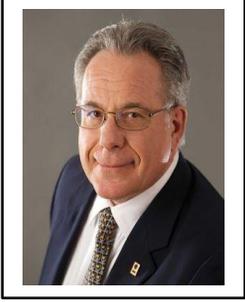


Councillor Seguin Resigns



On May 4th Councillor Michael Seguin announced that he had resigned his position as Councillor. His resignation is the culmination of a two year legal battle that started when the former CAO filed a harassment complaint against Mr. Seguin for the manner in which he asked questions and advocated for his constituents.

In a press release outlining his reasons for resigning Councillor Seguin stated:

Dear Supporters, Constituents and Fellow Residents of the Town of the Blue Mountains

It is with my deepest regret that I found it necessary to announce my resignation as Councillor in The Blue Mountains on Friday May 4, 2018. It has been truly an honor and privilege to have served this great community.

The campaign against me by the Staff Complainant, with support of the Mayor and other members of Council, with the exception of Councillor Martin, who was the only one willing to listen to my side of the story, has taken a heavy toll, and the burden has become one which my wife and I can longer bear.

In response to how the initial complaint against me was dealt with, behind closed doors by a human resources lawyer with a working relationship with the Complainant, I filed a Judicial Review of the process used to find me guilty because of the words I used in representing my constituents.

I have been trying to reach a negotiated settlement with Town Council for some time now. Through my lawyer, I attempted, on various occasions (July 19, 2017, August 4, 2017, and December 1, 2017) to settle this matter to save substantial costs to both myself and the taxpayers. On March 28, 2018, I finally received a settlement offer from the Town for less than 50% of my costs, which I decided to accept on April 11, 2018. However, Council then rescinded the offer without reasons.

Part of the settlement included my resignation as Councillor. I am living up to my end of the agreement. Will they? Only time will tell.

I have been accused of accepting monies for a legal fund but I stated publicly at a Council meeting on April 30, 2018, I have never accepted or solicited any monies. I understand that anonymous donations from the community were received in a trust established, to help defray to some of my legal expenses, which now exceed \$60,000, in advancing the judicial review and to help promote access to justice for matters that are in the public interests. I can assure everyone that there have been no gestures over the past two years from anyone advising me that they donated and then trying to influence my performance of my duties of Office. There is absolutely no conflict of interest.

I would like to thank the anonymous donors for their kind

gesture, and more importantly, their support to find procedural fairness and justice.

The whole ordeal involving the original allegations by the Complainant, the unfair handling of the investigative process, Council's sanctions, my Judicial Review application before the court and now, the Code of Conduct complaints by the same Complainant, over the past two years, have been costly to both my wife and I in terms of our health and our financial resources.

By willing to accept the Town's offer (although now rescinded by them for no reasons) and by resigning, I hope that this is the beginning of the end of this arduous journey for my wife and I.

If there is a silver lining in this whole matter, it is that complaints by citizens about how the investigation into the initial complaint against me was handled have resulted in the Integrity Commissioner recommending a new Protocol Policy for Complaints Related to members of Council and Local Boards, making it impossible for anyone else on this Council from ever being treated as poorly as I was.

Citizen outrage into how I was treated has also led to an unprecedented level of citizen activism in our community. I hope that this energy that has been unleashed will continue through the 2018 election, and that we will all work together as a community to elect a brand new Council who will truly embrace the values of honesty, openness, transparency and good governance, and respect the fact that they are there to serve the people who elected them.

When interviewed by the Citizens' Pages, Councillor Seguin explained the comments in his media release as follows: "I received a settlement offer with respect to the Judicial Review on March 28th, the Wednesday before the Easter long weekend. The offer was stated to be good until April 6th. On April 4th, three business days later, my lawyer wrote to the Town in good faith, requesting clarification of some issues. Failing resolution of these issues, he suggested we were prepared to enter into mediation to resolve any differences. I was encouraged by the motion brought by Councillor Martin "that this Council schedule a Special Meeting of Council to consider options for resolution" which was approved by council in a recorded vote on March 26th.

On April 9th prior to that closed meeting, when Councillor Martin brought a motion suggesting the addition of the names of three mediators to the closed meeting agenda, his motion was defeated 4-2, with Councillor McGee and Deputy Mayor Ardiel, who had previously voted for the meeting now rejecting the best option for settlement.

On April 11th my lawyer wrote the Town's lawyer informing that I had decided to accept the Town's settlement offer of March 28th. On April 13th we were advised that Council would consider this matter at its earliest convenience. On May 2nd we were advised "that there is no settlement."

