

Erdem's statements for the censure meeting. CONTENTS:
Concluding remarks.
Introductory remarks,
Chairwoman Sovinee's misconduct at the meeting on
3/14/13

DR. ERDEM URAL'S CONCLUDING REMARKS ON CENSURE

I would like to thank the Chairwoman and the members of the school committee for giving me this opportunity to speak this evening.

Stoughton voters elected me to do a job. Upon election, I took the following oath of office:
I ERDEM URAL DO SOLEMNLY SWEAR THAT I WILL FAITHFULLY AND IMPARTIALLY PERFORM THE DUTIES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ACCORDING TO THE TOWN CHARTER, BYLAWS OF THE TOWN OF STOUGHTON AND THE GENERAL LAWS OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS.

I have always conducted myself in a way that was true to this oath. I fully support the Massachusetts Laws, and I fully support the United States Constitution.

I ran for office to:

1) Improve Education Quality

- ★ Improve student achievement by providing opportunity, support and challenges for all our students to reach their full educational potential;
- ★ Create a safer school environment
- ★ Improve services to all schoolchildren and families
- ★ Improve services to entire Stoughton Community
- ★ Improve communications with parents
- ★ Hold the Superintendent accountable

2) Improve Fiscal Responsibility

- ★ a more accountable and transparent School Administration
- ★ Reduce fees, resist fee increases

3) Improve System Efficiency

- ★ Collaborate with the Selectmen and other town boards
- ★ Share services with other Town departments
- ★ Seek more opportunities to regionalize
- ★ Treat employees with respect and dignity
- ★ Make collective bargaining more effective and equitable

During my tenure, I always tried to make sure that administration conforms to the law, and is also sensitive to the hardworking taxpayers of Stoughton.

I take pride in thinking independently from other school committee members. I wish my fellow school committee members took their responsibilities more seriously and have the school committee harness the administration better. Instead, they appear more interested in silencing the lone dissenting voice within the committee.

I will not be silenced because:

- 1) The safety of our schoolchildren is paramount, and I do not want the incidences of guns in schools to be swept under a rug.
- 2) I take the improvement of achievement of every student in Stoughton very seriously. This can happen only after we examine all the achievements honestly and impartially. After all, celebrating isolated anecdotal successes may be good enough to buy a contract extension and a huge raise for the superintendent. But, I am wary of the false sense of security this creates among the key stakeholders.
- 3) I do not want a school administration that will set a poor role model to our children (and incur costs to our Town) by lying, withholding information, twisting facts or deliberately breaking the law, just as in this meeting.
- 4) I do not want the School Administration to play Russian Roulette with the local aid money.
- 5) I want a school administration that will tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, unlike the case of the West School principal.

I do not care if the local media and the school committee are more interested in highlighting the good news and censoring the bad news. This attitude only puts a higher responsibility on my shoulders to demand accountability, fiscal responsibility, transparency, and common sense from the School District Administration.

- ★ If you find it objectionable the fact that I fully support the US constitution, then go ahead and censure me.
- ★ If you find it objectionable the fact that I fully support the MGL, then go ahead censure me.
- ★ If you find it objectionable the fact that that I demand better student achievement, then go ahead and censure me.
- ★ If you find it objectionable the fact that that I demand transparency, accountability and honesty from the school administration, then go ahead and censure me.

Never forget, even the judges in the United States Supreme Court publish their dissenting opinions. They are not censured for dissenting opinions.

Some of Deb Sovinee's wild and sweeping accusations have been addressed in my web site: www.02072.org

You can find a discussion of how Sovinee and Rizzi falsified the lawyer fees in the school committee video at mms://71.184.118.35/TRMSVOD/1833-1-SchoolCommittee31213.wmv

AN INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

First, I would like to say that I consider this meeting to be an unfortunate continuation of the illegal practices that this school committee continuously engages in. My participation in this so-called censure is for the sole purpose of protecting my reputation as a father, scientist, and Committee

Member from being further slandered by the members of this committee. I cannot, in good conscience, allow my name to be defamed anymore without defending myself.

