

**REPORT TO
THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF McMURRICH/MONTEITH
REGARDING AN INVESTIGATION INTO
COMPLAINTS UNDER THE TOWNSHIP'S CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**

INTRODUCTION

Amberley Gavel Ltd. was retained as Integrity Commissioner by the Township of McMurrich/Monteith Council to investigate complaints received against Councillor Ron Walton under the Township's Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy as incorporated into and under the Code of Conduct for Members of Council.

Amberley Gavel Ltd. has served local governments in Ontario since 2008 as Closed Meeting Investigator, Integrity Commissioner and educator for Council members and staff. Its principals and investigators have decades of municipal experience as well as experience as municipal solicitors and senior local government executives.

COMPLAINTS

The complaints can be summarized briefly as follows:

Complaints were filed March 2, 2017 by Louise Heintzman that Councillor Ron Walton is engaging in incivility, and harassing and bullying behaviour against her; and that he is gossiping about her, poisoning her work environment; and that he engaged in a breach of confidentiality, all in violation of the Council Code of Conduct.

A Complaint filed March 6, 2017 by Jim Jenkins that Councillor Ron Walton is harassing him, by interfering in his management of his employee.

The test for determining harassment remains the same for members of Council as for employees, however a report by the Integrity Commissioner relating to a member of Council must be provided as a public report to Council while a report on staff on staff harassment can appropriately be dealt with in closed session.

THE INVESTIGATION

Framework for this Investigation

This investigation was conducted within the framework of the Township's Workplace Harassment policy, as well as the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* ("OHSA").

The OHSA defines workplace harassment as:

Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.

The Township's Workplace Harassment policy reflects the OHSA and provides, in part:

Workplace harassment may have some or all of the following components:

- *It is generally repetitive, although a single serious incident may constitute workplace harassment if it undermines the recipient's psychological or physical integrity and has a lasting harmful effect*
- *It is hostile, abusive or inappropriate*
- *It affects the person's dignity or psychological integrity; and*
- *It results in a poisoned work environment*

In addition, behavior that intimidates isolates or discriminates against the recipient may also be included:

Some examples of workplace harassment are:

- *Verbally abusive behavior such as yelling, insults, ridicule and name calling including remarks, jokes or innuendos that demean, ridicule or intimidate or offend*
- *Workplace pranks, vandalism, bullying and hazing*
- *Gossiping or spreading malicious rumours*
- *excluding or ignoring someone, including persistent exclusion or a particular person from workplace-related social gatherings*
- *undermining someone else's efforts by setting impossible goals, with short deadlines and deliberately withholding information that would enable a person to do their job*
- *providing only demeaning or trivial tasks in place of normal job duties*
- *humiliating someone*
- *sabotaging some else's work*
- *displaying or circulating offensive pictures or materials*
- *offensive or intimidating phone calls or emails*
- *impeding an individual's efforts at promotions or transfers for reasons that are not legitimate; and*
- *making false allegations about someone in memos or other work related documents.*

Assessing whether the respondent knew or should have known that comments or conduct were unwelcome requires consideration not only of whether the respondent did know, but *whether a reasonable person ought to have known that the comments and conduct were unwelcome*. This standard has been explained by the Ontario Human Rights Commissioner as follows:

Comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome contains a subjective and an objective element. First, the harasser's own knowledge of how his or her behavior is being received is part of the test. The second part is the point of view of a reasonable third party (ie. How such behavior might generally be received).

Therefore, the test of harassment is met if the recipient specifically says that the conduct is unwelcome; or a reasonable person would have recognized that his or her behavior would be unwelcome to that specific recipient under the circumstances (the objective standard).

Workplace harassment, sometimes referred to as workplace bullying, is a form of abuse that is often characterized by the use of position to cause distress to another person in the workplace, often a subordinate. Similar to other forms of abuse, it often contains a component of intermittent reinforcement,

meaning that the bully alternates between being civil and respectful and being hostile or destructive. This can be destabilizing to the victim as he or she is unsure how to respond or interpret the behavior. This enhances the bully's power. In many instances, victims believe that the situation is getting better but then it gets worse, leaving them in a continual state of uncertainty, stress and apprehension, and strengthening and reinforcing the power imbalance.

Bullying is different from normal workplace conflict. It is generally frequent, repetitive, and can extend over long periods of time (months or years). It differs from uncivil behavior, which is rude or annoying, rather than abusive.

