

May 25, 2022

Dear Chester Town Manager and Select Board:

After almost fifty years of gratifying public and community service, I find myself the target of intense personal attacks in my role as Chair of the Whiting Library Board of Trustees. The attacks have questioned my integrity, fairness, and honesty, then moved quickly and ironically to questioning my support for inclusion and LGBTQ+ rights, to which I have a deep and very personal commitment and have worked, and will continue to work, passionately to advance.

My natural response to vitriol is to respond with reason, calmness, and professionalism. This time is different: the attacks are unprecedented in their hostility, baseless, uninformed, untruthful, and some are motivated by personal malice. In the last several days I have faced insults shouted from a passing car and several public comments that cross the line into defamatory. While I have not lost my affection and respect for the community in which I have enthusiastically volunteered, it has certainly been challenged.

The attacks will continue as long as they serve the agenda of some, empower the perpetually angry, feed the social media frenzy, and bring clicks to websites. As they continue, they will apply undeserved pressure on my family and will eventually impact their right to live a peaceful and meaningful life. They will also spill over to the amazing and dedicated colleagues and the critically important institutions that I have had the privilege of working with and for. That undeserved collateral impact is unacceptable to me.

So, I will leave public service to others who are willing to step forward, and I will focus on working quietly for the people and causes I care deeply about.

Effective immediately, I am submitting my resignation from the following positions:

- Whiting Library Trustee and Chair of the Whiting Library Board of Trustees
- Town of Chester Justice of the Peace and Member of the Board of Civil Authority
- Member of the Town of Chester Local Cannabis Control Commission

Hopefully, this step will help the library return to its mission and continue to serve the community with thoughtful, innovative, and impactful programs and services.

I will be available to my colleagues to answer any questions they may have and to ensure a smooth transition in all areas in which I have served.

Best Regards,

Robert Nied

cc: Whiting Library Board of Trustees