

Township of Bonfield Integrity Commissioner – David C. King  
Citation: Councillor Sylvie Beaudoin v. Mayor Randall McLaren  
Date: February 26, 2021

## **REPORT ON COMPLAINT**

**Notice:** Municipal Integrity Commissioners provide investigation reports to their respective municipal council and in most cases, make recommendations for imposition of penalty or other remedial action to the municipal Council.

Reference should be made to the minutes of the Township of Bonfield Council meeting to obtain information about their consideration this report.

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## **THE COMPLAINT**

1. Councillor Sylvie Beaudoin (Complainant) alleges that since the declaration of the local state of emergency, Mayor Randall McLaren (Respondent) has contravened the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct for Members of Council, Procedural By-Law No. 2015-32 and has acted beyond the authority granted to the head of Council under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (EMCPA).

## **SUMMARY**

2. Ontario and the Township of Bonfield continue to be gripped by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Township remains in a local state of emergency which enables the head of council to take such action and make such orders as he or she considers necessary and are not contrary to law, to implement the emergency plan of the municipality and to protect property and the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the emergency area. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. E 9 s.4.(1)

3. This inquiry focuses on the Council Code of Conduct allegations of the Complainant and not alleged procedural by-law infractions. I take the position that I do not have jurisdiction to enforce the procedural by-law as it is not explicitly stated in the Code of Conduct or assigned to me as part of my appointment as Integrity Commissioner.

4. I also take the position that it is outside of my authority to determine if the Respondent, as the head of Council, acted contrary to law, or the powers granted to him under the EMCPA.

5. As documented in the background section of this report, If the intent of the Complainant were simply to see improved in communications between the Respondent, CAO/Clerk and Council during the declared state of Emergency, I am of the opinion that this could have been achieved without resorting to the June 9, 2020 resolution which by its vague nature, casts doubt on the leadership of Council and administration, and has resulted in at least two lawsuits and inquiries, including this one.

6. In summary, I find that the Respondent did not contravene Sections 8 or 14 of the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct but, did contravene Section 15 when reprimanding a member of Council during the June 9, 2020 Council meeting and in a June 12, 2020 email to the Complainant and the other members of Council.

## **BACKGROUND**

7. Ontario declares a state of emergency on March 17, 2020, and orders some business to be closed, including daycares, bars and restaurants, theatres, and private schools as a result of the increasing number of COVID-19 infections in the Province.

8. On March 20, 2020, the Township of Bonfield CAO/Clerk sends an email to Council regarding the COVID 19 situation, issues staff are addressing, a notification about the March 23 Emergency Control Group meeting, and how communications would be dealt with going forward. (see attached Appendix 1)

9. On March 25, 2020, at 10:15 a.m. in the Township of Bonfield, the Respondent declares a state of Emergency for the entire municipality in accordance with the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. E 9 s.4.(1) due to the COVID -19 Pandemic. This declaration remains in effect as of the writing of this report.

10. As a result of this declaration and in accordance with the Township of Bonfield Emergency Response Plan issued under By-law #2006-37 and the amended by-law 2018-25, the Respondent notifies Emergency Management Ontario; Township Council; the Public; neighboring community officials; the local MP and MPP and takes control of the Township of Bonfield Emergency Control Group (ECG).

11. The Township of Bonfield ECG, led by the Respondent, continues to meet on a weekly basis to coordinate the provision of essential services necessary to minimize the effects of the emergency on the municipality.

12. During the month of April 2020, Council or Committee meetings are not held, only ECG meetings to respond to the rapidly evolving situation.

13. On May 12, 2020 at 6:50 p.m. a Special meeting of Council was held via Zoom to amend By-law 2015-32 a by-law to govern the proceedings of the Council of the Township of Bonfield, its committees and Boards during a Declared Emergency to allow for electronic meetings. This meeting was followed by a Regular meeting of Council at 7:05. Both meetings were attended by all the members of Council.

