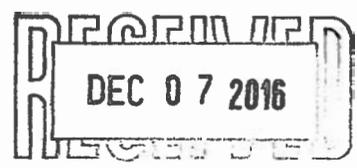


7891

From: Judy Gouin <jumago@xplornet.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 7, 2016 3:08 PM
To: Roxanne St. Germain; Roxanne St. Germain
Subject: Letter to the Mayor and Council
Attachments: Prefasi letter December 2016.pdf



Please acknowledge receipt. Thank you.

Judy

- File Incoming Other
- Mayor
- Council I A
- CAO
- Building
- Finance S C
- Ec Dev S C
- Parks & Rec S C
- Planning S C
- Public Wks S C
- PPP
- Social Services
- _____
- _____

Judy Gouin
P.O. Box 534
6136 Hwy. 11 N.
Temagami, ON
P0H 2H0

Mayor Lorie Hunter and Council,
Municipality of Temagami
7 Lakeshore Drive
P.O. Box 220
Temagami, ON
P0H 2H0
visit@temagami.ca

December 7, 2016

Mayor Hunter and Council,

Councillor Prefasi continues to use his group Facebook page to criticize municipal staff. I refer in particular to the attached post from Tuesday, December 6. Whether or not his criticisms are accurate is irrelevant. The fact that he is using a public forum to level criticism at municipal employees is inappropriate and unfair.

Canada Post is also a public corporation accountable to taxpayers. But if a regional supervisor took to social media to criticize the job performance of our postmaster, I think we would all be offended. Similarly, the Temiskaming Public School Board is an elected body that is accountable to taxpayers. But if one of the trustees used social media to criticize the job performance of one of our teachers, I think we would all be offended. And rightly so. In both these examples, there are appropriate mechanisms for dealing with job performance issues internally, where a fair and impartial hearing can be had by both parties in private, in the expectation that resolutions can be found that do not damage the reputation of either party in public, and so that the organization as a whole is able to move forward.

Councillor Prefasi states that the purpose of his group Facebook page is to provide information, and he encourages people to dialogue with him there. But it is not a neutral space. It is his personal podium. The page is a source of information *from his perspective*, and a forum for dialogue where he can always have the last word. In a posting on Wednesday, December 7, also attached, he claims that "I have no ox to gore, no scores to settle and I gain no great satisfaction in criticism". Even occasional glances at the page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/884013831709947/>) show that all three of these assertions are false.

There is no reason why social media can't be used responsibly and ethically, as can any other form of speech. In this case, a municipal councillor is using social media to enhance his stature as a political figure at the expense of municipal employees, other councillors, and anyone else who disagrees with him. A social media policy for councillors should set a standard for use of social media that is consistent with Council's Code of Conduct and the Municipality's policies on harassment. That should go without saying, but apparently Councillor Prefasi thinks they don't apply to him. The attached post of December 6, and the one that was the subject of my previous letter of complaint, dated September 7, 2016, both contravene Council's Workplace Harassment Policy, specifically Article 2.1, as follows:

"Harassment is any behaviour that demeans, humiliates, or embarrasses a person, and that a reasonable person should have known would be unwelcome. It includes actions, comments, or displays. It may be a single incident or continue over time. Some examples of harassment cited include... patronizing or condescending behaviour, humiliating an employee in front of co-workers, abuse of authority that undermines someone's performance or threatens her or his career, and abuse of authority that censures someone's performance when acting in accordance with municipal policy."