Workplace Incivility

Incivility refers to lower grade forms of bad behaviours at work. Incivility can be defined as seemingly inconsequential inconsiderate words or actions that contravene conventional norms of workplace conduct. Workplace incivility has been defined as low-intensity deviant behavior with ambiguous intent to harm the target. Such behaviours, which can occur occasionally in any organization, are inappropriate and negatively impact the work environment. Workplace incivility, if left unchecked, may easily deteriorate from uncivil behaviour into workplace harassment.

What is Not Harassment

Normal differences of opinion, constructive feedback and guidance about workplace behaviour, and reasonable action taken by a supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers are not harassment and bullying.

Identifying Workplace Harassment and Bullying

Bullying and harassment can range from blatant and obvious, to behavior that is subtle and covert. Tangible proof or concrete examples of such behaviour are often challenging to identify when it comes to more subtle forms of harassment. Bullying behaviours can be difficult to convey in writing, and conduct which seems trivial when examined out of context (tone, body language and frequency) may seem insignificant. For example, being told that a bully refuses to engage in common pleasantries may not seem nearly as significant as it would to the victim who experiences it on a repeated basis. Behaviour that may seem fairly minor at first has a cumulative effect and can, over time, become overwhelming and poison the victim's work environment.

In addition to the example of harassment set out in the Township's Workplace Harassment Policy, the following are recognized behaviours that can constitute or contribute to bullying:

- Persistent, hypercritical comments and constant scrutiny
- Singling out one person for unfavourable treatment or discipline that is not applied to other employees
- Humiliating someone in private or public
- Giving someone the 'silent treatment'
- Discounting the victim's thoughts or feelings
- Verbally abusive behaviour such as screaming or yelling
- Insults
- Using offensive language
- Using a disrespectful tone of voice
- Mocking or mimicking someone

- Using disrespectful body language such as sneering, smirking or a cocky smile
- Staring or glaring
- Turning away from the victim before he or she finishes speaking ('dismissing' them)
- Making little or no eye contact with the victim (when it would be appropriate and normal to make eye contact)
- Throwing temper tantrums
- Character assassination: making disparaging remarks to others about the victim's competence, performance or other behaviour in order to malign his or her reputation and get others on side
- Turning others against the victim
- Constantly nitpicking and discussing the victim's behaviour or mannerisms

Workplace bullies may display a complete disregard for the victim's dignity, dehumanizing them and viewing them as less deserving of respect. Even though a bully knows right from wrong, they tend to blame the victim, claiming that he or she is incompetent, weak or in some way deserving of the treatment. The bully typically remains unconcerned about the impact that their behaviour has on the victim or others. In the past, bullying, like workplace harassment, was dismissed as just personality conflicts' in the workplace, or an attitude problem (that needed correcting). Outsiders might have perceived a victim as overly sensitive or just a 'complainer', rationalizing that the bully's conduct is 'just part of the job', or 'just his management style'.

Over the past couple of decades, bullying has been recognized as more than a 'strong management style' or mere workplace conflict. It is a course of vexatious and distressing conduct (verbal, non-verbal, psychological) that be damaging to the victim's mental and physical health, erode the victim's self-confidence and ability to perform effectively in the workplace, and can be corrosive to the overall workplace environment for the victim and for others, whether they experience it or merely witness it. Even when an employee is not being directly harassed or bullied, their work environment can be poisoned by an overall climate of harassment. If the employee is, as a result of behaviours of others, made to feel unwanted, unsupported and unappreciated over a period of time, this has a corrosive effect on not only the victim but also on others in the workplace, whether they experience it or merely witness it.

Sometimes, when a victim finally makes a complaint, there is a history of incidents that have gone on without complaint, giving rise to the question "if it was so bad, why didn't the victim complain earlier?"

It is not uncommon for victims of harassment and bullying not to speak up and to be reluctant to complain. They may fear the effect it will have on their job/career; they may be afraid of facing other negative consequences; in a small community, they may fear others will not support them or even ostracize them; they may believe they will be told it is nothing, or that they are overreacting; they hope if they ignore the behaviour it will stop; they don't want to be a bad team player or a troublemaker; they don't think anything will change because it has been like this for a long time.

