

Municipality Of Chatham-Kent

Corporate Services

Municipal Governance

To: Mayor and Members of Council
From: Judy Smith, Director, Municipal Governance/Clerk
Date: July 28, 2020
Subject: Integrity Commissioner Report respecting complaints regarding Councillor Bondy

Recommendations

It is recommended by the Integrity Commissioner (IC) (Page 20 of the attached IC report) that:

1. Council formally reprimand Councillor Bondy.
2. Councillor Bondy formally apologize, within one week, to Council and the administration for his action.
3. Failing to apologize, Council suspend his remuneration for a period of one week.

Background

The Integrity Commissioner reports to Council directly and is responsible for ensuring compliance to The Municipal Code of Conduct for Members of Council, and conducting investigations as requested by the Municipality into the actions of Council members in an independent and impartial manner.

Council approved the appointment of an Integrity Commissioner whose responsibilities are as follows:

- Investigate complaints and alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct for Members of Council.
- Review the Code of Conduct for Members of Council and make recommendations on an annual basis.
- Serve as an advisor to individual Members of Council in relation to the Code of Conduct and any procedures, rules and policies of the municipality governing ethical behaviour, and act as a proactive educator for Council, the Civic Administration and the public.
- Provide reports to Council, summarizing activities.
- Provide individual investigative reports, as required, which will include background concerning a complaint and recommendations to Municipal Council with respect to a complaint

Section 19.c (iv) of the Code of Conduct requires the Integrity Commissioner to provide a report within 90 days of first receiving the complaint. It also provides the Integrity Commissioner with the authority to make a recommendation to Council on penalty.

Section 19.d of the Code of Conduct also states that within 60 days of receipt of a final investigation report from the Integrity Commissioner, the report shall be considered by Council in a regularly scheduled open and public meeting of Council. Council shall decide, and the Municipal Clerk shall record the vote of each member of Council, with respect to each recommendation made by the Integrity Commissioner. Council may ask the Integrity Commissioner to appear before Council, in an open and public meeting of Council, to answer questions or provide information to Council about the investigation or investigation report. No person shall be entitled to make a deputation to Council with respect to any investigation report or any matter related thereto. Council is entitled to receive in camera advice as permitted under the Municipal Act, 2001 from relevant staff.

It is also noted in the Council Code of Conduct that “neither the person who filed the complaint, nor the Council member who is subject of the report, shall be present during that portion of the Council meeting when the report is considered and responded to by Council.” However, as it relates to dealing with the imposing of a penalty of a suspension of remuneration, the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act permits a member of Council to take part in the discussion of the matter, including making submissions to Council to attempt to influence the voting on any question but is not permitted to vote on any question in respect of the matter. This provision about a member of Council being present and making decisions at the meeting in the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act supersedes the section in the Council Code of Conduct with respect to these matters.

The portion in the Council Code of Conduct related to the person who filed the complaint remains applicable.

Comments

The Integrity Commissioner responded to several complaints received from the public, Members of Council and the administration about Councillor Bondy’s conduct leading up to and during the May 25, 2020 Council meeting and specifically during their consideration of Items 13e (Motion of Councillor Bondy re: Victoria Avenue Reconstruction) and 13f (Victoria Avenue Infrastructure Renewal, Community of Chatham) and also about posts on social media made by Councillor Bondy following that meeting.

Appendix A is the report submitted by Mary Ellen Bench, the Chatham-Kent Integrity Commissioner, relating to this matter.