I have tried my best to resolve this issue in good faith at the least cost to the taxpayer, but have been betrayed by this Council, with the exception of Councillor Martin, at every turn. I look forward to the electorate deciding this fall whether this Council acted responsibly and in good faith."

Council Struggles with Decision on How to Fill Vacant Council Seat Chooses to Hold a Draw

A Special Meeting of Council was held on Tuesday, May 22nd, at 1 pm when Council proposed to meet behind closed doors to consider how to fill the vacancy on Council created by the resignation of Councillor Seguin.

Speaking to the motion to move behind closed doors Councillor Martin stated he wouldn't be able to join in the closed session as the issue with respect to the vacant Council seat is quite plain. Previously, Council has appointed the defeated candidate for Council with the next highest number of votes in the last election, which in this case Peter Bordignon. That was what happened in 2004 when Councillor Martin was appointed upon the death of Harold Holden.

The other issue that Councillor Martin had with going behind closed doors was that the last time Council was in closed session it was decided that recorded votes wouldn't be allowed in closed session and he could not accept one set of rules for public sessions and another for closed ones.

Deputy Mayor Ardiel then asked why they wouldn't consider candidates other than Peter noting that there were other good candidates out there, mentioning a Julia, a Rosemary and stating that Alars is going to be running (Editors note: that would appear to be me (Alar), but I have not yet decided if I am going to run). She also mentioned Paul Mitchell who ran against her for Deputy Mayor during the last election.

At this point Mayor McKean replied that "we have an opinion to be dealt with in closed session and I am sure that the municipal lawyer will have some interesting observations for us too if you would care to go into closed session to hear them." After some additional comments from Councillor McGee, Council, with the exception of Councillor Martin voted to go into closed session.

After about 50 minutes in closed session, Council emerged and it was reported that a Staff Report would be forthcoming on the results of the closed session on May 28th.

At its meeting on May 28th Council received [Staff Report FAF.18.93, "Vacant Council Office"](#). Deputy Mayor Ardiel then brought a motion, seconded by Councillor Martin to appoint Peter Bordignon, the defeated candidate with the most votes in the last election. After some discussion the motion was lost with Councillors McGee, Gamble and Mayor McKean voting against and Deputy Mayor Ardiel, Councillors Martin and Halos voting for.

In the end Council approved a process whereby the Town Clerk will accept applications for the vacant position from any person who, by 4:00 p.m. June 5, 2018, has submitted nomination papers for Councillor for the 2018 Election.

At the June 18, 2018 Council Meeting, all qualifying names will be put into a container, and the Clerk will draw the name from those submitted. The successful candidate will be announced at the June 18th Council Meeting, and sworn in at a subsequent Council Meeting.

Election Update

COUNTDOWN TO THE NEXT ELECTION Less than 145 days

The municipal election will be held Monday, October 22, 2018.

List of Registered Candidates to May 25, 2018

Mayor (One to be elected)

None

Deputy Mayor (One to be elected)

1. Michael Martin Lorne St. Thornbury, N0H 2P0 (519) 599-5048 electmichaelfordeputy@gmail.com

Councillor (Five to be elected)

1. Peter Bordignon www.peteroncouncil.com
info@peteroncouncil.com 4 Arthur St W #1078 Blue Mountains, ON N0H 2P0

2. Paula Hope

3. Rob Potter 129 Bruce St. S., PO Box 365 Thornbury, Ontario N0H 2P0

4. Rob Sampson 126 Snow Apple Cres Blue Mountains, Ontario L9Y 0Y1 (705) 445-6529 rob@robsampson.ca
robsampson.ca

Trustee, Bluewater District Board of Education (Public, one to be elected),

1. Frances Morgan 519-986-2731
francesmorgan@rocketmail.com

Trustee, Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board (Separate, one to be elected)

None

Trustee, Le Conseil Scolaire de District des Écoles Catholiques De Sud-ouest (French Language Separate, one to be elected),

None

Trustee, Le Conseil Scolaire de District du Centre-Sud-ouest (French Language Public, one to be elected)

None

Follow Elections 2018 updates at the link below or by clicking the Election 2018 button on the Town of the Blue Mountains Home Page.

<http://www.thebluemountains.ca/administration-election201.cfm>

Welcome to the Citizens' Pages

This is the nineteenth monthly issue of the Citizens' Pages, a citizen funded insert into the Blue Mountains Review. This insert allows for four pages of news about what is going on in our Town.

If you like reading us, please follow the link and make a donation to keep us going. We can't do it without your support! We have managed to raise enough to survive for our first nineteen issues, but we are surviving month to month.