So often, there is a gap between when events occurred and when the individual brings the allegations forward. Often there is a triggering event...something that causes the victim to decide 'I can't take this anymore - it has to stop'. Once the complainant is interviewed, a litany of past experiences comes forward. The time lapse is not an indicator that the complaint lacks merit.

Investigation

During this investigation, we interviewed the complainants, the respondent Ron Walton, and several witnesses, other members of Council, and other staff of the Township whose evidence we felt was both relevant and necessary. In addition to the above interviews, we also reviewed the relevant Human Resources Manual and Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy, and Code of Conduct for Council of the Township, all relevant documentation relating to the complaints, and audio recordings of closed meetings conducted through the summer of 2016. As required under the Code of Conduct, a written copy of the complaints being investigated was provided to Councillor Walton.

Summary of the Complaints

1. It is alleged that Councillor Ron Walton is engaging in incivility and harassing and bullying behaviour towards Louise Heintzman, and gossiping about her, thereby poisoning her work environment, including:
 - He is disrespectful and uncivil when he talks to her in the office and at meetings
 - He is aggressive and loud, and yells at and berates her at meetings and at the Township office
 - He unfairly blames her for things that go wrong, unfairly criticizing her performance and competence both publicly and privately
 - He glares at her while sitting in meetings, intimidating her, and refuses to speak to her or acknowledge her at other times
 - He engages in malicious gossip about her with others, turning them against her, and poisoning her workplace environment
2. It is further alleged that Councillor Walton engaged in breach of confidentiality by sharing certain information relating to the FEDNOR grant application which was considered confidential.
3. It is alleged that Councillor Ron Walton harassed Jim Jenkins by interfering in a situation at the landfill and trying to tell Jim what to do and how to deal with an employee.

This report will deal first with the harassment complaint by Louise Heintzman.

Complaint 1:

Ron Walton was elected to Council in 2014. It is his first term on Council.

Louise Heintzman is the Deputy Clerk/Treasurer and has worked for the Township of McMurrich/Monteith for the past 6 years, starting out as Administrative/Office Assistant for the first year, then being promoted to Deputy Clerk/Treasurer, a position she has held for the past 5 years. Louise Heintzman reports to the Clerk/Treasurer, Cheryl Marshall, who reports to Council.

The Township of McMurrich/Monteith has no Chief Administrative Officer (“CAO”) nor does the Municipal Act require appointment of a CAO, although there are certainly advantages to the establishment of this position. Among others, the CAO is the ‘point person’ for Council, the person to “exercise general control and management of the affairs of the municipality for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective operations of the municipality”. In short, the CAO would be the head of all staff and responsible for overseeing all of the other functions and operations of the township, guided by the policy direction established by Council.

Credibility:

In order to make findings of fact, it is necessary to assess the credibility of the individuals interviewed. These assessments are outlined below:

We found Louise Heintzman to be credible. She provided her evidence in a clear and forthright manner, and her answers were consistent with and corroborated by the evidence of other witnesses.

Councillor Ron Walton, while credible at times, attempted to portray a lack of general self-awareness in terms of his behaviour and its impact on others, particularly Ms. Heintzman. We found that this apparent lack of self-awareness is not believable. He justifies his conduct on others and/or external circumstances: trying to "get at the truth"; or trying to bring the public's views forward; or feeling Council is getting 'rushed into things'. We found him not credible when he denied certain non-verbal harassment, such as his denial of glaring at Louise when he attended Cemetery Committee, or denying he is actively involving himself in gossip, malicious or otherwise, with other staff and people in town. In these and other matters, we found his answers were inconsistent, both internally and with those of other witnesses.

At no point did he acknowledge the impact of his behaviours on Louise Heintzman.

Overall, we found the other witnesses to be generally credible.

On balance, where there was a conflict between the evidence of Louise Heintzman and that of Councillor Walton, we accepted the evidence of Louise Heintzman.

Findings of Fact

In order to make a finding of fact, the test in harassment investigations is on a "balance of probabilities". This means it is more likely true than not that the alleged conduct occurred. This is a much lower threshold than the criminal standard of proof "beyond a reasonable doubt".

Based on our investigation, we make the following findings of fact:

We find that Councillor Ron Walton's behaviour towards Louise Heintzman constitutes harassment and bullying. He is disrespectful and uncivil when he talks to Louise Heintzman in the office and at meetings. He has commented openly that she and the Clerk are easily replaceable with minimum wage staff. Although he stopped coming in to the office as much as he used to when first elected, he still shows up and yells at staff – Louise Heintzman in particular – when he feels there's a problem with something.