Under Section 223.4(5) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, Council may impose either of two penalties for a violation of the Code of Conduct:

- a. a reprimand, or
- b. suspension of remuneration paid to the member for a period of up to 90 days

Areas of Strategic Focus and Critical Success Factors

The recommendations in this report support the following areas of strategic focus:

- Economic Prosperity:
Chatham-Kent is an innovative and thriving community with a diversified economy
- A Healthy and Safe Community:
Chatham-Kent is a healthy and safe community with sustainable population growth
- People and Culture:
Chatham-Kent is recognized as a culturally vibrant, dynamic, and creative community
- Environmental Sustainability:
Chatham-Kent is a community that is environmentally sustainable and promotes stewardship of our natural resources

The recommendations in this report support the following critical success factors:

- Financial Sustainability:
The Corporation of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent is financially sustainable
- Open, Transparent and Effective Governance:

The Corporation of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent is open, transparent and effectively governed with efficient and bold, visionary leadership
- Has the potential to support all areas of strategic focus & critical success factors
- Neutral issues (does not support negatively or positively)

Consultation

Legal Services was consulted on this report.

Financial Implications

If Council chooses to suspend remuneration for a period of one week, the amount is \$663.36. ($\$34,760 \times 260/262$ working days/26 pays = 1326.72/2 weeks = 663.36 for one week)

Prepared by:

Reviewed by:

Judy Smith, CMO
Director, Municipal Governance/Clerk

Cathy Hoffman, MPA, CHRL
General Manager, Corporate Services/
Chief Human Resource Officer

Consulted and confirmed the content of the consultation section of the report by:

Dave Taylor
Manager, Legal Services, Community Development

Attachments (Appendix A – Integrity Commissioner report)

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Report of the Chatham-Kent Integrity Commissioner

Respecting Complaints against Councillor Bondy

Submitted: July 13, 2020

This report responds to several complaints received from the public, Members of Council and the administration about Councillor Bondy's conduct leading up to and during the May 25, 2020 Council consideration of Item 13e, respecting the Victoria Ave. infrastructure improvements and also about posts on social media made by Councillor Bondy following that meeting.

It is rare for an Integrity Commissioner to get multiple persons expressing concerns about a potential breach of the Code of Conduct arising out of the same facts. The matters referenced in this report were first brought to my attention in a request to investigate received on May 27th and the final person to reach out to me did so on June 22nd.

The complaints can be summarized as follows:

- Councillor Bondy's comments during the Council meeting were disrespectful of other councillors and of municipal staff, and his tone was rude and aggressive;
- There is a pattern of disrespectful behaviour towards staff and Council by Councillor Bondy and this is the most recent manifestation of this behaviour;
- Councillor Bondy's posts on FaceBook state there is "corruption and collusion" and others using words like "sabotage" demonstrate a lack of respect for Council and / or municipal staff, and create a public impression that the Municipality lacks integrity

In investigating these complaints, I followed a fair and balanced process to first assess whether the complaints made were within my jurisdiction as Integrity Commissioner. I assessed the complaints against the Municipality of Chatham-Kent Code of Conduct for Members of Council, and I have determined that they constitute an informal complaint under section 19.a of the Code of Conduct and that the subject matter is within my jurisdiction. Next, I determined that the subject matter was not frivolous or vexatious, and that the complaints were made in good faith and needed to be investigated.

Councillor Bondy lives on this street and in January approached me for guidance regarding whether he was able to participate in the budget discussions regarding proposed reconstruction work to replace watermains and add a bicycle lane to a major historic road. On January 29, 2020 I advised him in writing that his interest as a resident of the street was an interest in common with the public and that I would not consider it to be a breach of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act of the Chatham-Kent Council Code of Conduct for him to participate in the Council decision-making process surrounding this matter. I have more information now, and I maintain my opinion in this regard. Councillor Bondy was free to participate

in the budget and in the follow-up discussions regarding this matter, including the May 25th Council meeting.

Turning to the events of May 25th, I asked and received from the Clerk a link to the recording of the Council meeting posted on-line, and copies of all emails and agenda materials regarding the agenda item about the Victoria Ave. reconstruction. These included:

- Background emails concerning the
- report titled Victoria Avenue Infrastructure Renewal, Community of Chatham (staff report) which is dated May 14, 2020 and was prepared by Chris Thibert, P.Eng. Director of Engineering and Transportation;
- Councillor Bondy's motion;
- Councillor Brock McGregor's proposal to amend Councillor Bondy's motion;
- 18 deputations;
- emails between the Clerk and Members of Council, staff and members of the public.