<https://www.gofundme.com/Citizens-Page-in-the-Blue-Mts-Review> Donations can also be made to the Citizens' Pages care of The Blue Mountains Review and be dropped off at Riverside Graphics in Clarksburg. All of the funds we receive go towards printing and distribution. All content and editing is provided by citizen volunteers.

Alar Soever, Editor

Citizens' Pages in the Blue Mountains Review – June 2018

Council Holds Marathon Public Meeting on Changes to the Short Term Accommodation (STA) Bylaw

On May 28th Council heard from both residents and STA owners on the proposed changes to the STA bylaw as described in [Staff Report FAF.18.60](#) during a Public Meeting that lasted over four hours. This staff report provided Council with several updated recommendations for changes to the Town's STA Licensing By-law. The revisions are a result of Council direction, and include updates recommended by staff.

The most contentious issues are outlined as follows by Terri Kellar of the Blue Mountain Ratepayers Association:

"AIRBNB style rentals are proliferating in our Town and regulations must be maintained. Currently there are 278 STA licensed units in the Blue Mountains. Our Town was ahead of the curve with the STA By-laws however proposed changes may reverse this.

Many of the proposals simply amalgamate the old Town of Thornbury and Township of Collingwood bylaws and update them. However there are issues that are of major concern.

Staff Report FAF 18.42 refers to 8 areas of interest to the STA bylaws; Legal non-conforming (grandfathered) units, Parking requirements, Separation distance, Occupancy load, Commercial Resort Unit (CRU), Responsible Person (RP), and Demerit point assignment (OPP involvement discouraged). Enforcing the Bylaw on the separation and occupancy load recommendations along with tying in the # of bedrooms to parking spaces are all appropriate. Please right click the following and open the hyperlink [B.2 FAF.18.42 Short Term Accommodation Proposed Program Updates](#) to see this report along with the OP changes.

Unfortunately with the Official Plan and STA Bylaw changes there are many, many issues to address. Perhaps some of the changes to the STA Bylaw and Licensing could be delayed to a later date to allow for more study and consultation. However we can highlight a few crucial issues.

Of major concern is the new requirement to only contact the RP, sometimes through the Bylaw department, instead of the OPP when appropriate. The current Bylaw mentions the RP role 3 times with NO wording that mandates the RP be called by the public and absolutely no justification in eliminating the role of the OPP. This process has been lobbied to staff by the business operators and is a return to self-policing. Self-policing didn't work before demerit points were introduced and it won't work now! The Town Council has turned down this option previously and we were dismayed to see it presented so strongly by staff. The role of the RP is as an employee contact to the owners of the business and is to be available when required. It must not take the place of the Town Bylaw staff or the OPP reacting to complaints about STAs.

In conjunction with the RP role is the proposed watering down of the effectiveness of demerit points. The Town staff, residents and even the owners have agreed that the assignment of demerit points against an STA licence has

been extremely effective in reducing the problems caused by the renters in STAs. Why would this process be changed now? The owners would benefit by having fewer demerit points assigned (if any) as the RP would respond and not Town staff or OPP. In fact if a resident calls the OPP (who are contracted to respond to noise and nuisance complaints) and not the RP no demerits will be assigned against the licenses. Our rights and the effectiveness of demerit points are being challenged. The only way for demerits to be assigned is for the town to take the owners to Provincial Court for every complaint be it noise, garbage, or long grass (don't know who would lay the charge) is a waste of time and resources. Currently the Town has an Appeals Committee of 3 rotating councillors who deal with appeals to the demerit point assignment. At 15 points an STA license can be removed. To date No licenses have been rescinded and the Town's committee has only met 3 times. So why change the whole process. The only real benefit is again to the owners who could delay the hearings. Residents would have to attend more court proceedings and the Town would have to be represented at all these hearings.

Another area of concern regarding the Staff Report is in the wording of the Official Plan ("OP"). An OP is the overview of the Town's intentions and so planners or developers will consult an OP when looking at land usage.

The opinion of staff #1 states, "New STA's shall be directed away from existing residential developed residential areas unless it can be proven that there is no potential for an adverse land use conflict between the STA and surrounding uses." The 'unless' in the middle of this proposal opens up a large area for interpretation and could result in many challenges by the STA industry, even if zoning seems to protect those areas. Zoning has been challenged in the past, even to the OMB level, and may not be enough



The Citizens' Forum is a community association open to all who seek effective ways to improve the management and governance of The Blue Mountains.

Come out and meet people who are interested in what is going on in the Town, and what is before Council. All citizens are invited to drop in at Maiolo's on most Monday nights between 4 and 7 (except for holiday weekends) for some socializing and friendly discussion on the issues facing the Town and what is on the Council Agenda.

Come, meet new friends, listen, and have your say.

