

Subject: Bill Mudge Response to Misleading, Inaccurate Newspaper Articles.

Dear Friends and Readers

Please read this E-mail before you vote and vote accordingly.

This Email is forwarded to clarify and set the record straight regarding two inaccurate "View Points" articles that were published on page 12B and 13B of this Thursdays (10/28/4) Standard Times and to correct the misunderstanding that the \$1.1M bond issue for the North Kingstown golf course watering system will not cost the taxpayers any money.

First, I would like to say that this E-mail communication is the only way that I can contact and inform voter on several issues that I feel need clarification by next Tuesday's election. I recognize the concern and apologize if you feel I have inappropriately intruded on the privacy of your valuable time. I also apologize for not keeping with my intention to minimize the comments; however I feel after reading this E-mail you will be a more informed voter come next Tuesday. Please take the time to vote with all facts considered.

I would also like to mention that I have not solicited or accepted one penny for my efforts to have the **opportunity** to serve on the Town Council. Accordingly, I have not advertised to promote my election to this office, instead I have and will continue to depend on my published newspaper articles, the various candidate debate forums, the posting of a few signs and the word of mouth(including e-mail) to serve as my modem to the general public. Of course as an unaffiliated Independent candidate, the lack of party support and funding inhibits your ability to rapidly access and inform the community of the issues. Thus this E-mail.

My letter to the editor concerning "poor management" was published in the Standard Times on 10/21/4. It is the subject of an article, published this week, and written by the Chairman of the Republican Town Committee, Mark Zaccaria. I have included my article, FYI and reference, as an attachment to this E-mail.

Please take a few minutes to consider my open response to the articles written by Mr. Zaccaria and Mr. Gibbons and vote accordingly. Also, please consider forwarding this e-mail to your concerned friends or acquaintances so they may also have an opportunity to consider the merits of my response.

Most Respectfully,

Bill Mudge

Member, NK School Committee
Candidate NK Town Council

Issue 1) NK Golf Course Watering System Bond \$1.1M (Question 15)

The attached letter, items 14 and 15, specifically addressed this issue a week ago. One should know that the entire Recreation Budget is essentially funded with revenues received from the golf course. In FY03 and FY04 revenues totaled \$405,241 and \$393,383 respectively. This year, only \$200,000 has been budgeted as golf course revenue, which translates to the fact that \$193,000 of tax payer's, money is required to support this years Recreation Budget. I recommend the postponement of the installation of the watering system for one year which will save \$193,000 this year, and will allow clearer heads to reevaluate this need and in conjunction with a water conservation project (item 13) I have recommended on several past occasions. Also, not mention is that the Quonset Development Cooperation as proposed to relocated the Golf Course at no cost to the Town; **Saving us \$1.2M**. Again, please understand you have been misled by both public and elected officials regarding this matter. One only has to look at the very last page of the FY05 Town Budget for the truth.

Issue 2) Mr. Zaccaria Viewpoint that "Mudge has not offered specific solutions."

Had I had the timely opportunity to response to Mr. Zaccaria's article, this is what I would have written:

Mark, please re-read my letter published in the Standard Times on Oct 21(attachment to this E-Mail) and acknowledge the poor management of the past. As I believe I noted, there is only one common theme and solution to mitigate the sins of the past. We must elect individuals (regardless Republicans, Democrats or Independents) who will approach each new issue or problem with an unbiased mindset and absent of a hidden agenda, and who recognize the urgency of exercising good judgment, planning and the need to implement sound, cost effective management principles in their decision making process to ACT is in the best interest of our community.