In addition, certain other complainants provided me with copies of emails and of social media posts related to this matter. Emails received cover the period February 25 to June 2, 2020. I then conducted interviews with persons I deemed would have information relevant to this matter. I have chosen not to identify complainants, as is my right under the Code of Conduct, as concern about repercussions was expressed by some, and I see no benefit to be gained in providing this information. I also conducted my own independent investigation of Councillor Bondy's posts on FaceBook prior to my interview with him.

My investigation included conducting an interview by telephone with Councillor Bondy, to provide him an opportunity to address the subject matter of the complaints. Councillor Bondy was very cooperative and provided helpful information. My notes of our conversation were provided to him afterward so that he could confirm their accuracy, which he did.

Applicable Code of Conduct provisions:

The preamble to the Code of Conduct includes the following paragraph:

Improving the quality of public administration and governance can be achieved by encouraging high standards of conduct on the part of government officials. In particular, the public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct from those elected to Municipal government. In turn, adherence to these standards will protect and maintain the Municipality of Chatham-Kent's reputation and integrity.

This is reinforced by the General Principles found in section 5, and set out below:

The general principles are:

a. Members of Council shall uphold a high standard of ethical behaviour to ensure that their decision-making is impartial, transparent and free from undue influence;

and

b. Members shall refrain from engaging in conduct that would bring the Municipality or Council into disrepute or compromise the integrity of the Municipality or Council.

Other provisions of the Code of Conduct that I referred to in conducting my investigation and writing this report are:

13. Conduct at Council and Committee Meetings

During Council meetings, members shall show respect and conduct themselves with decorum and mutual respect at all times during presentations by staff, public and fellow members. Respect for deputations and for fellow members and staff requires that all members show courtesy, respect and not distract from the business of Council during presentations and when other members have the floor to speak.

14. Conduct Respecting Staff

Only Council as a whole has the authority to approve budget, policy, Committee processes and other such matters. Under the direction of the Chief Administrative Officer, staff serve Council as a whole and the combined interests of all members as evidenced through the decisions of Council.

Individual members shall not give direction to staff. Council shall give direction to staff, through the Chief Administrative Officer, in a meeting of Council (either in camera or in an open public meeting, as appropriate and as permitted by legislation) and through a vote of the majority members of Council.

When interacting with staff, members shall use generally accepted practices of respectful interaction.

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 faction of the Council.

Members shall not maliciously or falsely injure the professional or ethical reputation of staff, or the prospects or practice of staff, whether in public or in private, and all members shall show respect for the professional capacities of staff.

15. Discreditable Conduct

All members of Council have a duty to treat members of the public, one another, and staff in a civilized way 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, in addition to other federal and provincial laws.

19.c Complaint Protocol

the Integrity Commissioner shall have the authority to keep confidential any names or facts that would identify members, complainants and/or witnesses where it is in the interest of a just and fair result to do so. Relevant criteria for determining whether the identity of members, complainants and/or witnesses will include, but is not limited to, the nature of the complaint and the power imbalance between the parties (including for example municipal employees who can be subject to reprisals from members of Council). In such an instance, the Integrity Commissioner may use initials, code or other means of protecting the

identity of complainants and witnesses and may also black out any identifying information on relevant documents.

Background respecting the Victoria Ave. matter:

The Victoria Ave infrastructure improvements were approved by Council as part of the Budget process for 2017-2020, following which staff followed standard procedure for such matters, including retaining a consultant to assess various options to address infrastructure renewal needs (sewer separation, watermain replacement and road resurfacing) as well as other matters where complaints had been received including AODA compliance, active transportation, poor drainage and speeding. A public meeting (Public Information Centre or PIC) at Sprucedale United Church about the Victoria Avenue project on February 20, 2020 to review the recommended proposal to address these matters. What was proposed generated a very significant amount of public debate and comment with feedback following the meeting directed to engineering staff and the CAO, in addition to Members of Council. I have reviewed 164 pages of such material and find the two emails to Council that are set out below to be most relevant to explaining the concerns surrounding this project. Councillor Bondy advised the CAO as early as February 29th that he had received many calls and visits from residents expressing concern that a multi-purpose trail would negatively impact the street.

