



TOWN OF CALAIS

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Selectboard Response to Notice of Violation May 29, 2024

By correspondence dated April 17, 2024, Dorothy (Dot) Helling submitted to the Town a document entitled “Notice of Violations,” with supporting documentation, in which she alleged certain specific violations of the Vermont Open Meeting Law by the Selectboard at its March 25, 2024, meeting. On April 22, 2024, the Selectboard responded that it had reviewed the Notice of Violations and related documents, carefully considered Ms. Helling’s assertions, consulted with legal counsel, and determined that no violation of the Open Meeting Law had occurred and that no cure was necessary, except for one item which the Board then took steps to cure.

On May 13, Ms. Helling submitted another document entitled “Re. Notice of Violations at March 25, 2024, SB meeting regarding appointments to the DRB” in which she alleges:

1. the SB cure of violation was insufficient, and
2. there was a further violation of the open meeting law, specifically that the board improperly took up a second matter in executive session.

The Selectboard has reviewed the March 25 document, considered Ms. Helling’s further assertions, and further consulted with legal counsel. The Selectboard affirms its response and actions of April 22, 2024 were sufficient to cure the matter related to DRB appointments.

In regard to the allegation of further violation the board agrees that the matter could have been taken up outside of executive session. Since only one employee was affected by the matter, the board was thinking that discussion of the item in public would be a violation of the employee’s right to privacy. However, upon reflection, the board realizes that if there had been several employees affected, the matter would have been a policy decision that would have been discussed in public and the fact that only one employee was affected should not change that. Therefore, the board will take steps to cure this matter as well by discussing and ratifying the vote in public session, and by giving the public a reasonable opportunity to express its opinion on the matter.