

**From:** [Griesemer, Lynn](#)  
**To:** [Town Council Members](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Town Councilors speaking during Community Safety Working Group (CSWG) Community Forums  
**Date:** Monday, January 25, 2021 6:13:26 PM  
**Attachments:** [Community Safety Working Group \(CSWG\) Public Forum Bockelman em 01-12-21.pdf](#)  
[CSWG Community Forums January 2021 flyer from News and Announcements.jiff](#)

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Dear Colleagues:

Below is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of 2 emails from Alisa and includes the attached.

Lynn

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**From:** Brewer, Alisa <brewera@amherstma.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 25, 2021 6:01 PM  
**To:** Griesemer, Lynn <GriesemerL@amherstma.gov>; O'keeffe, Athena <okeeffea@amherstma.gov>  
**Cc:** Bockelman, Paul <bockelmanp@amherstma.gov>  
**Subject:** Town Councilors speaking during Community Safety Working Group (CSWG) Community Forums

This is a two-part set of emails regarding the letter published at 4:45 pm today by the Community Safety Working Group in the Town Council packet 01-25-21 labeled [6.a.CSWG Town Council Letter](#)

A separate email describes the Public Comment portion of the Community Safety Working Group Public Meeting 01-16-21, entitled "Apology for bringing up avoiding Open Meeting Law violations during CSWG Public Comment 01-16-21"

No member of the Community Safety Working Group has discussed these matters with me.

I heard Sunday from people who had watched the video of the Community Safety Working Group Public Meeting of Friday 01-25-21 that my participation in the Public Comment portion of the Community Safety Working Group Public Meeting Saturday 01-16-21 and the following Community Forum later in that 01-16-21 Public Meeting had been the topic of conversation.

I write here with my understanding of the video of that Friday 01-25-21 meeting, plus the fact that a letter was referenced in the Community Safety Working Group slides placed in our packet this morning at 11:22, and the Community Safety Working Group letter that was placed in our packet this afternoon at 4:45.

The Town Manager sent an email to the Town Council 01-12-21 regarding the presence of Town Councilors at either Community Safety Working Group (CSWG) Community Forums on Wednesday 01-13-21 and Saturday 01-16-21. Please see attached.

At the CSWG Meeting, Community Forum portion Wednesday 01-13-21, one Town Councilor spoke twice, and no other Town Councilors spoke.

At the CSWG Meeting, Community Forum portion Saturday 01-16-21, a different Town Councilor than Wednesday 01-13-21 spoke once, and no other Town Councilors spoke. However, that same Town Councilor had also spoken during the earlier typical Public Comment portion of the CSWG Meeting Saturday 01-16-21.

I am the Town Councilor who spoke once during the Community Forum portion Saturday 01-16-21, having additionally spoken during the typical Public Comment period scheduled at the beginning of the Public Meeting.

I was not intending to speak at all during the Community Forum, because I thought it was better for Town Councilors to not speak at all during the Community Forum portion of the CSWG Public Meeting, even though time had been set aside for white people to speak after all BIPOC people were heard. I understand that elected Town Councilors already have a position of power under our Charter.

Unfortunately, when I was referenced by name by a previous speaker during the Community Forum, which was a very unusual use of speaking of lived experiences, I felt compelled to speak when recognized during the white people portion of the Community Forum, in order to provide fuller context, without mentioning the name of the speaker who used my name. Three speakers gave their truth during the Community Forum between myself and the person who had named me.

Had Town Councilors been advised that the CSWG preferred to not have the Town Council speak at all during the Community Forum, even during the white portion of the Community Forum, even if mentioned by name, I would have abided by that preference and remained silent, as we do at Town Council meetings during Public Comment.

A Town Councilor spoke at the first Community Forum Wednesday 01-13-21, and no mention was made of that needing to be avoided at the second Community Forum Saturday 01-16-21.

I did not understand the Town Manager's Tuesday email referenced above to have communicated that no-speaking preference, nor that the stated CSWG Public Forum ground rules at the Community Forum regarding speaking from our own experience at the Community Forum to have been sufficient to tell me to keep quiet when I was in fact referenced by name.

Below are excerpts from the automated transcripts for CSWG 01-16-21 Community Forum portion of the CSWG 01-16-21 Public Meeting.