Mark is it unclear to you, that the Town Manager and Superintendent have collectively "rope-a-doped" the community for years and we no longer need their services. Mark did you missed "the regular Republican candidates meeting" when the topic of Dr Halley's employment and removal was discussed by your colleagues? Your cunningly disguised support of Dr. Halley's management was well camouflaged as evidenced in your statement "I've been focusing on other matters". It must be quite awkward to the party as a whole to find that four of your fellow republican colleagues running for Town Council now understand and have come around to my long stated assessment and "**SOLUTION**" that the school department needs new leadership; despite the failure of your other republican school committee colleagues and candidates (C. Hueston, K. Mulvey, B. Martasian and D. Defedele) to understand the obvious. Explain this anomaly away!

I would also say to Mr. Zaccaria that it is very disingenuous on his part to suggest I unfairly dumped a history of "poor management" on him during "the final stages of a hotly contested political campaign". I said it over two years ago, I said it when I ran for the School Committee, I said it at every debate, at many school committee meetings and have written about it often. I even challenged the town manager and superintendent of schools to take me on, two heads to one, in a public debate to discuss my claims of poor management.

To be fair I invite Mr. Zaccaria to discuss the issues and participate in the debate, Zaccaria, Kerbel, Halley vs. Mudge. Let's openly discuss the 19 issues I included in my article of Oct 21 (attachment to this e-mail) concerning poor management. I would particularly welcome the identification and public discussion of any specific statements that you say "are incompletely stated or were flat out inaccurate." Please identify the errors of my way!!!!!!! Please invite your colleague running for school committee, Mr. Mulvey, so he can explain the reasons why he and his party authored a contract with Jamestown that allows their students to attend our high school at about \$1,500 per student less than what it cost to educate resident high school student.

Mr. Zaccaria, we are seeking a seat on the Town Council not the Presidency of this country. I have offered my comments and thoughts with the belief that I have presented the facts accurately and with integrity. I believe our voters want and deserve to hear the facts behind the issues in order to judge the merits of each candidate; I don't believe they want to hear misleading, convoluted political rhetoric that unfortunately and disgustingly permeates this Presidential election. Let's be honest and deal with the facts and stay away from the sewer tactics that stress and demand "the party must win at

all cost". As a community, we must be better than that, or as a county we are doomed to failure. If we practice good government in our home communities, good state and federal government will follow.

Mr. Zaccaria, I can not fathom how a reasonable and fully informed, knowledgeable person could evaluate the list of items I selected to identify and articulate what I believe "constitutes poor management". How could you not draw the same conclusion I have - poor management; arguably one could even say, if only half the items were correct one could still "only" draw the same conclusion. Please do not doubt or underestimate my ability to produce another much longer list of items that will also bolster my conclusions. I ask, how deep and how often must I dip into this well before one has enough water to quench his thirst in recognition of the obvious truth?

Again, I take exception to Mr. Zaccaria's most regrettable remarks that "I did not deliver on a promise to reduce school department expenditures." Indeed I did, for the past two years I was the first to recommend areas of the school budget that could be reduced without affecting school programs. Each time I voted against the school committee's proposed budget, only to be characterized by my fellow colleagues, including Republicans Hueston and Mulvey, for not being a "team" player for leading the effort to reduce wasteful school department expenditures. I do my research before the financial budget game starts, unlike my colleagues on the school committee who blindly follow the word of the Superintendent. It is I, Mr. Zaccaria, who has demand accountability, like wanting to know how over \$3.5M of Medicaid money was used over the past six years or why surplus school operating funds were diverted to pay off the \$5M High School, with out school committee approval. Yes, I am a team player, and I will not let down the "Community Team" I represent. Yes, it was the council that followed my lead to reduce the school budget.

