

March 14, 2022

To the Residents of West Stockbridge and the members of the West Stockbridge Select Board

After months of consideration and deliberation with people whose counsel I value, I have decided that I will resign from the Select Board, effective May 9, 2022, the date of the next Annual Town election. Until that date I will continue to serve as an active member of the Select Board and will complete the specific assignments I have taken on independently or at the request of the Board.

I am providing notice of my resignation at this time, which is 10 days before the date of the Town Caucus, so that someone who is interested in serving the remaining two years of my term can step forward now and get their name on the 2022 election ballot.

This is not a decision that I made lightly. I was an active audience member at Select Board meetings from the time we moved here in 2016 until I ran for and was elected to the Select Board in 2020. I decided to run for office because I thought I could use the knowledge and experience I gained over my career in the private and public sectors to bring some much needed structure to the processes of governing and managing the Town of West Stockbridge. Since my first week on the Select Board and continuing through today, I have strived to ensure that the Town government is responsive to the needs of the whole community, that the business of the Select Board is conducted transparently and that decisions being made are fact based and considerate of the financial impact on all Town residents .

I have learned a lot in my 22 months on the Select Board. I've learned that prior Boards and Administrators, all with good intentions, have left behind a seemingly endless number of not quite finished tasks and poorly executed decisions that have plagued the Select Board from the start of my tenure. I've learned that the current structure of the Town government is a template for inefficiency, where everyone reports to the Select Board but the Select Board itself does not have the authority to oversee or coordinate the day-to-day administration of the Town. I've learned that the Town is slowly and not so quietly splitting into factions, one that wants "everything to be like it used to be" and one that sees "transformation as the only answer for the future". I believe the Select Board needs to actively bridge that divide and ensure that the voices of both groups are heard and their collective needs are recognized in all Select Board deliberations and decisions. From my point-of-view, that is not happening adequately today.

Finally, I have learned that in spite of the time and effort I have expended over the past 22 months, little has changed, and the prospect for making a meaningful impact seems no closer now than it did in May of 2020. In summary, these are the reasons I have chosen to step away now.

I wish the best for my successor, the Select Board and the Town, and will do everything I can to ensure a smooth transition.

Respectfully
Roger Kavanagh