I was indeed moved by the many statements people were willing to make in public. I also heard multiple people say that it was not appropriate to expect BIPOC members of our community to continually bear the burden of this ongoing work, while at the same time the work was so necessary and should not be perceived as once and done. I heartily agree, but I would have remained silent in this venue had I not been mentioned by name.

I was a bit upset that I was mentioned by name, as far as I recall the only person mentioned by name, in context of an appointed town body that the speaker did not indicate they had any lived experience of being part of, which naming felt well outside the ground rules of the Community Forum.

I -- unfortunately -- then felt compelled to clarify (see transcript below) when recognized during the designated white person speaking space, with three intervening speakers, that I had not been part of that appointed body, while also expressing my deep shame for not doing a better job in the past of following through, when I later came into an elected role where I could have insisted that the Select Board compel the Town Manager (then) explain more about how the work of the appointed Police Stops Committee had actually been used to improve our community, and next steps to be undertaken -- not once and done.

Even though there was zero indication that the speaker who named me was in any way speaking from their lived experience of an appointed town racial profiling committee that existed some years ago, given that I did speak, in addition to my appropriately not naming the speaker, I should also not have used the word "modification" because in hindsight of course it is perceived as "correction," and one cannot and must not attempt to correct anyone's experience. That was a poor choice of wording, and I apologize.

I should not have spoken at the Community Forum, because I am a Town Councilor who is there to listen.

I should not have taken offense that I was mentioned by name, despite the Community Forum ground rules that said speaking from our own experience.

I do commit to not speaking at future CSWG Community Forums. I will continue to listen.

I am very sorry for any frustration my speaking at the CSWG Community Forum portion of the CSWG Public Meeting 01-16-21 has caused any members of our community, for any offense taken by the speaker who named me, or felt by any other speakers, listeners, and possible speakers, and especially to those devoting so many hours to the work of the CSWG.

Sincerely,  
Alisa

...represents breaks in the timeline

CSWG Community Forum portion of CSWG Public Meeting 01-13-21 (Wednesday): I did not speak at either the Public Meeting or the Community Forum on 01-13-21. A different Town Councilor speaks during the 01-13-21 Community Forum starting at 1:36:18:

[https://amherstma.zoom.us/rec/play/5DkOO92d79Y4gAEuAC1\\_NjH9Jl3xkZAg4CAghB4Yw50EtuhFm-5DIpAjslWmUNjzgzDrwryvviKmsOij.WSLltvyKI6GxRAo\\_?continueMode=true&\\_x\\_zm\\_rtaid=aX2JXwejqBOK7V5Vgb3n3w.1611590810584.d37152ef1dae791c84310b426c9cbd23&\\_x\\_zm\\_rhtaid=658](https://amherstma.zoom.us/rec/play/5DkOO92d79Y4gAEuAC1_NjH9Jl3xkZAg4CAghB4Yw50EtuhFm-5DIpAjslWmUNjzgzDrwryvviKmsOij.WSLltvyKI6GxRAo_?continueMode=true&_x_zm_rtaid=aX2JXwejqBOK7V5Vgb3n3w.1611590810584.d37152ef1dae791c84310b426c9cbd23&_x_zm_rhtaid=658)

01:36:18I just want to say that I think that the idea that you put forward of gift cards to people who speak and perhaps people who fill out questionnaires is a really good one. I know as an academic  
01:36:31Book Publishers are always trying to get us to fill out responses to a book or program or whatever, and they offer gift card. So it's, it's something that's across the board. And I think it's  
01:36:44It's really a good thing to do so.  
01:36:47I have found this evenings meeting very, very useful. And I really do want to applaud the young man who came forward and told his story. And I think as we all know, something very big did happen. And maybe that's why he doesn't come back to Amherst that often.  
01:37:05It sounded very traumatic and very upsetting. And I guess we're all glad that he stayed there and didn't run because  
01:37:14It turned out okay but it really wasn't okay

**Unknown Speaker**

01:37:18Thank you.

**Jennifer Moyston**

01:37:19Thank you.  
01:37:20Counselor, Pam.  
01:37:25And so as we were coming into the last half hour of our  
01:37:31Forum, I would like, perhaps, if people have ideas to share about community engagement and how to engage folks, that would be great to share with now as well.

...

the same Town Councilor who spoke at 1:36:18 was recognized to speak again as the CSWG moved into discussion:

01:56:34Because it's not an easy thing for people to do

**Paul Wiley, Chair**

01:56:41Thank you, Miss man. Other comments from from the working group.

