

**Communication
to be read at Government Study Commission Meeting
on March 7, 2007**

TO: GSC Members:

I continue to find your conduct of the GSC deeply troubling.

Regarding the Feb 28 scheduling of public meetings:

The "Public Meetings" item appears on the agenda of the Feb 28 meeting. During that discussion I raised the question regarding the decision on scheduling and location of public meetings, namely, why had those dates and locations already been chosen.

I specifically stated my concern that as an elected member of the GSC I am entitled, and want the opportunity to participate in the public meeting scheduled for Lock Haven. Given your designated start times, the Lock Haven meeting is the only one I could hope to arrive at before it adjourned. I noted that no formal public notice of the meeting dates or locations had yet been advertised. I also noted that a simple shuffling of locations could suffice to enable even this minimal participation. Given that the item was on the GSC agenda for the meeting at which I was speaking, my request was in order, timely, and legitimate.

Your responses were that "those decisions had been made at the Feb 21 meeting" (Hanna), and very pointedly that I was "not present at that meeting so missed my opportunity for input" (Robinson).

I call your attention to the agenda for the Feb 21 meeting as distributed on both Feb 16 and Feb 19, 2007. Discussion of "Public Meetings" is NOT on either version of the agendas I received for Feb 21, 2007. Had it been, I would have been afforded the opportunity to express my concerns in a timely manner.

Given that the GSC is obligated to operate under its own By-Laws, your Feb 21 actions deciding on the public meetings schedules were out of order.

Regarding the scheduling of GSC meetings:

I have repeatedly stated my concern that as an elected member of the GSC I am entitled to, and wanted the opportunity to fully participate in its deliberations. You have repeatedly taken actions that preclude me from doing so.

You have consistently engaged in individual actions to prevent me from being heard; whether it be the Chair allowing members to repeatedly interrupt me, to consistently hurl insults and/or vulgar and obscene remarks; or not recognizing me to speak; or when not chairing the meeting, choosing to aggressively interrupt me when I was the last person to have the floor at a lengthy meeting.

As a group, you decided to reschedule meetings to begin at a time which you knew would preclude my opportunity to fully participate. When reminded of your actions, you respond variously that you were unaware of my schedule (Day), that I was not singled out (Robinson), that everyone's needs were taken into consideration (Hanna), etc.

Your responses ring hollow in light of the record. I call your attention to the minutes of our very first meeting (November 2005) as the GSC. The motion to hold the meetings at 6:30 PM died for lack of a second. After discussion...the discussion in which I noted that due to my teaching schedule I cannot meet before 7:00 PM...the GSC agreed to begin its meetings at 7:00 PM. In October 2006 you again, in my absence, moved to change meeting times. The minutes of November 1, 2006 recount the discussion wherein you were again told I cannot meet before 7:00 PM, and the meeting time was moved back. Then in December 2006, again when I would be out of town, you proposed to change meeting times. You were advised again, in writing this time, that I could not meet before 7:00 PM. At the Jan 3, 2007 meeting, with me again out of state, you rescheduled meetings to begin at 6:30 PM. The vote was "unanimous", done as the first item of business. Interesting that the meeting began at 7:00 with only four members present, and in fact there was no quorum present to conduct business until 7:30 PM, long after this vote was taken.

The starting time of the GSC meetings in itself might seem trivial, except that you also changed the order of doing business on the GSC Agenda. On November 7, 2007 the seven members present voted to permanently change the order of business to move the significant business of the GSC to the top of the agenda. That combination, reordering the agenda and rescheduling the meeting to start a full 30 minutes before I could possibly arrive ended my ability to fully participate.

Now I call your attention to the By-Laws. Article 4, Section 1. Order of Business clearly lays out the agenda sequence and order of business. As a part of the By-Laws, to change the order of business requires a By-Laws amendment. No such By-Law amendment procedure was ever attempted nor accomplished. A simple motion passed by a majority vote of those present (7) was not sufficient to accomplish a required By-Laws change.

Given that the GSC is obligated to operate under its own By-Laws, your actions on November 7, 2007 changing the order of business were out of order. You have conducted meetings in breach of the By-Laws since that date.

You publicly proclaim your thoughtfulness and accommodation, then declare that my statements to the effect that I am not being afforded the opportunity to fully participate are "not true" (Day).

The record of your actions spells out a very different reality. You have consistently engaged in behaviors that either through design or “just coincidence” have the effect of silencing opposition, criticism, or questions.

You conduct yourselves inappropriately, abuse a duly elected member of the commission with whose views you disagree, make decisions ignoring proper procedures, and disregard the Laws you have sworn an oath to uphold.

Ironic isn't it, you use your power to engage in exactly those behaviors for which you condemn the county commissioners, or haven't you noticed.

Respectfully,
Kathleen McQuaid