14. The next Regular meeting of Council was held on June 9, 2020 via Zoom and attended by all members of Council. It was at this meeting the following notice of motion was introduced by the Complainant.

15. The discussion regarding the notice of motion can be viewed from 33:16 to 1:02:14 at: [https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/yO\\_JAruRtSETcAvWNA-4XdGn5i39MdQrD2RPLeuMLu22aSC7m7yCPaD0xWJcAA.X02\\_OnK4fFYrWBBX](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/yO_JAruRtSETcAvWNA-4XdGn5i39MdQrD2RPLeuMLu22aSC7m7yCPaD0xWJcAA.X02_OnK4fFYrWBBX)

Resolution No. 3

Moved by Councillor Beaudoin, Seconded by Councillor Foisy

Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Sylvie Beaudoin, included in this Regular Meeting of Council for consideration.

**“WHEREAS** over a lengthy period of time, Council members have not been adequately and equally furnished with information in relation to all departments within the Corporation and further that, concerns have been identified by Council regarding e-mails and text messaging having been sent to Department Head/s and or Manager/s of the Corporation from the current CAO and Mayor of the Corporation;

**AND WHEREAS** Council as a whole should be made aware of situations happening with all municipal departments;

**BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED** that effective immediately, Council requests that all communications and or correspondence through e-mail and or text messages sent by the current Township's Mayor and CAO be copied to all Members of Council at all times;

**AND FURTHER** that all previous communications and or correspondence through e-mail and or text messages sent and or directed to any Department Head/s and or Manager/s for the past six months be printed and forwarded to Council by Tuesday, June 30th, 2020;

**AND FURTHER** that this resolution be forwarded to all Department Heads and or Managers of the Township of Bonfield.”

Council Beaudoin requested a recorded vote on Resolution No. 3

Yea: Sylvie Beaudoin, Eric Foisy, Marc Vaillancourt

Nea: Jane Lagasse, Randall McLaren

Carried Randall McLaren<sup>2</sup>

16. It should be noted during this meeting, the Respondent recommends that Council obtain a legal opinion about the notice of motion, prior to voting on it, to determine its legality and implications for the Township. Despite this advice, the majority of Council chose to proceed without a legal opinion.

17. The day following the Council meeting (June 10, 2020) the Complainant sends an email to the Respondent requesting that a Special meeting be held to introduce amendments to resolution 3 passed the evening before.

18. In a June 11, 2020 email response to the Complainant and the other members of Council, the Respondent denies the request for the Special meeting citing “While there is much to be stated with respect to the motion and the ramifications legally for individuals and the corporation, under the circumstances it is prudent that I do not comment further on how this matter gets delt with”. The Respondent goes on to say, “there will be not be a special meeting, nor any further meetings at all of the Township of Bonfield Council until I have more clarity with respect to our situation.”

19. Despite the advice provided by the Respondent, the Complainant responds advising that she would be submitting a petition for a Special Meeting to the Deputy Clerk.

20. In an email on June 11, 2020 the Deputy Clerk advises the Complainant that the Respondent would be responding to her directly regarding her petition.

21. On June 12, 2020 the Respondent sends an email to the Complainant, all of Council as well as the Deputy Clerk and CAO/Clerk, advising that he would not be permitting any virtual meetings of Council for the foreseeable future.

22. On July 3, 2020 the Complainant contacts me regarding her governance concerns in the Township of Bonfield. As part of our teleconference discussion, I explain my role as Integrity Commissioner as well as the complaint and application process.

23. On July 10, 2020 I receive the completed Code of Conduct inquiry application from the Complainant.

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<sup>2</sup> From the Minutes of the Corporation of the Township of Bonfield Regular Meting of Council, June 9, 2020.

24. The following day, the Complainant forwards me an email from the Respondent to all members of Council enclosing a legal opinion from the Township's Lawyer in regard to the "communications resolution" passed by Council on June 9, 2020. The opinion identifies issues relating to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPA) and that the resolution did not relate to any specific matter under consideration by Council.

25. The Respondent also refers to correspondence received by Council (via email) from Mr. Stephen Wolpert, of Whitten & Lublin, Employment Lawyers advising that he will be representing the Township's CAO/Clerk in a defamation claim against the Township resulting from the June 9, 2020, resolution.

26. As part of the same email, the Respondent, advises the members of Council that he will be seeking his own legal assistance to serve claim against the municipality for the damages he suffered resulting from the June 9, 2020 resolution.

27. On July 31, 2020 the Complainant sends an email to the Office of the Ombudsman and me indicating that no meeting of Council or Committees were held during the month of July 2020.

28. On September 8, 2020 the Complainant again sends an email to the Office of the Ombudsman and me requesting a status update.

29. On September 9, 2020 I respond to the Complainant indicating that my role as Integrity Commissioner is limited to receiving and reviewing allegations of Conflict of Interest and breaches of the Municipal Code of Conduct. Not to intervene to address when the State of Emergency will be lifted, and regular meetings of Council will resume.

30. On October 16, 2020 I receive a complaint from Township of Bonfield Councillor, Eric Foisy alleging that Mayor McLaren violated the Township's Code of Conduct on five separate occasions from June 20<sup>th</sup> to September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020. (This complaint will be the subject of a separate Code of Conduct inquiry)

31. On November 19, 2020 a "second formal complaint" is sent by the Complainant to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Regional Office in Sudbury as well as to me. The essence of the second formal complaint was to report on alleged violations of the Township of Bonfield's 'Council Code of Conduct'; 'Procedural by-law'; 'Municipal Conflict of Interest Act' and the 'Municipal Act' during the November 10, 2020 Regular meeting of Council. The proceedings of this meeting can be viewed at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/epw668Pc684meErGsVlfXmELtXDqX7GRBP-vCFdVCLNLxcSBBPL6Apsx4-1NNsH.57dMOGTewwfZhLsV>

32. It was at this meeting the Complainant alleges the Respondent invited the Township's lawyer to attend the meeting, without the prior knowledge of Council. In addition, it is alleged that the Respondent violated the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act

(MCIA) when he failed to declare a pecuniary interest or refrain from speaking on the Complainants amended notice of motion when his lawsuit against the Township regarding the June 9, 2020 resolution was still outstanding.

33. On December 15, 2020 the Complainant submits a Municipal Conflict of Interest application to my attention requesting that I undertake a MICA investigation. This application will be the subject of a separate inquiry.

## **PROCESS FOLLOWED**

34. The following is the process I followed to ensure fairness to both the individual bringing the complaint and the respondent:

- i) The Respondent receives notice of the Complaint and is given an opportunity to respond.
- ii) The Respondent(s) is made aware of the Complainant's name.
- iii) I interview any witnesses that I believe have relevant evidence.

## **POSITIONS OF THE PARTIES**

### **POSITION OF THE COMPLAINANT (Councillor Sylvie Beaudoin)**

35. The following are excerpts of the information provided by the Complainant as part of her application for this Municipal Code of Conduct inquiry:

36. The Complainant alleges that **Section 8** of the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct was violated when a request was received by the municipality (from a member of the public) requesting use of the Bonfield's Municipal Park for a wedding on Sunday June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020. This request was made through email to the municipality and stated no more than 5 people would be attending. Approximately 50 to 70 people attended the gathering and did not physical distance.