**Jennifer Moyston**

01:56:46I just want to add that counselor, Pam has her hand raised as well.



**Paul Wiley, Chair**

01:56:51Oh I'm sorry I did we lost some of that visual there.

01:56:56Go ahead.



**Jennifer Moyston**

01:56:58I don't know. Oh, there she is. Yep.



**Paul Wiley, Chair**

01:57:02RC or no.



**Dorothy Pam**

01:57:04I didn't realize I'd raised my hand. But I agree with the \$25 it's

01:57:10It's got to be worth something. And it's quite possibly possible that some of the local merchants could be involved in this, to reduce the cost, the committee because it is something that is very important to the whole town.



**Jennifer Moyston**

01:57:26It has no bring bring business into their business. So it's worth the investment. Yeah.

01:57:32Thank you.

CSWG Public Forum portion of CSWG Public Meeting 01-16-21 (Saturday): my name is mentioned at 07:21 because I had just made a Public Comment during the scheduled typical Public Comment portion of the CSWG Public Meeting 01-16-21, and they moved through their Agenda from typical Public Comment into the Community Forum:

[https://amherstma.zoom.us/rec/play/x\\_XiFCwJIspqW8C5JmjsmLj4Zj4yVicJmSLIDuX88AwwZe3R7oWc7q-DsGMXJS-AtDmsh7gllV-Foirj.VPOW87EXvVKQw3Vq?continueMode=true&\\_x\\_zm\\_rtaid=qombLsr3RUSDN1NcPbITkQ.1611502669861.ec2d4a7af356422c6ffid1e1533e1725&\\_x\\_zm\\_rhtaid=890](https://amherstma.zoom.us/rec/play/x_XiFCwJIspqW8C5JmjsmLj4Zj4yVicJmSLIDuX88AwwZe3R7oWc7q-DsGMXJS-AtDmsh7gllV-Foirj.VPOW87EXvVKQw3Vq?continueMode=true&_x_zm_rtaid=qombLsr3RUSDN1NcPbITkQ.1611502669861.ec2d4a7af356422c6ffid1e1533e1725&_x_zm_rhtaid=890)

**Jennifer Moyston**

00:07:21Thank you counselor brewer.

00:07:28So let's see here.

00:07:41**So, good evening and welcome to the second Community safety working group Community forum for those who do not know me, my name is Jennifer moist and I am one of three Community participation officers for the town of amherst as well as the staff liaison for the Community participation.**

00:07:59For the Community safety working group committee.

00:08:02Working Group.

00:08:04here with me today is Sean Hannon our it director and, as always, I have a few logistics to go over.

00:08:13This is a safe place, and here we will practice confidentiality compassionate listening respect speaking from our own experience, no judgments and no shaming.

...

00:47:55So it is complicated, but the work you're doing you cannot get it all done this has to be ongoing, you have to recommend a Commission on police practices that is ongoing.

00:48:09Because it's not it's, this is not a one and done thing.

00:48:12If you do it like that, in the in the racial profiling thing that that alyssa brewer was supposedly on at one time and that goes on for a little while and then it's one and done we'll be back here or.

00:48:24In this situation, a year from now five years from now 10 years from now, maybe even worse context than now, so it can't be one and done.

00:48:33you're going to have to recommend an ongoing Commission on police practices, and I say again, chief Livingstone welcome the creation of this body back in the summer, why aren't we already on it, is what I can understand, thank you for listening, thank you for your work.

...

01:08:18**So we can call in the next person and then, if miss lydia comes back after our next speaker than making**

allow her to come back in so our next speaker is counselor brewer.



**Alisa Brewer**

01:08:39 i'm sorry, thank you, I know that we were making a point i'm not having counselor speak, if at all possible, and certainly as a white counselor I did not wish to do so, but I did want to just make one.

01:08:51 modification to something that was stated earlier.

01:08:53 There was a previous police steps Committee as a representative town meeting Member I assume I voted in favor of as the majority of representative town meeting did back in 2004 to establish a police steps committee.

01:09:06 It had a fairly simple charge, which was to create a single one page form.

01:09:11 That did some demographic tracking tracking the kinds of things we think are really obvious now, but many people were not doing back in 2004.

01:09:18 I was not part of the select board that set the charge up for that committee after town meetings action, I was not part of the appointing authority for that committee.

01:09:26 That committee had a majority of people of color including representatives from the Human Rights Commission and as far as I can tell from town records, which are often spotty in certain places.