Rules: Be polite, respect other people's opinions, and if you don't agree with them, just remember: They have the right to be wrong.

This insert is brought to you as a public service to provide citizens information about issues facing their Town. It is funded by the citizens of the Town through online contributions. If you like this page and would like to keep it going, please donate here or by following the link <https://www.gofundme.com/Citizens-Page-in-the-Blue-Mts-Review> To contact us with your letters, comments, ideas, and suggested content please e-mail tbcitizens@gmail.com



STA Bylaw continued

protection. We suggest that the sentence should stop after "residential areas".

With the LNC (Grandfathered STAs) we would like to see occupancy loads reduced to Max 8 and we suggest that wording be introduced or strengthened in the bylaw to add a 'sunset clause' to these non-conforming units to eventually be eliminated from residential areas. In addition it must be clear that no additional LNC units will be approved.

It is very important that residents make their opinions heard by the Town Council. Please note the following dates for meetings at the Town Hall:

- June 4th: -5PM Public Meeting on the Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw
- June 25 Committee of the Whole – follow-up Staff Report attaching all comments from the Public Meetings and recommend approval of final version of Official Plan, Zoning By-law and STA Licensing By-law documents.
- July 9 Council – Council will receive the recommendations from June 25 COW meeting and consider passing the Official Plan, Zoning By-law and STA Licensing By-law documents.

These timelines are very tight and there are concerns that all the issues may not be adequately addressed.

Your input is essential even if it only involves coming to the meetings to be seen by Council."

Council Committee Hears From Citizens Forum on the Town/Grey County Relationship

by John White

On May 24th, a Citizens Forum ("CF") delegation led by John White, and including Andrea Matrosovs, Rosemary Mesley, Ken Mehi, and John White presented and discussed ideas on the Town/County relationship with the Internal Town / County Steering Committee comprised of Councillors, Martin, McGee & Halos and Interim CAO Shawn Everitt and Treasurer Ruth Prince.

Currently 39 cents of every one of our property tax dollars goes to Grey County. We fund 26% of the County's tax budget, and with development in the TBM averaging 40% plus of total County development - our tax contribution is headed towards 40%. In exchange we only get just over 10% of County Council Voting Rights, and County expenditures directed towards the Town appear to equal less than 10% of County tax supported expenditures.

The current situation is not acceptable.

In the past some in the Town have advocated for a new representative voting model based on contributed tax dollars, and not surprisingly the other eight constituent municipalities of Grey County have voted against it. These municipalities know a good thing.

The CF offered time effective ideas and practical suggestions. The suggestions were designed to achieve a positive outcome by aligning action with the County's legislative mandate and expenditure allocations, also

focusing on actions the Town could quickly initiate, in some cases, independent of the County.

Insufficient information currently exists as to what the practical issues are surrounding moving out of the County and establishing the Town as Single Tier Municipality – in effect its own City . In the long-term, the growth in the Southern Georgian Bay region may, as it did with the last amalgamation over 15 years ago, make a single city a necessity, whether it be the City of The Blue Mountains or something else with totally new boundaries. The CF suggested the Town take steps to engage in conversations and gather and analyse the required data so it can be prepared to obtain a favourable outcome, if and when the Province decides to act on restructuring.

We recommend remaining in the County at this time, but engaging with the County in new ways with some different objectives, a primary one being, where possible, the speed of action.

Funding: Today, the Town fully funds our Library, Museum and Archives programs, but the latter two are also included in the Country services mandate. We recommend the Town immediately seek County funding, but not management assistance, to partially fund the existing Museum and Archives program under the current Town structure. It is important to note the Town is solely responsible for Libraries.

Economic Development, Housing, and Transit: Unfilled job opportunities in the Blue Mountains are a major issue due to the lack of attainable housing. Increasing attainable housing in-town, which will take years not months, makes local labour force availability a long-term challenge. However, in the western portion of the County there are significant job seekers, many on social assistance, who lack the means to travel east without a transit system to jobs. The Town should leverage the County to immediately implement a private transit solution, like other Ontario Municipalities have achieved in weeks and months via services such as Uber and not the years and capital funding necessary to develop a traditional transit system. It would be cost effective and administratively simple to direct this assistance first to those most in need giving them an effective hand up.

The past agreement from 2010 onwards with the County on Sustainable Development included objectives for health care, road & transit systems including green options and many others. Promised updates and action plans have not emerged and this needs to change.

We gladly accept letters to the editor. Please be advised that these letters will be reviewed & published at the discretion of our Editor. Please limit your letters to 200 words or less. You can email your letters to tbmcitizens@gmail.com. Please include a phone number for validation.

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