In addition, the facebook posts in question both contravene Council's Code of Conduct, which states as Policy, in part: "Council members are expected to carry out their duties in a fair, honest, conscientious, diligent, impartial, transparent and professional manner that respects the dignity of individuals and is in accordance with the Human Rights Code and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Canada)..." and further, as its Purpose, to ensure that "Private interests, real or perceived, are kept separate from public responsibilities; Respect and support for others, including other Council members, members of municipal staff and members of the public, is maintained", and specifically article 4.7, **Relations with Staff**, which states:

"Members shall acknowledge and respect the fact that staff work for the Municipality as a corporate body and are responsible for making recommendations that reflect their professional expertise and corporate objectives, without due influence from any individual Member. In addition, Members shall acknowledge and respect the fact that staff carry out directions of Council as a **whole**, through the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and administer the policies of the Municipality. A Member shall refrain from using their position to improperly influence members of staff in their duties or functions or to gain an advantage for themselves or others. If a Member disagrees with or disapproves of information or advice provided by staff or actions taken by staff acting in good faith, the Member shall ensure that any comments made to this effect in public shall be made in a fair and respectful manner, in such a way as to express disapproval with the outcome, without criticizing staff."

I urge Council to address this matter with Councillor Prefasi under the terms of its Workplace Harassment Policy, and the Enforcement provisions of its Code of Conduct. Further, as many of Councillor Prefasi's complaints about the lack of organization and accurate information contained in the recent posts could have been addressed if the

Municipality had a Recreation Director in place, I urge Council to include, as another example of Councillor Prefasi's inappropriate behaviour toward employees, the correspondence between Councillor Prefasi and Derek Callahan that was included, but not listed, as Correspondence (Action) in the agenda for Council's November 24 meeting.

Yours sincerely,

Judy Gouin

Att:

Tuesday, December 6
Ron Prefasi

...ON THE CONCEPT OF FIXING AN ERROR WHICH I HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF MAKING IN A RECENT POST:

As Chair of Parks and Recreation, I received the P & R budget on November 17th. The phone cost immediately jumped out at me and I generated the following email to the Treasurer and CAO:

FROM RON PREFASI NOVEMBER 21st to CAO and Treasurer:

"Hi Candice,

I'm just going over the budget for Parks and Rec which you provided earlier this month and I don't have a revenue portion to it to speak with my committee about tonight.

Is it easy to pick out the revenues and send them to me?

Also wondering about the telephone expense for 2016 -- over \$4,000 then another \$600 actual for the tower. It seems kind of excessive on both counts (no facilities coordinator since about April which makes it just under \$1,000 a month plus cost of line and internet for arena for 2016 and it looks like about \$200 a month for caribou mountain for the less than 3 months open).

Phone costs are not as important right now as revenues for Parks and Rec are more important to me but I'd like to follow this up at some point."

PLEASE NOTE: the CAO is copied in the email and I indicate that this should be followed up at some point.

On November 21st, I received the following email from the Treasurer, who also copied the CAO:

FROM THE TREASURER To Ron Prefasi and CAO November 21st

"By all means! Here you go.

Also, yes the phone is high.. Two internet connections at the arena (one for the security system), one land line and one cell. The tower has a line but it is suspended during the non-operating months.

Candice"

PLEASE NOTE:

- the CAO is copied in the email and
- I am informed that the phone is high,
- there are TWO internet connections,

- ONE land line and
- ONE cell included in the cost.

I'm just thinking that the only thing which should have been left active at the Arena from April until October, during a time period when the Arena is closed, is the internet connection for security.

THAT is the information on which I base my concern over the high cost of the phone for a four month period, over \$4,000.

AND NOW, since I posted two days ago on the Group page that the cost of the phone is in my humble opinion EXCESSIVE, I have received the following email from the CAO:

FROM THE CAO to Ron Prefasi DECEMBER 5th, 2016

"Hi Ron, a member of the public pointed out a facebook post you put up on your page (Temagami Ron Prefasi: Your Voice Matters) sometime this morning. Without going through the entire post, which appears to have several errors in it and is misleading to the public, your reference to the arena phone line costing \$4,000 for 5 months is wrong. The account as of today, December 5, 2016, sits at \$4,052.17 out of a budget of \$4,750 for the year. My understanding is that staff had explained this to you shortly after the budget was provided to you for the last Parks and Recreation Committee meeting. The costs charged to that budget line include dedicated lines for alarms (Fire, Public Access Defibrillator and Ammonia plant), 2 business lines (including 1 for public use) and internet as well as cell phone charges.

