

Description of alleged violation:

Describe the alleged violation that this complaint is about. If you believe the alleged violation was intentional, please say so and include the reasons supporting your belief.

Note: This text field has a maximum of 3000 characters.

A meeting of the Williamstown Affordable Housing Committee was held on February 12, 2013. No other subsequent meetings were held prior to a Letter To The Editor that was signed by all six members of the committee being published by three local news outlets.

<http://www.willinet.org/content/affordable-housing-committee-meeting-21213>

During that meeting there was no discussion by the Committee about drafting a letter to the editor and sending it to the three (3) local news outlets. I attended that meeting as well as several other acquaintances. None of us recall the letter that was published March 4, 6, and 7, and signed by all six members of the Affordable Housing Committee being discussed during an open meeting session on February 12, or on any earlier date in any form or shape.

While a individual member of the committee could have written the letter that appeared in The Transcript, The Advocate Weekly, and the online publication, iBerkshires, public, open meeting deliberation would be required by each and every member of the six member committee for it to have been published with each of their names. No one can recall even an authorization being discussed or voted upon to draft such a letter.

While it may be commendable for a town committee to write a letter to the editor, such a letter is required to be drafted, authorized, and/or discussed and voted upon in an open meeting session prior to its submission for publication.

There is no evidence that this happened. Thus, the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law has been clearly violated.

What action do you want the public body to take in response to your complaint?

Note: This text field has a maximum of 500 characters.

This violation is egregious. The chair made an opening statement at their 12/18/12 meeting noting that the Committee was, is, and will be in full compliance of the Open Meeting Law. <http://www.willinet.org/content/affordable-housing-committee-meeting-121812> . This statement was made after an OML complaint was filed against the Board of Selectmen on 12/10/12. This violation indicates training on the open law is needed. The board should acknowledge their violation during an open meeting.

Review, sign, and submit your complaint

Read this important notice and sign your complaint.

Under most circumstances your complaint will be considered a public record and be available to any member of the public upon request.

I understand that when I submit this complaint the Attorney General's Office cannot give me legal advice and cannot act as my personal lawyer.

I certify that the information contained on this form is true to the best of my knowledge.

Signed: Henrich J. Saratch

Date: 3-14-2013

For Use By Public Body
Date Received by Public Body:

For Use By AGO
Date Received by AGO: