal before the Committee. Virginia, an analytical discussion of shared services giving the risks, with no contracts currently in place, with hidden costs and hidden benefits to those services, lack of overhead should be studied. Ziplow, New London looking into shared services and Windham has implemented. Chain of command – mitigating risks of people doing dumb things-policy, if only implemented, is in place. Workflow may not include hiring and firing practices.

Paul, calling Virginia big spenders because of her request for a comprehensive overview of current practices.

Toni, if favor of the using practice used by state, rather than bidding, to resolve the issues sooner rather than later. Allowable by town Purchasing Ordinance to seek best value.

PUBLIC DOESN'T HAVE AN OPINION UNTIL WE GIVE IT ONE. (7:00 pm)

[Virginia, no tracking of time given to shared services and the overhead costs]

Toni, I would never vote against shared services happening whenever possible.

Mayor, I agree basically with what Toni has said. In other towns, where I was on the town council, getting information from the board of Education was very difficult.

Mayor, how will you compare towns because of our students during the year we are different-shifts in population. Who do you answer to?

Who are the pre-qualified firms-scope expanded to include transaction testing, and cost of shared services but the analytic analysis would happen later.

Transaction testing- do forms used comport with the policy used. Testing is needed before and after testing. Interview with employees to be done, knowing role and assessing the actual implementation of that role is necessary to create a culture of compliance. Periodic transaction testing is needed to insure that culture is maintained.

Such studies are not in the current proposal that would be an additional 10-12 k in addition to the proposed 35.5k.

submitted by Arthur Smith September 22, 2014

Cost of Shared Services has at this time an unknown value. Property, space and IT overhead value is not assessed. CCM study may not be "apples to apples" Should the Trahan work be worked with or should those assumptions be abandoned for a fresh start? CCM spreadsheet analysis. Due diligence would require calling around to see how it is implemented elsewhere.

Flow diagram is needed-who reports to whom?

Deliverables-will the committee be cc'd on all drafts/reports? Status meetings during the process is envisioned.

Conflict of interest-Vanessa will not be looking at my work, she will not influence my report. Toni, Chinese Wall to divide interests.

Trahan, the Bd. of Educ. Is responsible for knowing its own budget, didn't create a document filled in printed copy of words and gave assumptions about places of origin.

Contact person would be identified as the Committee Chair.