

TOWN OF CANAAN
Office of the Board of Abatement
Po Box 159
318 Christian Hill
Canaan, VT 05903

To: Jonathan Benoit
From: Canaan Board of Abatement
Date: March 5, 2026
RE: Response to Alleged violation of Vermont's Open Meeting Law – Benoit 02/23/26

Dear Mr. Benoit,

Thank you for your written notice dated February 23, 2026, regarding the alleged violation of Vermont's Open Meeting Law, 1 V.S.A. §§ 310-314, during your Board of Abatement hearing on October 15, 2025, for Parcel R03017.B.

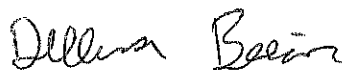
The Board of Abatement has reviewed your complaint alleging that substantive input was received from Jean Wilson (NEMRC assessor) after you were dismissed from the hearing. We determine that no violation of the Open Meeting Law occurred because Ms. Jean Wilson did not provide any substantive information during the deliberative session.

The hearing before the Board of Abatement hearings was a quasi-judicial proceeding as defined by 1 V.S.A. § 310(8). The hearing in this case was a “case in which the legal rights of one or more persons who are granted party status are adjudicated, which is conducted in such a way that all parties have opportunity to present evidence and to cross-examine witnesses presented by other parties, which results in a written decision, and the result of which is appealable by a party to a higher authority.”

After the hearing the Board of Abatement went into deliberative session. “‘Deliberations’ means weighing, examining, and discussing the reasons for and against an act or decision, but expressly excludes the taking of evidence and the arguments of parties.” 1 V.S.A. § 310(3). Deliberations are not meetings subject to Vermont’s Open Meeting Laws. See 1 V.S.A. § 310(5) and § 312(e). Specifically, states that the open meeting laws do not “extend to the deliberations of any public body in connection with a quasi-judicial proceeding; nor shall anything in this section be construed to require the making public of any proceedings”

Since the deliberative sessions were not open meetings, no response is necessary and no cure is necessary. If you have further questions or wish to appeal the abatement decision under 24 V.S.A. § 1538, please contact the Town.

Respectfully Submitted:



Chairman Dillon Begin
On behalf of the Town of Canaan Board of Abatement