He is aggressive and loud, and berates her at meetings and at the Township office. We find that this goes beyond his merely having a 'loud voice' and becoming impassioned trying to make a point. We find that he is wielding his position as an elected official to intimidate. His perception that Louise Heintzman is controlling meetings apparently frustrates him so that he turns on her.

He unfairly blames her for things that go wrong. He unfairly criticizes her performance and competence both publicly and privately. When Council have asked staff to research an issue, and after staff have provided information back to Council, and Council has made a decision on the issue, Councillor Walton will then go and do his own 'research', and raise the issue at the next meeting. He justifies this as getting to 'the truth'. We find that his efforts, even if well-intended, have the effect of undermining staff in their attempts to serve the Township. His characterization of his efforts as a quest for 'the truth' imply that others – and in particular, staff – cannot be relied on to bring Council reliable facts. We find that this is inappropriate, and undermines staff. We find that this behaviour constitutes harassment and bullying.

Councillor Walton attended the office the morning of October 31, 2016 about a water problem at the community centre which had occurred over the prior weekend. We find that he berated the office staff, both Cheryl Marshall and Louise Heintzman, for the problem. We find that he yelled at them, and when they tried to explain, he interrupted them and yelled over them. Even though, as staff explained to the Councillor, the problem had been fixed, he continued to berate staff for the way staff allow the water issue to persist. This behaviour was intended to be intimidating to staff and constitutes harassment and bullying.

Louise Heintzman alleges that Councillor Walton attends meetings, such as the Cemetery Committee meeting where he is not a member, and glares at her. Councillor Walton confirmed that he attended the meeting in question, and that he was frustrated by the proceedings, which he felt were mishandled. But he denies glaring at Louise. However, it is clear that he blames Louise Heintzman for the manner in which the meeting proceeded which, in his view, was very badly done. We find it more likely that he did glare at her during the meeting. We find that, whether he intended it or not, his behaviour at that meeting would be considered to be intimidating to Louise and that this behaviour constitutes harassment.

Louise Heintzman alleges that Councillor Walton is engaging in malicious gossip about her with other ratepayers and staff. She alleges that this is poisoning her work environment by turning people against her. Councillor Walton denies that he initiates such gossip but says he is only participating because people (ratepayers and staff) approach him with their complaints. We do not accept his explanation. We find that he is, at the very least, perpetuating the negative comments circulating in the community, and more likely than not, he is initiating some of the negativity which Louise Heintzman believes she is experiencing. We find it more likely than not that Councillor Walton is engaging in a negative commentary which amounts to malicious gossip which is having a detrimental effect on Louise in her job. We find that this is poisoning her workplace environment.

Complaint #1 - Conclusions

We find on a balance of probabilities that the allegations against Councillor Ron Walton by Louise Heintzman have been substantiated and that he has engaged in a course of vexatious comments and conduct which constitute harassment and bullying, and which created a poisoned work environment for the complainant. Councillor Walton is aware that his behaviours are seen as inappropriate by several of his Council colleagues, who have asked him a few times to tone it down, and at least once, told him to apologize to staff. We find that by engaging in harassment and bullying contrary to the Workplace Harassment Policy, Councillor Walton violated the Council Code of Conduct.

The relevant provisions of the Township Council Code of Conduct are as follows:

B. Standards of Conduct

2. Members of Council shall refrain from behavior that could constitute an act of disorder or misbehavior. Specifically, Members of Council shall refrain from contact that:

ii) is an abuse of power or otherwise amounts to discrimination, intimidation, harassment, verbal abuse, or the adverse treatment of others.

D. Interpersonal Behaviour of Members of Council

1. Treat Every Person with Dignity, Understanding and Respect

Members of Council shall abide by the provisions of the Human Rights Code, and, in doing so, shall treat every person, including other Members of Council, Township employees, individuals

providing services on a contract for service on a contract for service, students on placements, and the public, with dignity, understanding and respect for the right to equality and the right to an environment that is safe and free from harassment and discrimination.

