

Fauquier Leaks—Correcting The Record

I applaud *Fauquier Leaks* for its colorful use of AI-Generated cartoons on their web site, and I am all for political opposition expressing their views—as long as they are not playing fast and loose with the facts. Cartoons can be a powerful way to clarify an issue, however cartoons are only effective and meaningful when they are fact-based and truthful—not when they are designed to mislead citizens. In my continuing effort to inform Warrenton citizens let me rebut some of the more egregious claims *Fauquier Leaks* make, and some claims made on Karen Lavarney's Facebook page (my opponent in the last election).

First from Ms. Lavarney's Facebook page:



Karen Lavarney

20h · 🌐

...

Gagnon is trying to close the WARF!



6 comments

1. I am not trying to close the WARF, it is a wonderful amenity—but one that comes at a cost. I am doing my job informing citizens of what it costs to run and maintain the WARF and asking them to let me know if they want to continue supporting it, knowing the tax implications it means for citizens.



Karen Lavarney

November 9 at 8:08 AM · 🌐

...

Gagnon, I see you shared your private phone for FOIA's but yet you did not show your private email. Mr Transparency, what are you hiding on your private emails?

"Eric Gagnon" <eric@jumpcode.com>
Fri, 10 Oct 2025 17:15:41 -0400
"egagnon@warrentonva.gov" <egagnon@warrentonva.gov>
Town E-Mail Records Review Resolution for Ne
Resolution - Town E-Mail Access - 10-08-2025.d

...DO NOT CLICK links or attachments unless you recognize the sender

own Manager, Mayor, Town Attorney cc'd:

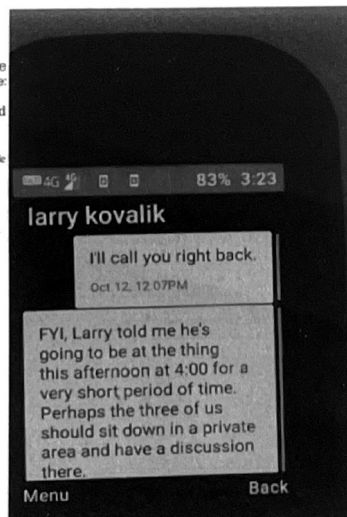
I for this item to be placed on the agenda for
a September 22nd, over three weeks before next
sent to the Town Council Handbook guidelines.

Mr Town Manager acknowledged this fact, and said
I in the generic "closed session" entry pending

indicated that I would be taking up this item at
commission meeting. Mr. Clough asked me for this
6th, which I provided it to him on October 8th.
is item was not placed on the agenda for next
it was just posted this afternoon.

for your review is the Town E-Mail Records Review

resolution concerns the issue of whether or not
granted Commission, has the right to broad access



2. I am not hiding my private phone number or email address—it is printed on almost all my communication materials and available via FOIA if not already there in prior FOIAs. In this most recent FOIA request, I have turned over everything that was asked for and will continue to fully comply with any FOIA request.

and certain quotes are from the web site *FauquierLeaks.org* and reprinted here under fair use policy

Fauquier Leaks—Correcting The Record Continued...

Karen Lavarney
October 30 at 7:45 AM · 🌐

Why is Gagnon forwarding his town email to his personal email? What else is he sending from his personal email that we can't see?

From: "Eric Gagnon" <egagnon@warrentonva.gov>
Sent: Wed, 22 Oct 2025 14:36:00 +0000
To: "Eric Gagnon" <eric@jumpcode.com>
Subject: Fw: VACP and VPBA Letters and Your Directive to Stephen Clough