Another most disingenuous statement made by Mr. Zaccaria was that "my formal complaints" to the Attorney General "has cost the town tens of thousands of dollars in unforecast legal fees". While I recognize Mr. Zaccaria has most likely obtain this outrageous and unsubstantiated input from colleagues, Mr. Mulvey or Mrs. Hueston, it is far, very far from the truth and he should be held accountable for echoing this false information. I would ask Mr. Zaccaria or the reader to call the school department and get a copy of all of the school committee's legal fee expenditures. I do not have the most current report, but from the data that was made available to me a several months ago, approx \$5,000 of legal fees can be attributed to rebutting my complaints to the AG's office. I expect additional expenditures will arise because of my yet resolved complaints regarding violations of our "Open

Meetings Law" and various improper contract awards and change order violations. Also, it should be noted that contrary to several unsubstantiated innuendoes and statements by Mr. Zaccaria, Mr. Mulvey, and Mrs. Hueston, the AG's office has not completed its review or investigative actions with respect to my complaints. Please take the opportunity to call the **Attorneys General's** Chief of Staff, Leonard L. Lopes, who will set the record straight.

Mr. Zaccaria, we have already recuperated more than the \$5,000 expenditure, because of my discovery of improper workmanship at Davisville Elementary school and my recommendation to the town sue the construction contractor that installed the three elementary school roofs. Specifically, an unauthorized quid pro quo arrangement valued at about \$7,000 was made to install five new interior ceilings at Davisville Elementary School as an offset for the failure of the contractor to comply with the provisions of his roof installation contract. What Mr. Zaccaria, Mulvey or Mrs. Hueston did not divulge is that Superintendent Halley spent; with out school committee approval or knowledge, over \$12,000 of school committee funds to pay for other legal fees concerning DEM violations and for a complaint filed by Governor's Commission of Disabilities with the Dept. of Education. In addition, and also not disclosed was that almost \$30,000 of legal fees and court awards were expensed because of the Superintendent's dislike and continued unwarranted pressure intimidation tactics directed at the President of the NK Teachers union. Of course, there was no mention of my leading efforts that resulted in a \$200,000 year long program to help "at risk kids" at the High School last year.

Finally, I was the first to say that the \$45M construction bond proposed by the School Committee was insane, with out merit and could not stand the justification and scrutiny of a planner and manager's cost effective eye. Why didn't Mr. Zaccaria make it clear that Council ignored the advice of its own Asset Management Commission until after voters turned down the Town Council's ill advised alternative \$23M pacifier bond issue? I believe the voters agreed with me and sent a clear message that a more thorough evaluation and cost efficient facilities plan is needed before they will spend another penny to "expand" our school facilities. Yet the council, to save face, now puts forth the Asset Managements Commissions original recommendations for a \$9M school repair bond that Mr. Zaccaria's own Republican School Committee colleagues do not support. Also how can it be justified to spend \$28M to expand four elementary schools and not consider the construction of a new school in the southern end of town? Speak of being disingenuous and misleading the public!!! Is this the type of "party leadership", regardless Democrat or Republican that we want to manage our community affairs for years to come? Again, I say NO!

Issue 3. Mr. Gibbons letter headline "Mudge wasted his large voter mandate".

Had I had the opportunity to response to Mr. Gibbon's article, this is what I would have written

The school department has put at risk the health and safety of our school children many times by continuing to violate health and safety regulations. Most notable, by conducting roof work on three elementary schools (Hamilton, Davisville Elem, and Stony Lane) while school was in session. Bill Mudge did not close DE and S/L for health/safety related reasons. It was the State of Rhode Island. State officials also have told me that Hamilton Elem should have been closed because of the tar vapors that were present in the building, but went unreported by the Superintendent of Schools. Least we forget, the administration ignoring the safety issues concerning bus stops at Westmoreland Estates and Gilbert Stuart Road. These issues are far for being over.

Regarding Mr. Gibbons statement that "The record - not one complaint substantiated or prosecuted!" in regards to Open Meeting Law violations, unauthorized contract awards, improper contact awards, procurement violations and quid pro quo arrangements that I have submitted to the Attorneys General Office, I can only say again, please contact Leonard L. Lopes, the Attorneys General Chief of Staff, who today informed me that the review, assessments and investigatory work concerning my complaints have not been completed and are in fact ongoing.