This should be corrected on your facebook page.

Your cooperation regarding this matter would be appreciated."

PLEASE NOTE: THIS NEW INFORMATION IS A LITTLE DIFFERENT THAN WHAT HAD BEEN PROVIDED TO ME ON NOVEMBER 21st.

The CAO is now indicating that:

- Staff had explained the phone costs to me in November (APPARENTLY NOT as the whole number of lines has now increased substantially over what I was told in the email from the Treasurer)
- There are now apparently THREE DEDICATED LINES for alarms (one for Fire, one for Public Access Defibrillator, and one for the Ammonia plant; (I had been told there was only one internet connection for "security");
- There are TWO business lines (I had been told there was only one)
- There is an internet connection (I had been told there were two)
- There are cell phone charges (I'm wondering why wasn't this cut off in April when the former Arena Manager left?)

First, regarding the cell phone: the first week on the job in mid October, the Arena Manager told Suzanne and me that the Town was going to get him a cell phone and that he did not have one yet (which begs the question: did anyone ever cut off the cell phone which the previous employee had in his possession?). So now we find out that the cell phone is apparently NOT part of the \$4,000 bill at least from April until now).

All that to say that even if we take into account that we had to keep the three DEDICATED LINES active during the summer (and I'm thinking there has to be a cheaper way to do this than to have three dedicated lines), I stand firm on my conviction that over \$4,000 is excessive when we consider that the Arena has been closed from May until the middle of October.

As to correcting this "error that is misleading to the public", I don't think it was an error. I wrote that post basing my comments on the information (which you all now have) that I was given at the time. Even though staff was copied on the information, and even though I had indicated that "this should be followed up at some point" it NEVER was...until the CAO's reaction to my post this week.

That brings us right back to the value of this Group...it is meant to provide information, and now you, and I, have a LITTLE more information than we had before.

There is still lots to figure out...such as why the phone charges for the Temagami Tower in 2015 were \$1,324.46!!! (and I thought that \$600 for 2016 was already excessive!)

Is anyone watching these costs?

Did we forget to shut something off?

Why wasn't the complete and correct information given to me on November 21st when I asked for it...I rely on information given to me by the municipality, as difficult as it is to get in its entirety, but I am quite content and in fact eager to make corrections when they are required.

Wednesday December 7

"I have no ox to gore, no scores to settle and I gain no great satisfaction in criticism; but I have an extreme social conscience within me, which I know many people have...and that is what drives me to want to make things better. I feel that indefinable something about "Temagami" that I know a lot of people around this whole planet feel and that feeling has moved me for most of my adult life.

I will continue to use whatever tools and energy that I have to try to move this huge turtle that is Temagami in the right direction so that it can slowly make its way through disturbance and chaos towards the grounded organization it can become, an organization which has a long life and which beats with one heart.

Personal opinion? I think Temagami at this moment in time is broken; but it can be fixed.

I vote for fixing it. I vote for council working in harmony with each other, with staff and with (ratepayers? residents? taxpayers? – such cold words!) with our friends and neighbours so that Temagami becomes a shining example of what works best in local government. And the key word is local. We are all in this together and all rules aside we should be working together to find ways and paths to make things work... no matter what."

Wednesday, Dec 7

12 hrs

Don't want to take away from the Christmas Spirit, but...

As I mentioned in a previous post, the Municipality wants to institute a Social Media Policy to restrict this council member from speaking out in public AND for the Municipality to have a better and more robust communication with residents...maybe they should begin their Social Media Policy by checking out the accuracy of the posters which the Town Hall has added to the Temagami website as well as to the Municipality's Facebook page.

