From: John Gorman
To: Board of Selectman

Presented at the June 9, 2011 Hampton town budget meeting

Teddy Roosevelt once said, "Give kids something interesting and good for them to do, or they will find something interesting and not good for them to do." I fully support a viable accessible youth sports program in Hampton.

Since the May, 20011, town budget meeting I have continued to raise questions about full health insurance for elected officials and town employees who do not work full time.

I have also raised questions regarding the budget for youth sports – specifically seeking justification for the numbers. What I have received instead is a series of lectures about caring for the children.

At the special BOS meeting on June 6th I again asked for justification for the numbers. lack The chairwoman of the youth sports committee invited me to attend their committee meeting on June 7th, where the information would be available. Others who were in attendance at BOS meeting may recall that exchange.

I accepted the invitation, and attended that meeting. During the audience for citizens, I again raised the question of justifying the numbers. In response, the chairwoman told me I had not said I would be there, and she does not carry a box of documents around with her. She said that if I provided her with a mailing or email address she would get them to me. I provided her with my email address and specific question in writing so that they could be entered into the minutes.

Assuming the documentation does exist and exist in digital format that makes for a simple process of attach and send. I have not yet received them. Granted it has only been a day since that meeting, but I have been repeating that request for a month.

The First Selectwoman, smoothing the waters, offered and gave me what she says was the budget proposal presented to her by the youth sports committee. Given that this document is supposed to be the backing for what is seen on the town budget, I can only surmise that even the Selectwoman has no clear idea of how the money is actually going to be spent. What it contains is the same numbers you see on the town budget spread sheet with a laundry list of goods and services requiring expenditures and no projection or history of what is to be spent on any particular item.

I asked about past fundraising and how they were projected to be raised in the future. She referred me back to the rec commission because that's where the funds raising and accounting had taken place. And that in reality is the heart of the issue. Youth Sports was split off from the rec commission not to better serve youth, but to accommodate

adult egos and reward political supporters. The children have become the pawns on a political battle field.

To bring the evening's events to glowing climax, the chairwoman attempted to eject a citizen seeking clarification on scholarships and advertising policies. When this citizen was unmoved, the chair threatened to call the police and end the meeting. In so doing, she upset the woman's child who was witnessing this travesty. I might add that the chairwoman has in fact called the police in the past solely on the grounds that she disapproved of a citizen observing a proceeding.

I ask, "Is this the sort of person we want in charge of the Youth Sports program?"

To be fair, I got the distinct impression that the two gentlemen sitting on the committee fully grasped that youth sports was supposed to be about accessible fun for the kids, and not for the satisfy the egos and power trips of political cronies

Having said that, I recommend that if the parents of this town want youth sports to be about kids, that the program be rolled back into the rec commission, and that one of these two gentlemen be placed at the helm. The current chairwoman should be restricted to the role of a spectator at children's sports events.

On final note in case anyone thinks that youth sports as it is currently being run is only about youth sports, I will leave you with this tidbit:

As part of general discussion last night, the issue of uniforms was raised. It was proposed that Parish Hill uniforms be used as a means of getting kids warmed up and used to the idea of choosing to go to Parish Hill. An audience member I believe to have identified himself as a Parish Hill coach, nixed that plan on the grounds that it would violate rules governing school sports. Thus the idea was still-born.