With regard to the Auditor Generals incomplete review (not audit) of inappropriate contract awards and budgeting practices, North Kingstown has been directed to account for the receipt and expenditure of all Medicaid Finds and to disclose these funds in the Financial Town Audit. Also overlooked was my complaint that the Town Council was withholding state aid from the School Committee. Just recently the Town Solicitor so advised the Council and as such an additional \$350,000 has been made available to the school committee.

With regard to working with my peers, I tried both off line and on line, to address and discuss many issues, but the fact of the matter is, they are unwilling to confront the substantive and tough issues related to the health and safety of our children, the superintendents unauthorized spending, poor planning and financial issues and of course poor management. Just last night

the committee refused to put on the agenda my request to discuss the illegal contract that Principal of the High School has entered into with regard to "senior pictures" while a 10% kick back gets spent without school committee knowledge or oversight. Again vetoed by Mr. Mulvey and Mrs. Hueston.

With regard to my motives, it is simple I want to do what's best for my community and I have learned from the past two years we can not expect to get much outside help from agencies like the Department of Education, Dept of Health or the Auditor Generals Office to solve our internal problems. As such, if I were elected to the Town Council I would only need two "reasonable" people to "listen" to my budget, safety, procurement and contract award concerns, which is all I ask. Nonetheless, the bottom line is that many municipal/school department issues overlap and only three Town Council votes are need to get our house in shape by starting with a full compliance audit of all town expenditures.

Finally I will like the reader to consider what Mr. Gibbons has not said, and draw his or her own conclusion with respect to Mr. Gibbons unfound criticism of my performance as an elected official.

Mr. Gibbons does not explain why Jamestown does not pay their full share towards the construction of the new school or why the high bidder for the design of high school was awarded the contract that cost the taxpayer an extra \$700,000. In fact there is no documented evidence that the selection criterion for the design contract was ever followed, except a statement from the Town Manager that said it was followed!! ??? Also Mr. Gibbons Jr. does not say who was on this high school design selection committee, Dr. Halley, Mr. Quinn and a **Mr. Gibbons**! Also, committee leader Richard Kerbel (Town Manager), hand selected Richard Pastore (Planning Commission/NK Building Committee/ISDS designer), Judy Pardo (NK Building Committee). I ask why was Building Committee Co-Chairman Jack Higby and Frank Cain were both overlooked for this committee.

Mr. Gibbons did not reveal who failed to get Jamestown to sign on the dotted line before agreeing to build extra space at the high school to house 200-300 of their students. Jamestown taxpayers, because of this failure, will get over \$350,000 off their tuition bill this year alone. He doses not say that I opposed the contract agreement or Dr Halley, Mr. Mulvey and Mrs. Hueston fell prey to Jamestown's threat to go elsewhere, and therefore orchestrated a contract most favorable to Jamestown's interest and leaving NK short changed.

Mr. Gibbons fails to explain who should be held responsible for a high school project over run of \$5,000,000 which drained much needed maintenance

monies away from nine other school buildings.

Mr. Gibbons fails to explain why the Town Council had to appropriate an additional \$1M to install a septic (IDS) at the new high school, three months after the high school construction contract was awarded for \$28.3M. Did he forget that the ISDS system was a requirement of the planning documents and was included in the \$33M budget estimate? Would he explain how you can build a new facility and leave out the septic system or why window vent fans had to be installed in the brand new chemistry labs? Could he explain why there are only 350 parking spaces at the new high school instead of the planned 600 that was budgeted?

Of course, Mr. Gibbons would not recognize that I have offered, on several occasions, to openly debate anyone, including the Town Manager and Superintendent of Schools, on the issues and facts related to my so called ascertains. Mr. Gibbons is also invited to join the debate team and make it a five some - four to one aren't bad odds! I've done what I said I would two years ago and I will continue to demand good planning and management, fiscal responsibility and accountability and efficient government.

Sincerely

Bill Mudge