- i)The Mayor did allow a Bonfield municipal park to be used for a private wedding when the Province and Mayor of this municipality had closed parks.
- ii)The Mayor did open a Bonfield municipal park to facilitate a wedding when the park was closed by order of the Mayor using section 4 (1) of the Municipal Act, 2001 to do so, during a locally declared state of emergency *without first having terminated the state of emergency and notifying Council that had done so.*"

37. The Complainant also alleges that Mayor Randall McLaren contravened **Section 8** of the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct when:

i)The Mayor *being made aware at an* ECG meeting June 23 at 8:30am, that a request had been made to have Municipal Fire Equipment, Staff and Resources attend a private residence to provide security and first responding services; the location being a private residence, and having left it up to the Fire Chief, permitted the Chief to command fire personnel to initially attend.

ii)The Mayor permitted the use of Municipal Fire Equipment, Staff and Resources for a use other than Municipal business at a private residence by failing to act once he was made aware of the fact that the Deputy Chief was reinstating the fire department back to the residence after the Fire Chief had removed such.

38. The Complainant alleges that Mayor Randall McLaren violated **Section 14** of the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct when:

i)The Mayor directed the Deputy Clerk not to respond to my special meeting of Council request and that he would be responding to my email.

ii)The Mayor directed the Deputy Clerk to remove my notice of motion from the agenda of the general meeting of Council on June 09, 2020.

iii)The Mayor directed the Deputy Clerk to remove my notice of motion from the agenda of the general meeting of June 09, 2020 violating Procedural by-law 2015-32.

iv)The CAO/Clerk directed the Public Works Manager to take individual direction from the Mayor.

39. The Complainant also alleges that Mayor Randall McLaren violated **Section 15**, of the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct on four separate occasions when:

i) The Mayor treated Councillor Eric Foisy inappropriately and in an abusive and bullying manner during the June 9, 2020 Council meeting when the Mayor snapped at Councillor Foisy and said, “ Maybe you’d like to give her the wording and for once start earning your pay”.

See 1:27:44 to 1:28:45 at:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/yO\\_JArURtSETcAvWNA-4XGn5i39MdQrD2RPLeuMLu22aSC7m7yCPaD0xWJcAA.X02\\_OnK4fFYrWBBX](https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/yO_JArURtSETcAvWNA-4XGn5i39MdQrD2RPLeuMLu22aSC7m7yCPaD0xWJcAA.X02_OnK4fFYrWBBX)

ii) When the Mayor in a July 7, 2020 email to Councillor Foisy and cc'd to Council; at 4:44 p.m., reprimanded Councillor Foisy by making the following statement: “I had advised in a previous email that I do not take a position or make a statement until I am certain I am correct. I stand by that motto. You need

to embrace it also to relieve your stress. Perhaps it is time to let a leader lead and for you to learn and grow from this experience.”

iii) When the Mayor in a July 7, 2020 email to Councillor Foisy and cc'd to Council at 5:36 p.m. wrote the following regarding Special meeting:  
“Councillor Foisy,  
Also, in your reply of 6.47am today you suggested you were not aware of my decision to not permit any more virtual meetings for the foreseeable future.

Please find below my reply to another Council member clearly stating this. It has been my position since June 11th, almost a month now.

Perhaps the email swamping policy adopted by Council on June 9th is causing inbox overload. This would certainly explain the harassment of the clerks and disrespect shown of my stated decision since that time.

Once again, perhaps cause for reflection.”

40. Finally, the Complainant alleges that Mayor McLaren treated her along with Councillors Foisy and Vaillancourt inappropriately and in an abusive and bullying manner contrary to **Section 15** of the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct in an email sent to Councillor Beaudoin on June 12, 2020 at 12:56 and cc'd to members of Council the Deputy Clerk and the CAO/Clerk regarding the subject of Special meeting.

## **POSITION OF THE RESPONDENT**

41. The Respondent was provided with a copy of the allegations of the Complainant via email on November 25, 2020. As of the completion of this report, no response has been received from the Respondent.

## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

42. Under the authority of *Emergency Protection and Civil Protection Act*, Section 4(1), “the head of council of a municipality may take such action and shall make such orders as he or she considers necessary and are not contrary to law to implement the emergency plan of the municipality and to protect property and the health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the emergency area.”