2. Relationships with Staff and the Head of Council and Other Members of Council

The Head of Council and Members of Council will:

- i) Read and respect the guidelines contained in the Township of McMurrich/Monteith's Human Resources Manual.*
- ii) Respect the fact that staff work for the township as a body corporate and are charged with making recommendations that reflect their professional expertise and corporate perspective...*
- v) Refrain from publicly criticizing individual members of staff in a way that casts aspersions on that staff member's professional competence and credibility...*

4. Not to Engage in Harassment or Bullying (Psychological Harassment) or Violence in the Workplace

...harassment shall mean engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known, or ought to be known, to be unwelcome, bullying is the ongoing health or career endangering mistreatment of an employee, by one or more of their peers or higher ups. ..Often, verbal and strategic insults are intended to prevent targets from being successful in their job.

We find that Councillor Ron Walton, by engaging in harassing and bullying behaviour has breached the Code of Conduct for Council.

Complaint #2

The complainant, Louise Heintzman, alleges that Councillor Ron Walton engaged in breach of confidentiality, contrary to the Code of Conduct for Council, when he shared certain information relating to the FEDNOR grant application which was believed to be confidential.

The relevant provisions of the Township Council Code of Conduct are as follows:

C. Conduct To Be Observed

1. Release of Confidential Information

Members of Council have a duty to hold in strict confidence all information concerning matters dealt with in Closed Council meetings A Members of Council shall not, either directly or indirectly, release, make public or in any way divulge any such information or any aspect of the Closed Council deliberations to anyone, unless expressly authorized by Council or required by law to do so.

Findings of Fact

Council had a meeting with ministry staff regarding applying for FEDNOR grant funding for an addition to the community centre. The meeting was not held as a closed meeting. At the meeting, it was discussed that the addition of space for purposes of equipment storage and for an away team change room

met the FEDNOR grant criteria. The Township's ultimate longer term goal was to obtain additional space for record archives and storage for the recreation committee.

To support the FEDNOR grant for equipment storage and an away team change room, Councilor Walton drew up the plans and Council retained an architect to prepare drawings. Two drawings were presented, and Council voted on their preferred option.

Subsequent to this meeting, Councillor Walton attended a public meeting at which the addition was being discussed, and spoke against the proposal proceeding. Having done his own research, he felt it could be built by volunteers, thus saving the Township money.

Louise Heintzman believes that Councillor Walton told people that staff and Council misrepresented to FEDNOR the purpose of the grant. She alleges that this was confidential information, and that Councillor Walton's sharing of this information violated the Council Code of Conduct.

We find that the discussions around the FEDNOR grant were not part of a closed meeting, and as such, any discussion in that regard does not breach confidentiality under the Code of Conduct.

At the Saturday public meeting, Councillor Walton was openly critical about proceeding with the addition as proposed, as a waste of money. Although he had voted with Council to proceed with the project, he proposed changes (such as the use of volunteers) to the proposal which would involve changes to the grant application, and when staff pointed out that the tight timelines for the grant, he was critical of staff for allegedly rushing Council into a decision at the meeting.

Complaint #2 - Conclusions

Although we do not find that Councillor Walton breached confidentiality, we do find his conduct to have been publicly disrespectful of staff. In this regard, we find that Councillor Walton breached the Code of Conduct

Complaint #3

The complainant Jim Jenkins alleges that Councillor Ron Walton harassed him by interfering in a situation at the landfill and trying to tell him what to do and how to deal with an employee.

The allegation is that, on February 24, 2017 Councillor Walton was at the landfill where he learned of a problem which the landfill employee was complaining about. Councillor Walton dropped by the works yard and proceeded to tell Jim Jenkins what to do and how to do it. The allegation is that this level of interference with staff operations constitutes harassment.

Findings of Fact

We find that the events transpired as described by the complainant, but did not constitute harassment. The event represents a single incident, and we do not find that the complainant's evidence indicates 'a course of vexatious conduct or comment' towards the complainant, Jim Jenkins.

Overall Conclusions

We find that Councillor Walton is engaging in conduct and behaviour which constitutes harassment and bullying of Louise Heintzman and is engaging in a course of conduct, through participating in gossip with others, which is poisoning her work environment. While it may be hard for Councillor Walton to acknowledge and appreciate the severity of the impacts of his conduct, we find that the bullying is

ongoing, serious and we accept that it is severely impacting the complainant in her job and in her personal health.

