Rob Gauthier Statement regarding recent events.

We swear an oath to “faithfully and impartially discharge and perform all duties incumbent on us a members of the Select Board, according to the best of our abilities, agreeably to the rules and regulations of this constitution and laws of the state of New Hampshire.”

As members of the Select Bard, we are responsible for “managing the prudential affairs of the town.” That sometimes requires that we go into non-pubic session. We do that when divulging certain matters would be an invasion of privacy, or would adversely affect the reputation of some person other than a member of the public body, or would render proposed municipal action ineffective. Legal advice falls into this last category. Our oath means that we can’t divulge things that we’ve voted to be non-public.

Ms. Maroney has asked questions about the town’s use of lawyers. Some of her comments were directed to Mr. Scalley, but as Chair I want to address her comments. We try to control legal costs. Legal advice is most useful as an ounce of prevention. In the long run, making sure we handle things properly helps us avoid more expensive problems later. Sometimes we need lawyers because legal problems come up that we have no control over. Like when someone threatens to sue the town or actually does sue the town. We try to avoid those situations—and a lot of times our lawyers solve those problems before they get to that point. But sometimes we get dragged into a legal fight that couldn’t be avoided. And there can be times where we have to bring a case to make sure the town’s interests are protected. Like any town expense, depending on the issues that come up, legal fees can be less than we budget or more.

As Chair, I want to make sure we stay focused on what we’ve been elected to do. Our job is to manage the affairs of the town. With the COVID-19 situation, these are very stressful times. Everybody feels it. But we should remember our oath and do our jobs.