43. Sections 8, 14 and 15 of the Township of Bonfield Council Code of Conduct, which the Complainant alleges were contravened, read as follows:

### **8. USE OF MUNICIPAL PROPERTY, SERVICES AND OTHER RESOURCES**

No member of Council should use, or permit the use of municipal land, facilities, equipment, supplies, services, staff, or other resources (for example, municipal-owned materials, websites) for activities other than the business of the Corporation. Nor should any member obtain personal financial gain from the use or sale of municipal-developed intellectual property (for example, inventions, creative writings and drawings), computer programs, technical innovations, or other items capable of being patented, since all such property remains exclusively that of the Township of Bonfield.

#### **14. CONDUCT RESPECTING STAFF**

Under the direction of the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), staff serve the Council as a whole, and the combined interests of all members as evidenced through the decisions of Council. Council members shall be respectful of the role of staff to provide advice based on political neutrality and objectivity and without undue influence from any individual member or a faction of Council.

Members of Council shall not give direction to individual staff, save and except for the CAO who shall receive his or her direction from Council as a whole, or as specifically delegated by the whole of Council to the Mayor, or a committee of Council.

Accordingly, no Council member shall maliciously or falsely injure the professional or ethical reputation, or the prospects or practice of staff, and all members shall show respect for the professional capacities of staff.

No Council member shall compel staff to engage in political activities or be subjected to threats or discrimination for refusing to engage in such activities. Nor shall any Council member use, or attempt to use, their authority or influence for the purpose of intimidating, threatening, coercing, commanding, or influencing any staff member with the intent of interfering with that person's duties.

#### **15. DISCREDITABLE CONDUCT**

All members of Council have a duty to treat members of the public, one another, and staff appropriately and without abuse, bullying or intimidation, and to ensure that their work environment is free from discrimination and harassment. The Ontario Human Rights Code applies and the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

### **ISSUES AND ANALYSIS**

44. I have considered the following Code of Conduct issues arising from the Complainants allegations:

**45. Did the Respondent contravene Section 8 of the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct when he allowed a Township park to be used for a private wedding?**

46. No. Given the March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2020 emergency declaration for the Township of Bonfield, the Respondent, in his role as the head of council, exercised his authority to grant or deny permission for the event to take place.

**47. Did the Respondent contravene Section 8 of the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct when he left it to the Township Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief to decide if municipal fire equipment, staff should be deployed on standby at the Test and Tune event at the local drag strip?**

48. No. The ECG minutes of June 23, 2020 indicate that a discussion took place regarding the Bonfield Volunteer Fire Department attendance at the Test and Tune event and concluded with the Respondent (in his role as the head of council during the state of emergency), delegating the decision to the Chief and Deputy Chief to determine if volunteers and equipment should attend the event.

49. Section 8 of the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct is intended to prevent members of Council from unilaterally using, or permitting the use of municipal land, facilities, equipment, supplies, services, staff, or other resources for activities other than the business of the Corporation. In this instance, the Respondent did not unilaterally grant the use of municipal resourced, but rather, delegated the decision to attend the event to the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief.

**50. Did the Respondent contravene Section 14 of the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct when:**

**i)The Mayor directed the Deputy Clerk not to respond to my special meeting of Council request and that he would be responding to my email.**

**ii)The Mayor directed the Deputy Clerk to remove my notice of motion from the agenda of the general meeting of Council on June 09, 2020.**

**iii)The Mayor directed the Deputy Clerk to remove my notice of motion from the agenda of the general meeting of June 09, 2020 violating Procedural by-law 2015-32.**

**iv)The CAO/Clerk directed the Public Works Manager to take individual direction from the Mayor.**

51. Under a normal circumstance (no-pandemic or local emergency declarations) the alleged direction provided by the Respondent as described in items i, ii and iii, above, would be contraventions of Section 14 of the Council Code of Conduct. As indicated in the summary of this report I have taken the position that I do not have jurisdiction to

enforce the procedural by-law, or if the Respondent acted contrary to law or the powers granted to him under the EMCPA.