Following the public meeting, the following events occurred:

1. On March 1, 2020 Councillor Bondy emailed the Clerk a copy of a draft motion he emailed from his personal to his office email, and commented to the Clerk on March 2nd that his motion would be presented that night, and it would be lively. Councillor Bondy's motion dated March 2, 2020 reads as follows:

MOTION

Re: Victoria Avenue Reconstruction

“That Victoria Avenue underground infrastructure proceed as planned; Victoria Avenue's original design, including original sidewalks, boulevards, two direction street traffic and original lampposts be maintained. The area from McNaughton Avenue to Thames Street not incorporate a multi use asphalt path. Victoria Avenue would not appear ANY differently after construction than it is today, as has been for almost 200 years, aside from perhaps road narrowing and speed humps to calm traffic.

Any and all trees that were slated for removal be retained and

appropriately trimmed. All trees on Victoria Avenue within the scope of the projected project be properly maintained and therefore not removed. This is compliant with recently adopted Municipality of Chatham-Kent official policy; Retaining the original design of Victoria Avenue prevents the creation of asphalt strips adjacent to the roadway. This will keep the walkway on Victoria Avenue safe for all pedestrians. Adult cyclists will continue to safely travel the roadway of Victoria Avenue. Not removing 6 meters of green grass and replacing it with asphalt complies with the Municipalities recent declaration of a Climate Emergency policy.

The money saved by not redesigning Victoria Avenue, and simply replacing the underground infrastructure, be directed to the emergency needs of Erie Shore Drive and it's residents.”

Signed: Councillor Michael Bondy_____

Notice Given On: March 2, 2020_____

2. On March 5, 2020 staff sent the following email to all of Council:

“Council,

As you are aware there has been and continues to be a large volume of calls, emails and social media posts coming in to Engineering with some going to your attention about the proposed works on Victoria Ave. A lot of these comments/feedback are quite negative towards the project with some based on inaccurate and false information.

The purpose of this project is a sewer separation and watermain replacement project. From the feedback received to date, there are no concerns with this aspect of the project. Due to the required 8 month road closure (potentially split over 2 years/phases), this is therefore an opportune time to address many of the deficiencies of the street which include accessibility, traffic calming (designed in speed control), drainage, intersection improvements, and safe active transportation in a cost effective manner.

I would like to take this opportunity to clear up some of the misconceptions. Because of the sensitivity, strong public opinion and large difference between options/alternatives on this project, our goal is to do our due diligence and summarize all of the feedback to report back to Council in the summer of 2020. This report will be a recommendation report which will allow Council to identify how the project will be designed and constructed once budget permits. It is important to note that Victoria Ave. is a

collector road, which serves the needs of many travelers in C-K, not just the property owners and options proposed benefit the greater good.

Myth #1: 19 trees will be cut down.

Fact #1: 19 trees have been identified with safety issues. Actions to address these trees will take place independent of the project. There are 3 trees which have been identified to be removed in the initial design concept.

Myth #2: Streetlights being removed.

Fact #2: None of the streetlights are to be removed. There were a few identified to be slightly relocated to accommodate the proposed works but not removed. The streetlights have heritage status and our goal for the project was to preserve this heritage.

Myth #3: Nobody supports a multi-use trail.

Fact #3: There were several people at the PIC who supported the multi-use trail. Victoria Ave. is identified in C-K's Cycling Master Plan and provides connectivity for north of McNaughton all the way to downtown Chatham and is one of the best scenic and shaded routes for active transportation. This is a safety issue that is designed to keep bicycle traffic off of the arterial roads and will also be used to ensure the safe travels of those who utilize motorized wheelchairs.