The overwhelming evidence is that Councillor Walton is loud, aggressive, overbearing and disruptive at meetings, often dominating discussions by interrupting and talking over others. We heard evidence that attempts to maintain decorum and to get Councillor Walton to correct or control his behaviour have not resulted in any significant change in demeanor. He acknowledges that he is loud and often raises his voice; but he justifies this in stating that he was elected to bring the constituents' concerns to the table, and he gets very frustrated when he feels he is not able to get to 'the truth'.

It seems that Council is struggling to control its meetings, which are marked by raised voices, people interrupting one another and talking over each other, and staff members are feeling a general deterioration in the quality of the workplace environment. For the Deputy Clerk/Treasurer and the Clerk/Treasurer, Council meetings are part of their workplace, and so are any other meetings which they are required to support.

As Councillor Walton told our investigator, he has attended committee meetings in other municipalities, and there is nobody yelling at those meetings. They are civil and courteous.

The Township's Council Code of Conduct makes it clear that members of Council are to conduct themselves in a manner that inspires trust and confidence, that shows respect for the decision-making process, and that fosters civil and respectful discussion and debate.

As leaders of the community, we are held to a higher standard of behaviour and conduct. In the performance of our community role we will act with honesty and integrity and generally conduct ourselves in a way that generates community trust and confidence in us as individuals and enhances the role and image of the Council for the Township of McMurrich/Monteith in the performance of our duties as elected officials.

The fundamental principles of meetings – such as courtesy and respect, majority rule, minority protection, the right to information and equality of rights and privileges – shall be adhered to. ...

The usual reasons for discipline at a meeting are:

- i) Being disruptive through continual interruptions*
- ii) Making offensive remarks and being disrespectful to others*
- iii) Using unparliamentary language and harsh words or tone*
- iv) Impugning the motive of others*
- v) Not following the legitimate orders of the presiding officer*

What became clear during the course of this investigation is that Councillor Walton's disrespectful and harassing conduct is not only negatively impacting on the office staff, and particularly on the Deputy Clerk/Treasurer who appears to be the target of much of it, his loud and aggressive behaviour is disruptive to Council meetings. It is clear that the Councillor does not understand his role as a councillor. As is clear in the *Municipal Act*, Council's role is to ***develop and evaluate policies and programs; decide which services will be provided; and ensure that policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement council's decisions.***

While we have no doubt that Councillor Walton believes he is merely acting in the interests of the people who elected him, it appears he misunderstands his role as an elected member of Council, and that he does a great disservice to the ratepayers he purports to be speaking and acting on behalf of. While Council

need not always agree, and healthy debate is part of the democratic process, continuous argument, recrimination, and resurrecting issues already dealt with can lead to an unproductive environment.

If any member of Council believes he or she has new information relating to a decision, which he thinks needs to be considered, it would be most appropriate for him to provide such information to staff and the rest of Council, in advance of any meeting at which it will be discussed.

Councillor Walton is participating in gossip about town staff and town business, which he justifies as part of his role and that he does not actively seek this out, rather people actively seek him out to bend his ear, and he is just doing his job by listening. It would certainly be more productive, and less detrimental to his relationship with staff at the township, if Councillor Walton were to re-direct these people to put their comments or complaints in writing so that he can make sure it is directed to the appropriate staff. This would be a more productive and positive exercise of his role as Councillor.

Members of council who do not conduct themselves appropriately at a meeting may be subject to reprimand and may ultimately be expelled from the meeting. There appears to be room improvement in the general conduct of Council meetings, and it may be that Council would benefit from some additional training on meeting decorum.

We recommend that Council re-instate the practice of recording all meetings. While the Township has implemented a practice of audio recording all closed meetings, following a recommendation by the Ombudsman, they discontinued the practice of audio recording open meetings. We believe that audio recording all meetings, and posting them on the Township website, would enhance transparency and encourage better behaviour.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommended:

1. That the remuneration paid by the Township to Councillor Ron Walton be suspended for a period of 30 days commencing with his next pay period;
2. Those outside of Council and other meetings Councillor Walton restrict his attendance at township facilities (the landfill, the yard, the township office) to only those visits which are absolutely necessary to pick up, drop off, or return items, and minimize the duration of any such visits.
3. That Councillor Walton refrain from engaging in, or being a conduit for, gossip about township staff, by staff or others.
4. That Council re-instate the practice of recording all meetings and post open meeting on the website
5. That Council review the function of the Cemetery Committee.

Respectfully submitted

Nigel Bellechamber

for
Amberley Gavel Ltd.
Integrity Commissioner