52. In regard to allegation iv, the purpose of this Code of Conduct Inquiry is to determine if the Respondent violated the Council Code of Conduct, not to comment on an alleged direction provided by the CAO/Clerk to the Public Works Manager. Why this allegation is being made by the Complainant and not by the Public Works Manager, is of concern to me. If valid, this issue needs to be addressed between the Public Works Manager and the CAO/Clerk.

**53. Did the Respondent violate Section 15, of the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct when:**

**i) he allegedly chastised Councillor Foisy during the June 9, 2020 Council meeting by saying “ Maybe you’d like to give her the wording and for once start earning your pay?”**

54. Yes. While Councillor Foisy interrupted the Respondent when he was developing wording for a proposed resolution, I find there was no need for the Respondent to reprimand the Councillor in this manner.

**ii) in a July 7, 2020 email to Councillor Foisy and cc’d to Council; at 4:44 p.m., made the following statement: “I had advised in a previous email that I do not take a position or make a statement until I am certain I am correct. I stand by that motto. You need to embrace it also to relieve your stress. Perhaps it is time to let a leader lead and for you to learn and grow from this experience.”**

55. No. I do not interpret that it was the intent of the Respondent to abuse, bully or intimidate Councillor Foisy, but rather, to provide advice.

**iii) in a July 7, 2020 email to Councillor Foisy and cc’d to Council at 5:36 p.m. responded as follows : “in your reply of 6.47am today you suggested you were not aware of my decision to not permit any more virtual meetings for the foreseeable future. Please find below my reply to another Council member clearly stating this. It has been my position since June 11th, almost a month now. Perhaps the email swamping policy adopted by Council on June 9th is causing inbox overload. This would certainly explain the harassment of the clerks and disrespect shown of my stated decision since that time. Once again, perhaps cause for reflection.”**

56. No. As in the preceding paragraph, I do not interpret the intent of the Respondent to bully or intimidate but rather, to explain his position to Councillor Foisy.

**iv) In an email to Councillor Beaudoin on June 12, 2020 and cc'd to members of Council, the Deputy Clerk, and the CAO/Clerk, regarding the subject of special meetings, he allegedly made abusive and bullying remarks about the Complainant and Councillors Foisy and Vaillancourt.**

57. Yes. I have reviewed the email of the Respondent to the Complainant on June 12, 2020 and find the language used by the Respondent to be patronizing and condescending and not indicative of the kind of language that a head of Council or any member of Council should be using.

## **58. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

Members of Council are accountable to the public through the four-year election process. Between elections they may, for example, become disqualified and lose their seat if convicted of an offence under the Criminal Code of Canada or for failing to declare a conflict of personal interest under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

Sub-section 223.4(5) of the Municipal Act, authorizes Council to impose either of two penalties on a member of Council following a report by the Integrity Commissioner that, in her or his opinion, there has been a violation of the Code of Conduct:

1. A reprimand; or
2. Suspension of the remuneration paid to the member in respect of his or her services as a member of Council or a local board for a period of up to 90 days.

### Other Actions

The Integrity Commissioner may also recommend that Council or a local board (restricted definition) take the following actions:

1. Removal from membership of a Committee or local board.
2. Removal as Chair of a Committee or local board.
3. Repayment or reimbursement of moneys received.
4. Return of property or reimbursement of its value.
5. A request for an apology to Council, the complainant, or both. <sup>3</sup>

## **CONTENT**

59. Subsection 223.6(2) of the Municipal Act states that I may disclose in this report such matters as in my opinion are necessary for the purposes of the report. All the content of this report is, in my opinion, necessary.

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<sup>3</sup> Corporation of the Township of Bonfield Code of Conduct Policy for Members of Council, Local Boards and Committees. Approved by By-law 2019-04.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

60. That the Respondent issue an apology to Councillor Foisy for the remarks he made during the June 9, 2020 Council meeting.