Myth #4: Resolve the speeding issues with more Police presence.

Fact #4: The proposed design will reduce the natural speed of the road by reducing the width of the road and through use of a small traffic circle. These are modern day practices in communities across Canada. Speed control is much more effective through design, as opposed to speed limit changes or Police patrol. For example, we never receive speed complaints on King St. in downtown Chatham due to the inherent design.

Myth #5: Why not leave the sidewalks in their existing location?

Fact #5: The current sidewalk location has caused safety issues associated with bicycles and accessible motorized wheelchairs. In its current state, property owners must stop twice prior to entering the street – once for the sidewalk, and once for the road. We have several reports of accidents and near misses where the homeowner backing out neglects to stop at the sidewalk. The proposed design eliminates this problem. We are also reviewing the option to have sidewalks on one side of the street, and the multi-use path on the other. Additionally, the current sidewalks do not meet current AODA standards for width and road crossings.

Please let me know if you have any questions or comments.

Thanks

Chris Thibert, P.Eng.

Director, Engineering & Transportation

Infrastructure & Engineering Services"

3. On March 11th, the CAO sent an email to Council as well, which is set out below:

“Good day Council,

I am writing to request your support and understanding as the IES team prepares their report and recommendations regarding the construction project on Victoria Avenue, South of McNaughton to Thames St... Chris Thibert has acknowledged that the public consultation (PIC) generated many concerns and negative comments regarding the initial design proposal. He also noted that there is false information being circulated regarding this project, he attempted to provide the correct information in the following email.

Chris has also provided Council and residents who have inquired with a copy of the arborists report that identifies which trees need to be removed, the majority need to be removed for safety reasons, not because of the proposed redesign. There are many other questions and concerns that reflect the desire of many residents who wish to maintain the ambiance of the street. These questions all deserve a response, however, this work will take some time to complete. The current volume of requests for information has been overwhelming given the number of other operational issues.

Chris and his team are considering all of the feedback they received both from the public meeting held on Feb. 20 and the subsequent feedback received from Council and the public. This process typically takes several weeks to complete. They will present their report to Council, in a public meeting, so residents will have the opportunity to review the report and ensure their feedback has been considered. No work or commitments on the project will be made until the report is considered by Council.

Given the scope of the work required to address the aforementioned concerns and the operational requirements facing the IES team I am requesting Council’s support to give the IES team the time they need to prepare a comprehensive report for your consideration. Council can assure residents that their concerns are being considered. The purpose of the PICs is so that we can receive feedback from our community to ensure that any final plans consider their wishes.

Thank you for you anticipated support.

Don

The purpose of both of these emails, in my opinion is to ensure that Members of Council had the necessary information about the process that would follow to respond to resident’s inquiries. This is a best practice when Council is receiving public commentary about a contentious issue.

4. A response to the CAO and copied to Council from Councillor Bondy, that was also sent on March 11th is as follows: “I have a motion to retain status quo on Victoria. This is the overwhelming opinion of the many responses to this project. I guess this was missed by Don. The report has been reviewed by the public. “

5. On March 31, 2020 Councillor Bondy advised the CAO that he had deferred his motion and said: "Could you please ensure that the file is dormant and that NO progress of activity will happen concerning this project. This is a request of the concerned citizens. Otherwise they want to forward the motion in an absolutely inappropriate time. Please respond with something I can forward to the group which is now nearly 2,000 people. Thank you."

6. On April 1st the CAO responded in a way that could be shared with the public, as per Councillor Bondy's request: "I am pleased to confirm that no new tendering or construction will be initiated by the Municipal staff regarding the Victoria Ave. project before the issue returns to Council. The Infrastructure and Engineering staff have received feedback from the residents concerning the project, this information will be presented to Council before any decision is made. I also wish to assure residents that they will have an opportunity to ensure their voices are heard before Council is asked to make a decision on the project. Given the current limitation of the COVID 19 crisis, administration's preferences is postpone any decision on the project until after we can have a regular meeting of Council." The response from the CAO was sent to all Members of Council, some of whom thanked the CAO for clarifying the timing of Council's decision.