01:09:36 Basically, nothing happened, and the committee was eventually disbanded the committee just eventually faded away.

01:09:43 And so I very much appreciate all the comments that people have made about the fact that this is not a once and done process.

01:09:50 This is an ongoing thing, this is not necessary, this is not one group of peoples burden to bear.

01:09:56 for a period of time, but it is all of our responsibility to ensure that it is something we look at.

01:10:01 While I was not responsible for the police stops Committee, I am ashamed of the fact that I did not press the town manager at the time to say.

01:10:09 What did you find out from that that I did not say, please have the police chief come and explain to us how they have changed things because of that town meeting action.

01:10:19 Instead I defer to the fact that I had not heard from any committee members that they were dissatisfied, I had not heard from any.

01:10:27 Community Members that they were dissatisfied and i'm ashamed to say that I let it go, I have no intention at this stage of life of letting things go Thank you.

01:10:38 Thank you counsel brewer.

...

Video of the CSWG discussion at the CSWG Public Meeting Friday 01-22-21

[https://amherstma.zoom.us/rec/play/HsfuzZP-L6hB\\_hc-MyITkYuWTxPDKHlqngoz\\_uFW\\_DlQVhIGCu8L\\_l7nJa7Nxb8Mqzqxk7GcuT8Cpjii.7zES\\_DPYGr-pdfUR?continueMode=true&\\_x\\_zm\\_rtaid=qombLSr3RUSDN1NcPbITkQ.1611502669861.ec2d4a7af356422c6ffid1e1533e1725&\\_x\\_zm\\_rhtaid=890](https://amherstma.zoom.us/rec/play/HsfuzZP-L6hB_hc-MyITkYuWTxPDKHlqngoz_uFW_DlQVhIGCu8L_l7nJa7Nxb8Mqzqxk7GcuT8Cpjii.7zES_DPYGr-pdfUR?continueMode=true&_x_zm_rtaid=qombLSr3RUSDN1NcPbITkQ.1611502669861.ec2d4a7af356422c6ffid1e1533e1725&_x_zm_rhtaid=890)

beginning here 01:58:24:

**01:58:24um The other thing is that I just wanted to make note of is I was a little disappointed that i'm a Council Member was able to speak at the at the.**

01:58:38um because I how I understood it, is that the Council members were not allowed to speak, they could be there to observe, but they weren't supposed to be speaking on so I was a little bothered by that.

continues to 2:24:08

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~Alisa V. Brewer

Amherst Town Councilor-at-Large, 2018-

Amherst Select Board, 2007-2018

MMA Fiscal Policy Committee, 2019-

Cannabis Control Commission Social Consumption Working Group, 2019

Treasurer's Alcohol Task Force Licensing Process Working Group, 2017

vice president, Hampshire County Select Boards Association (HCSBA) 2016-2018, county designee to Massachusetts Selectmen's Association (MSA)

Executive Committee 2017-2018

Amherst & Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committees, 2002-2007

Amherst Representative Town Meeting, 1999-2018

413-362-2175

[BrewerA@AmherstMA.gov](mailto:BrewerA@AmherstMA.gov)

## Community Safety Working Group Public Forum

Bockelman, Paul <bockelmanp@amherstma.gov>

Tue 1/12/2021 4:26 PM

To: Town Council Members <towncouncil@amherstma.gov>

Cc: Moyston, Jennifer <Moystonj@amherstma.gov>

The Community Safety Working Group will be holding two public forums:

- Wednesday, January 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m
- Saturday, January 16<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m.

A flyer for the event can be found here: <https://www.amherstma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/54371/CSWG-Community-Flyer-large>

The question came up as to whether the Working Group was encouraging or discouraging members of the Town Council and the Town Manager to attend. The Working Group discussed this at its meeting last night and chair wrote that they would “welcome and encourage the presence of the Town Council and the Town Manager as a way to demonstrate their commitment to the mission of the Working Group. I think it would be incumbent upon whoever is making the introduction presentation to highlight the importance of the presence of these entities and other entities in our town at such gatherings. I'd rather err on being present rather than absent at this point.”

Paul

Paul Bockelman  
Town Manager  
Town of Amherst  
4 Boltwood Avenue  
Amherst, Massachusetts 01002  
413-259-3002

[TownManager@amherstma.gov](mailto:TownManager@amherstma.gov)

[www.amherstma.gov](http://www.amherstma.gov)

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