This committee accuses me of exceeding my authority as a committee member. However, on this very day, this committee attempts to censure me outside the scope of their own authority, statutory or otherwise. There is no authority, either in the by-laws of the town of Stoughton, or in the rules and regulations that govern this committee, which empowers the Madame Chairwoman with the power to call for the censure of another member of the committee. I challenge this committee to prove otherwise.

Incredibly, the members of this committee have created this power out of thin air. They do this simply because they disagree with my attempts to create greater transparency and accountability throughout the schools of Stoughton and, more particularly, within this committee. These actions are wildly undemocratic. The power to reprimand members of the committee is properly left to the voters in the town of Stoughton.

One of the chief accusations against my work as a committee member is that I have opened the school committee to so-called legal liability. More specifically, this committee accuses me, not-so eloquently, of being "a destructive force gobbling up" valuable time and money through legal complaints and the overturning of School Committee decisions. While it is true that I have brought complaints against the school committee, it is because this school committee regularly, as they are also doing here today, violates Massachusetts and Federal Law. These challenges have been repeatedly vindicated, courts have found this committee to have violated the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law and the Public Records Laws on many occasions. They were not a "waste" as the chairwoman wants you to believe. Instead of blaming me for legal fees, this Committee should stop breaking the law. I was elected to uphold the law and transparently represent the people of Stoughton. If the school committee continues to refuse to uphold the law, I will continue to require them to abide by it. It is my duty to do so.

The complaint against me, written by the Chairwoman, is riddled with generalized grievances and unsubstantiated accusations. For instance, The Chair of this committee alleges that I gave away School Committee strategy when negotiating with the teachers' union. However, the Chair neglects to include any details, such as what strategy I gave away, how I gave it away or who the supposed witnesses to this perceived transgression were. This is a violation of my right to Due Process under the United States and Massachusetts Constitutions.

Furthermore, this Committee accuses me of not being in favor of building a new high school last year. Last year I voted against the article because it was premature. Eventually, I was proven correct when the Stoughton SOI was not selected by the Massachusetts School Building Authority. Supposedly, I spoke disparagingly against the Committee after it was rejected. As a member of the school committee, it is my job to work towards the best plans possible and to point out the flaws of plans as I see them. That is what I was elected to do and what I must continue to do. To censure me for doing my job and exercising my right to free speech under the First Amendment of the United States is what this committee illegally purports to do today.

I am also being punished for advocating student achievement and holding this administration accountable. It is true, I have frequently spoken out against the deficiencies in the Stoughton Public Schools, and I will continue to do so until those deficiencies are remedied. Again, to punish me for speaking out against administration's incompetence, underachievement, misconducts and lack of transparency is a gross violation of my right to free speech - one of the most important constitutional protections afforded to the people of this country.

As a citizen, I will continue to exercise my right to free speech. As a committee member, I will continue to act on behalf of the best interests of the people and children of Stoughton. If this committee intends to move forward with this illegal, unauthorized hearing tonight and trample on

my constitutional rights, I will exercise all remedies available to me under Massachusetts and Federal Law.

At this time, as a member of this committee, a father of two children in Stoughton Public Schools, and a resident of Stoughton, I would implore this committee call off this hearing. So we can focus on what is important - the education of our children.

Chairwoman Sovinee's misconduct at the meeting:

- A) Did not allow the accused member's attorney speak
- B) Did not allow the concerned citizens speak. There were a lot of people wanting to speak at the meeting. Chairwoman Sovinee arbitrarily and capriciously made the school committee violate its own policy.
- C) Chairwoman Sovinee was the primary complainant in this witch-hunt she orchestrated. She was asked to step down as a chair of the proceedings because of this conflict. She refused.