Get Outlook for iOS

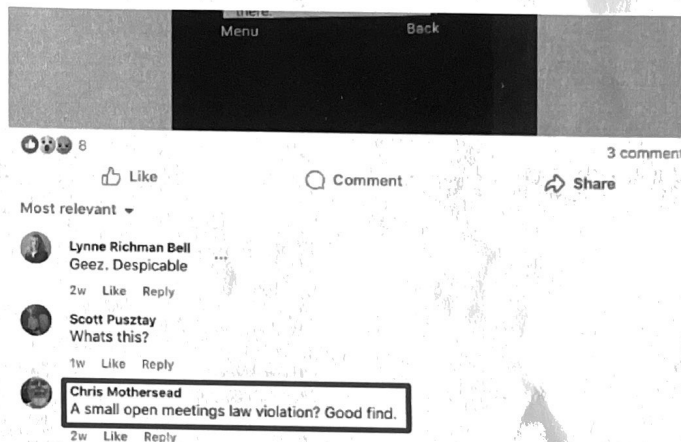
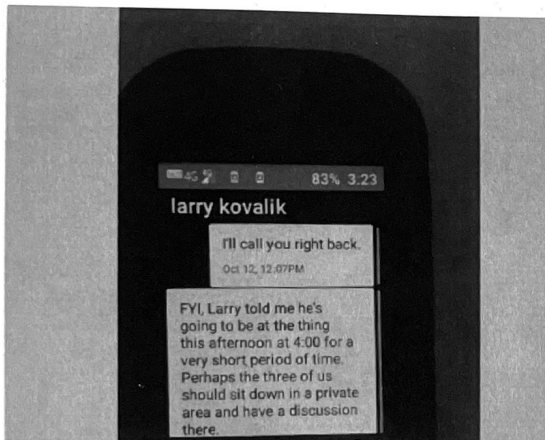
From: Carter Nevill <cnevill@warrentonva.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 6:18 PM
To: Eric Gagnon <egagnon@warrentonva.gov>
Cc: William Sample <wsample@warrentonva.gov>; Roy Francis <rfrancis@warrentonva.gov>; Paul Mooney <pmooney@warrentonva.gov>; Larry Kovalik <lkovalik@warrentonva.gov>; Michele O'Halloran <mohalloran@warrentonva.gov>; David McGuire <dmcguire@warrentonva.gov>; Stephanie Miller <smiller@warrentonva.gov>; Frank Cassidy <fcassidy@warrentonva.gov>; Chap Petersen <cp@petersenfirm.com>; Whit Robinson <whitsonrobinson@gmail.com>; Stephen Clough <scclough@warrentonva.gov>
Subject: Re: VACP and VPBA Letters and Your Directive to Stephen Clough

Eric,

3. I forward my Government emails to my private email for organizational purposes. My personal phone is a flip phone, not a smart phone so I have to forward my government email to my private email in order to offload them to my computer so I can put them in folders where I am able to pull them up easily when needed. My Town emails are public record so this is yet another false claim designed to mis-inform instead of enlighten.

Karen Lavarney
October 29 at 4:29 AM · 🌐

Want to see how transparent Gagnon is? Here's a screen shot of his personal phone.



4. This is an example of how much harm an untrue and out of context claim posted on social media can be. Here, Karen implies that an illegal meeting has taken place and has indeed mislead a Warrenton citizen as seen in the comments. If Karen had bothered to ask, she would have learned that the third person in this conversation was not another councilman. but instead was a Warrenton resident.

* All graphics and certain quotes are from the web site FauquierLeaks.org and reprinted here under fair use policy

Fauquier Leaks—Correcting The Record Continued...

Karen Lavarney
October 23 at 8:56 AM

Come to the Nov 12 Warrenton town council meeting and tell Gagnon to back off!



5. Here Karen posts a cartoon from *Fauquier Leaks*. This is particularly egregious because Karen and *Fauquier Leaks* know that the Transparency Commission has no interest and will have no access to the tax information of Warrenton citizens. This is an outrageous claim designed to create fear and should be publicly withdrawn and a public apology made.

Karen Lavarney
October 22 at 8:15 AM

Say NO to Eric Gagnon for Town Council • Ward 5!



6. This is another outrageous example of mis-informing the public. The transparency Commission will not be accessing any private citizen information—it is the exact opposite. They are looking into town records in regard to three land use projects. These records are owned by the public and this is an effort to find out how the approval of three developments were made and also to re-establish the principle that citizens have a presumptive right to view their own town records within FOIA requirements.

Fauquier Leaks—Correcting The Record Continued...

Posts and quotes from the *Fauquier Leaks* page:

"At the October 2025 Town Council meeting, Eric Gagnon, Larry Kovalik, Paul Mooney, and David McGuire voted to fire Town Manager Frank Cassidy — without warning and without explanation. Three Council Members — Bill Semple, Michelle O'Halloran, and Roy Francis said they were completely blindsided. Even the Mayor had no idea it was coming. No plan. No reason. No transparency."—Fauquier Leaks



7. No one enjoys firing an employee and each councilman had their own reasons why they thought Mr. Cassidy was not working out. We chose to fire him without cause in order to allow him his severance pay and also we didn't want to drag him through the mud publicly because that might hurt his future job-seeking prospects. Again—if we had fired Mr. Cassidy with cause, he would be due no severance pay.