61. That the Respondent issue an apology to the Complainant and all of Council for the email he sent to them on June 12, 2020.

62. That the Township of Bonfield develop Integrity Commissioner information along with complaint, and application procedures and post this information on the Township web site.

63. That the Township of Bonfield meet with the Integrity Commissioner either virtually or in person when conditions permit, to receive education and training on the role of the Integrity Commissioner, the Townships Code of Conduct, and the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

Respectfully submitted,

*David King*

Integrity Commissioner

February 26, 2021

## Appendix 1

Email to Council from CAO/Clerk re: Covid- 19 situation and communications

**From:** Peter Johnston

**Sent:** March 20, 2020 5:02 PM

**To:** Sylvie Beaudoin <[sbeaudoin@bonfieldtownship.org](mailto:sbeaudoin@bonfieldtownship.org)>; Jane Lagassie <[j\\_lagassie1@hotmail.ca](mailto:j_lagassie1@hotmail.ca)>; Eric Foisy <[efoisy@bonfieldtownship.org](mailto:efoisy@bonfieldtownship.org)>; Marc Vaillancourt <[mvaillancourt@bonfieldtownship.org](mailto:mvaillancourt@bonfieldtownship.org)>

**Cc:** [rcmclaren@sympatico.ca](mailto:rcmclaren@sympatico.ca) <[rcmclaren@sympatico.ca](mailto:rcmclaren@sympatico.ca)>

**Subject:**

Hi everyone,

I wanted to send you information that will give you an update on some of the issues which we are addressing currently.

Yesterday I sent you a copy of the flyer that we sent out last night and which should be in everybody's mailboxes in our community today. It talks about how the Medical Centre is operating, the change in due date for our interim tax bill and a grace period for interest and penalty on current taxes only and some information about the operation of the landfill site

Attached to this email is a copy of the agenda for the Emergency Control Group meeting on Monday, March 23 at 10 AM. As I did last week, I will make sure that the minutes of that meeting are sent to you as soon as they are prepared.

One of the issues that a number of us CAO's across the province have been discussing with the Ministry Municipal Affairs is the matter of holding and conducting Council meetings electronically by teleconference. Prior to today there was provision in the Municipal Act that allowed members of Council to attend a meeting of Council by teleconference, however that was only permitted if there was a quorum of Council actually sitting in person at the Council meeting. I talked to Bryan Searle at MMAH yesterday about a number of issues and he indicated to me that legislation was pending to provide Council with some new tools for conducting business. It was announced today that Council meetings under certain circumstances (an emergency declaration by the Emergency Control Group) will allow Council meetings to be conducted entirely electronically using teleconference. As you can see from the agenda that item is to be discussed on Monday morning and are Emergency Control Group meeting.

I am pleased with how all your team is daily ensuring that everyone in the community understands that we are doing all we can to protect them and to provide most of the essential municipal services that they rely on and require. And by using tools such as our website, the Citizen Alert app and regular flyers that provide links and actual material we help our citizens to stay safe and continue with their lives in this current environment.

I would encourage you to go to our website and look at all of the material that we regularly update and add to the tab on the website homepage entitled " COVID19- Current Information. We receive information from a variety of Provincial agencies and Ministries on a daily basis and we choose what information we believe would be helpful in a variety of ways for our residents. That information is posted on our website. Other information which I receive daily is forwarded to the appropriate Dept Head(s).

Finally, I just want to tell you that every day I am available by phone (705-205-3701, text or email so if you have any questions or issues that I might help you with, please let me know.

Please stay safe and remind yourself that this too shall pass. We are all in this together and if everyone does what they are being encouraged to do by the Provincial and Federal governments and your own Emergency Management Control Group, social distancing, self-isolation if you are feeling unwell, and washing your hands regularly, we can flatten the curve and end this health crisis weeks or months earlier than would be the case if we do not take it seriously. Take care, Peter

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