

Dove in hands

Complaint may benefit Dove

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WINSTED — Regardless of how Litchfield Superior Court Judge Anne C. Dranginis rules, a complaint filed with the town's Ethics Commission could tip the scales in suspended Town Manager Wayne W. Dove's favor.

Selectman Brian W. Sullivan has filed a complaint with the commission against fellow board member Francis J. O'Neill Jr.

The complaint charges O'Neill with a conflict of interest in voting to fire Dove and centers on a lawsuit recently filed against the board for granting O'Neill a retirement package without granting the request of a petition for a referendum.

Firing Dove would discredit him, making it easier for O'Neill to keep his money, Sullivan contends.

If the Ethics Commission agrees with Sullivan, O'Neill will be disqualified from the vote to fire Dove. O'Neill was one of the four selectmen who voted to suspend Dove with the intention of firing him by the end of the year.

The Ethics Commission will meet Dec. 26 to discuss the complaint.

This case "has impressed the court," she said. "It presents some real important issues."

"Hopefully the arguments made by (LaVoie) will allow for continued discussion in the community," Dranginis said.

She said that, regardless of how the case turns out, the people have the right to change the charter and she stopped just short of urging Winsted to call a new charter revision commission to address some of the issues that were presented yesterday.

Until the judge issues her decision, sometime in the next several weeks, the recently granted injunction restricting selectmen from firing Dove will stand.

Dove fate up to judge

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tion was significant and offered a "narrow window under which the town manager can challenge the board."

That "window" was created to give a degree of job security to a job that the writers of the town charter intentionally tried to de-politicize, she said.

At the conclusion of the hearing Dranginis said she would issue her opinion in the near future. She also took the time to compliment the town of Winsted and the community lawyer's office for bringing a case like this one before her.