Let's look at this. Staff and council want this Group page stopped so that INSTEAD people will use the Municipality's page as the source for information about the town.

Well, here's a little Christmas Challenge: if you are looking for information on the Santa Train or the Santa Parade, DON'T just read the "Temagami Ron Prefasi – Your Voice Matters" Group page (as apparently the information on that page is either wrong or misleading) and INSTEAD go to the Municipality of Temagami's website and Facebook Page for information. Compare the Group page to the Town's page. Which one is accurate...

Because of a previous problem with communication about the Hallowe'en Parks and Rec events, I made it very clear (as far back as October!) to the CAO and to an administrative assistant that I wasn't worried about who made a poster for a Parks and Recreation event or about who put together the announcements for P & R events– but that as Chair of Parks and Recreation I expected that I would see any poster or communication about an event before it was posted on the town's website or Facebook page in order to ensure its accuracy and adherence to the decisions about those events which were made by the Parks and Recreation committee.

Example: the Parks and Recreation committee at its meeting on November 21st changed the time of the reading for the Memorial Lights on our Station Christmas Tree to 6:15 instead of 6:30 because in the past

the train pulled into the station before the reading of the names was completed. The Facilities Manager and the Clerk were at the meeting and documented that change.

YET, the poster for the Santa Train and the Memorial Lights hit the Municipality's website without that changed time being reflected...and no one checked with the Chair of Parks and Rec before posting. I had no prior knowledge as to who generated the poster, nor as to when it first appeared on the Town's website.

Next comes the Santa Parade and the spaghetti dinner after the parade scheduled for December 10th.

I went into the Town Hall yesterday morning (Monday December 5th, the day of the Santa Train) to drop off some papers and coincidentally arrived at the wicket while the CAO was asking a member of the public whether or not SHE was organizing the Santa Parade. Really?

Parks and Rec at its November 21st meeting had discussed the parade and as in past procedure set the date and the request to the town for approval for the road closure with the expectation that the Facilities Manager would be inviting all businesses, fire trucks, ambulances and all other manner of parade vehicles to take part in the Parade with bells and whistles.

The rest was expected to be simple as floats gather at point A, Goward Avenue and travel to point B, the Arena. It all just boiled down to advertising the event on a venue that would reach a lot of local people. Registration of floats was never mentioned.

On the afternoon of December 5th, I received two communications from business owners: one asking how to put a float into the Santa Parade and the other alarmed that she had missed the cutoff date for registration that was advertised on the Town's website and Facebook page. The cutoff date?

When checking the town's facebook page to get the information regarding registration I also noticed the poster for the spaghetti dinner following the parade (first time I had seen this poster!) which states the cost of the dinner is \$12 for adults and \$6 for children. This spaghetti dinner is put on by the Legion and I had been informed that children 12 and under would eat free.

If I had been privy to the poster I could have helped clarify this...and could have helped to advertise it!

FINAL ANSWERS to the Christmas Challenge:

- The municipality was incorrect in its times on the poster about the Santa Train.
- Very few people check the town's website page so some businesses didn't know anything about registering their float for the parade.
- The cost of the spaghetti dinner is not \$6.00 for children as stated on the Municipality's page – children under 12 eat free.

THEN there's the question about Breakfast with Santa – it hasn't been advertised (as far as I know)...yet I see that on the town's Facebook page someone posed a question on November 28th about whether there is a pancake breakfast, and someone else from the public answered that the breakfast is on December 11th from 8:30 to 11:00 a.m. and yet there has been NO INDICATION from the municipality about any breakfast with Santa nor any response to the question about whether there even is a pancake breakfast on the 11th.

Breakfast with Santa? Is this a Parks and Rec event? If it is, this is the first time I've heard about it.

You can have a Facebook page and/or a website, but that's not enough. Someone has to do their best to keep everyone involved so that the correct information is posted.

In Temagami town the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing.

It's all about communication. It's time we had a little.