

RECEIVED FOR RECORD 07/13/2009
AT 12:45 pm
ATTEST Patricia P. Sperry TOWN CLERK

July 13, 2009

Kevin Mercik
25 Indian Hollow Road
Windham, CT 06280

To the Members of the Windham Ethics Board:

I am writing to make you aware of a possible conflict of interest involving the chairman of the Windham Board of Education (BOE), Mr. Kenneth Folan. I fear that Mr. Folan may be abusing his position by participating in a vote that could benefit himself or his employer.

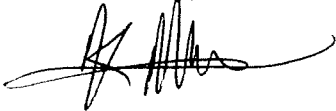
The BOE is considering a plan to outsource cafeteria services in our schools. Chairman Folan has spoken publicly in favor of the plan and recently announced that Sodexo was chosen as the "finalist" after a closed-door meeting of the board held Wednesday, July 8, 2009.

Mr. Folan is employed as a salesman for US Foodservice, the second-largest food distributor in the country. At the very least Mr. Folan should have fully disclosed his and his employer's business relationships to Sodexo, its subsidiaries, and Windham Public Schools at the time that the outsourcing issue was raised. Additionally, Mr. Folan should remove himself from any and all action on this matter to avoid the appearance of impropriety.

Although the outsourcing proposal is still under consideration, Sodexo has already posted and subsequently removed the position for food service manager in Willimantic. It appears that Sodexo fully expects to be the cafeteria contractor in Windham (and has for some time) even though the board announced them as the finalist only last week, and still has not voted to approve the plan.

A reading of the public record indicates that Mr. Folan's actions and entanglements may be improper. You will find documents supporting my concerns enclosed with this letter. I ask that you please investigate this matter fully, and encourage Mr. Folan to recuse himself from the outsourcing vote.

Sincerely,



Kevin Mercik

From the Willimantic Chronicle
Published 10/27/03

Christina Hall - Chronicle Staff Writer

WINDHAM — With four seats up for grabs, two Republicans and two Democrats are seeking seats for the Windham board of education Nov. 4.

Republican Ken Folan, and Democrats Paula Haney and Diane Rayhall, are incumbents. Lynne Weeks, current board chairman, is not running for re-election. Republican Mark Doyle hopes to step into her vacated seat.

Barring any third party candidate wins, the four major party candidates stand to be elected.

Doyle, 49, had his long tenure on the board interrupted when he lost a bid for re-election in 1999.

During his time on the board, he served as vice chairman.

With a son at Windham High School, he is currently president of the Dollars for Scholars program and works as business manager at Wile Motors in Columbia.

Doyle said he wants to take a second look at the Wednesday half-day schedule approved by the board this school year.

Also, in light of the recent decision by selectmen to reject the arbitration decision on teacher contracts, he said he wants to focus on repairing the strained relationship between the board of education and teachers.

“I think the school system works very hard for the kids,” Doyle said.

If elected, he wants to work to improve test scores by improving the continuity of curriculum in all schools.

Republican ~~Ken Folan~~ Ken Folan, 41, is also seeking a second term on the board.

He grew up in Rhode Island, one of 12 children, and moved to Windham in 1985. He has two sons who both attend Windham schools. He has served for the last eight years as chairman of the Republican town committee.

Folan said he brings a mix of both business and education to the board. A salesman for U.S. Food Service, he has degrees in history and education.

“I’m one of the few people on the board now who can come to the table with a business viewpoint,” he said.

Democrat Diane Rayhall, 40, is seeking her second term on the board of education.

She has been involved in town politics for years, serving as deputy Democratic registrar of voters for the past nine years. Rayhall works at the Putnam branch of Fleet Bank, as a senior business specialist.

A lifelong Windham resident, she is married to Victor Rayhall, member of the board of selectmen.

She has three children, two who attend Windham Regional Vocational-Technical School and one enrolled in the agricultural program at E.O. Smith High School in Mansfield.

“I think it is really important for us to advocate heavily for our children,” Rayhall said.

One concern she had four years ago was the high dropout rate at Windham High School. Over her term, she has seen an improvement, but wants to continue working to see it decrease.

Democratic colleague Paula Haney, 51, has served on the board of education for more than 10 years and is seeking re-election.

A New Haven native, she moved to Windham after earning a degree in physical therapy from the University of Connecticut. She works at St. Joseph’s Living Center as director of rehabilitation.

Her three children all attended Windham schools. It was through involvement with the PTO that she first became interested in the school board.

A priority for the board of education will be “looking at what state and federal mandates are, especially in light of reductions in funding,” according to Haney.

One concern for Haney is meeting the needs of all children, given the movement toward heterogeneous classrooms, where children of all ability levels learn together.

Job posting for Food Service Manager

<http://www.simplyhired.com/job-id/i5qlrwpuyy/general-manager-jobs/>

Originally posted on monster.com

General Manager - Food

Sodexo - Willimantic, CT

Sodexo is seeking an experienced General Manager 3 to manage a \$1.5MM K-12 School District comprised of 6 Schools. You will lead a team of 40 employees and will be responsible for the Financial Performance of this account, bringing a history of proven success in cost controls, quality programs and operating efficiencies. The best qualified candidate will have superior Client & Customer Service skills as you will interface with the District Superintendent, School Principals and the student population on a frequent basis. Knowledge of USDA Regulations regarding National School Programs and previous experience in a K-12 Schools Account is highly desired. Seeking bi-lingual Candidates as the ability to speak Spanish will assist in managing this Account. Union experience is a plus. This position...

originally from Monster -