

## Donna Conkling

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**From:** Mary Beth Gose <mbgose@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 17, 2018 4:42 PM  
**To:** Mayor; Clerk's Department  
**Subject:** 2018 BAR Appointments

Dear Mayor Hochvert and Trustees Arest, Callaghan, Crandall, Finger, Ross, and Veron,

The Board of Trustees' decision on April 10 not to reappoint a highly qualified and experienced member of the Board of Assessment (BAR) has raised serious questions about appropriate policies and procedures. On April 10 you renominated one BAR member whose term was expiring but failed to renominate Jane Curley, whose term was also expiring. To fill the two resulting openings, you appointed two relatively recent Scarsdale residents, neither of whom appear to have real estate or valuation experience, nor do they have sufficient duration in the community to meet the statutory requirements for the BAR.

Further, despite requests for an explanation from the public (including Ms. Curley) at the meeting, except for announcing the appointments and acting to approve them, you simply chose to remain silent.

For those of you who do not know me, I served as a Trustee for two terms, on both the Village and School Boards. I also served as Chair of the Village Board's Personnel Committee. As a result, I am well-acquainted with the appropriate policies and procedures.

Why did you decide not to reappoint Ms. Curley? My understanding is that you did not reach out to her and ask if she was interested in being reappointed. You treated her differently than you had treated Tom Giordano, a seasoned BAR member whose term was also up, and who was contacted about serving a second term. Your actions in Ms. Curley's case are not consistent with the practices followed by the Village Board when I served. Further, I understand that not only is Ms. Curley highly qualified, but she had also been an active, contributing member of the BAR, and that the other continuing BAR members expressed their support for her directly to you before the last Board meeting.

I understand that, under the Open Meetings Law, you are not required to disclose information about personnel decisions. However, if you are not basing your decision about Ms. Curley on poor performance, then it would be helpful for you to answer Ms. Curley and publicly explain the rationale for your decision. Hiding behind a legal shield does not relieve you of your duty to be publicly accountable for your actions.

Without your explanation, people will speculate about your rationale. Given that Ms. Curley was an active supporter of the Voters Choice Party Candidates in the last two elections, one obvious explanation for your decision is her support of opposition candidates and views. If this is your rationale, then I am very concerned about the message that you are sending to the residents, including volunteers, here. Your message seems to be that you will not be appointing any resident to a volunteer Board, if she supports an opposition candidate and does not express views with which you agree. If this is your rationale, then it is an anathema to the principles of non-partisanship.

I appreciate your willingness to volunteer your time and serve the residents in Scarsdale. I understand many of the challenges that you face as Board members. However, I do not respect your silence on the issue of your decision not to reappoint Ms. Curley, a willing volunteer, to the BAR. Your silent message is deafening.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Beth Gose  
205 Secor Road