FROM: INFO@FAUQUIERLEAKS.ORG
TO: Eric Gagnon
No asking of anyone. Pure info. Otherwise off the rails.
INFO: INFO@FAUQUIERLEAKS.ORG

On Monday, October 13, 2025, 6:01 PM, Eric Gagnon <info@faulquiereaks.org> wrote:

SCRIPT FOR CLOSED SESSION RE: FRANK CASSIDY

CLOSED SESSION OPENING (Frank is NOT in the room)

1) We have a consensus among the Town Council to terminate the Town's employment contract with Frank Cassidy without cause, effective immediately.

2) I'd like to go around the room and see each of you if I read aloud okay or go.

3) [Each Council member responds-RESPONSE? THIS IS NOT A VOTE]

4) O.K. we have [all] votes to terminate his contract at will.

5) This is settled, so let's call Frank up here to let him know.

(Frank enters room)

1) A majority of the Town Council has agreed to terminate your employment contract without cause, effective immediately.

2) We will get Kathy (phone and cell) can leave your building keycard. Your phone, laptop, and any other items you have with you and leave the building. If it's not here, drive your Town vehicle over to Town Hall and drop off the keys to Kathy. She will make arrangements to take you, pick up the rest of your personal items on Monday, the week of the weekend.

3) (Kathy Kaser and collect Frank's Town property)

FRANK: WITHOUT CAUSE MEANS NO EXPLANATION IS NEEDED. IF ASKED, OUR ONLY REPLY IS "IT'S TIME FOR A CHANGE."

8. This "script" is nothing unusual. All town councilmen plan how they want to present their views in front of the council and often work together to present their views. As long as council members comply with open meeting rules, then there is nothing out of order here.

Posts and quotes from the *Fauquier Leaks* page:

“At the October Town Council meeting, Eric Gagnon suddenly proposed holding a meeting to discuss firing the Town Attorney — the same attorney he and this council proudly hired just months ago. Once again, Council Members were blindsided. And once again, the citizens of Warrenton were left in the dark, given no explanation and no transparency.”—Fauquier Leaks

9. For quite awhile several council members had issues with Town Attorney Chap Petersen's advice that more often came in the form of political advice instead of legal advice. Mr. Petersen was fully aware of the issues we were having with him because a lot of discussion had taken place between council members and Mr. Petersen. It was no surprise to him—in fact—he resigned before the replacing discussion even began.

“How can a commission claim to be open and transparent when it’s stacked with people who have already made up their minds? Is this about fairness and truth — or about finding justification for decisions they’ve already decided to make?”—Fauquier Leaks

10. If the Transparency Commission was “stacked” why has there been so much division and debate among Commission members. Believe me—the members of the Commission are not walking in lock step.



Open and Transparent? Are They Breaking the Law? Is Our Data at Risk of Privacy Protections? Are They Firing Staff Who Get in the Way of Getting Access to Data?

11. This is another egregiously misleading post. The Transparency Commission will not be looking at citizen data. They are looking at Town emails between certain prior and town council members, lead staff, and developers—and also any related documents pertaining to the three land use approvals the commission was tasked to investigate. The commission is asking for access following FOIA rules and are not asking for the staff or the police department to do anything illegal. The assertion that the commission would knowingly or unknowingly access police records is a red herring. All emails coming from any law enforcement organization can be easily filtered out of the search query process.

In Summary

I have always been an advocate of directly informing the citizens on local issues because after all it's their money that pays for our local government. Citizens need to understand what is going on inside their local government and how their money is spent so they can be meaningfully involved in self-governance.

Fact-based communication has been the cornerstone of my service on town Council, and I would just like to add that I have always communicated honestly and openly with the intention of maintaining an open and transparent government for the benefit of the citizens.

The intention behind communication is important and defines it. If the intent is to inform and educate honestly for the benefit of citizens it's an important and useful activity.

...But if the intent is to dishonestly attack for political reasons based on falsehoods with the intent to misinform that is not a good thing and ultimately will never win the day.

And while we are on the subject of transparency, I see that Karen Lavarney vigorously supports *Fauquier Leaks* but does not openly claim any involvement with the web site. The website also does not have an "about" link to inform citizens on *who* created this content. Knowing the source is very important in order for citizens to judge the veracity of the content they present.

Eric Gagnon, Town Council, Ward 5