Community lawyer serves public interest

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I had the pleasure of working with Charlene LaVoie, Winchester's community lawyer, last summer and am puzzled by offensive comments made about her by certain individuals.

The purpose of the community lawyer is to provide free counsel to taxpayers, helping them to understand and react intelligently to the many complex municipal issues that affect them. The office is not a power unto itself, but rather a tool for ensuring that the taxpayers' best interest is always the prime objective of politicians and officials.

Political motivations have recently been suspect in Winchester, not because they are a recent development, but because they have finally become obvious, thanks to the efforts of Ms. LaVoie and her supporters. We can no longer blindly depend on city hall to look out for our best interest. We must further our efforts to fully guarantee the health of our municipal, as well as our physical, environment by holding elected and appointed officials accountable to the will of the people.

This is not merely a right, but a constitutional obligation. To do less, particularly in the presence of such a meaningful gift to taxpayers as the community lawyer, is inexcusable.

Bob Borghesi
Torrington