7. On May 14, 2020 Councillor Bondy, emailed the CAO, copying the Mayor and Clerk asking that the staff information report be held off until his motion could be presented in normal council. For purposes of clarity, normal council refers to an in-person attendance by Members of Council and staff, allowing for public in-person participation.

8. The CAO responded indicating that "We may wish to bring your NOM forward earlier rather than later so that we do not waste time and money exploring options that are not supported by Council."

9. Councillor Bondy's response to the CAO that same day, copied to the Mayor and Clerk, was: "So that's a no. There is no need for this now. Just let it sit for a month or so. And do you decide when my motion is brought forward? I thought we were in charge. I see that I was wrong. I will happily inform the public that the motion is being directed by the authors of the failed design. This thing should never have left your desk. It is embarrassing."

Council's consideration of Councillor Bondy's Motion:

Councillor Bondy's motion, as set out above was placed on the Agenda and the staff information report dated May 14, 2020 and titled "Victoria Avenue Infrastructure Renewal, Community of Chatham" immediately followed it on the Agenda.

The staff information report provides information to Council on the nature of the infrastructure renewal project, as well as the nature of public input received that led to some of the project design features being bundled together. It describes the Public Information Centre (PIC) meeting that was held in February to present the project design to the public and receive their feedback. The report discusses a separate project respecting trees on Victoria Ave. and the findings of an arborist retained to evaluate their condition, and the fact that the infrastructure project will require the removal of three trees necessary for the project and an additional 19 trees that are not healthy and will be removed.

The report describes the location of a proposed 3 metre multi-use trail that was to be constructed under this project, and the subsequent decision to construct a 1.5 metre bicycle lane instead, in response to public feedback. In this respect it advises that when the sidewalk is eventually replaced it will need to be widened to meet AODA standards at that time. Plans respecting traffic calming measures, intersection improvements and street lights are also discussed.

The report begins with: "This report is for the information of Council." The report does not contain any recommendations or seek Council approval to proceed. Under background it identifies that the project was approved and was part of the 2017-2020 capital budget program.

The purpose of Councillor Bondy's motion is to preserve the status quo regarding the appearance of Victoria Ave. while allowing for the underground infrastructure work to proceed.

On Friday, May 22, 2020 Councillor Bondy received a call from Thomas Kelly, who raised a concern about Councillor Bondy's motion and in particular the reference to "Not removing 6 metres of green grass and replacing it with asphalt" . Mr. Kelly was concerned that Councillor Bondy's motion was inaccurate by referencing 6 metres when the actual impact was a decrease in boulevard of 1.2 metres per side of the street totalling 2.4 metres. He also advised Councillor Bondy of an error with respect to the reference to redirecting any money saved to the emergency needs of Erie Shore Drive and its residents.

Several Members of Council commented on the length of the Council Agenda for the May 25th meeting. In response to an email from Councillor Bondy, the Clerk advised that his motion was first on the agenda followed by the staff report for information only. Items not reached by 9pm were to be deferred to the June 1st meeting. Councillor Bondy also raised questions about the staff presentation being moot if his motion passes because the project will have been cancelled.

Council and Council communications on May 25th -Council day

1. May 25th, Before the Council Meeting

At 11:23 am on May 25th Councillor Brock McGregor advised the Clerk that Councillor Bondy had committed to reword his motion to allow for an easier separation of points to vote on. His email to the Clerk advises as follows:

“Cl Bondy had committed to me to reword his motion to allow for an easier separation of points to vote on. I have not been a copy yet, and am unsure when we'll have it. If he does not provide this wording, could I ask to separate components of his motion as follows? I believe these points are consistent with his motion so are not changing the intent of the motion.

That the final design include:

- 1) No roundabout at Stephenson and Victoria
- 2) Sidewalks in their current location
- 3) No left turn lanes at the intersections of McNaughton and Grand
- 4) No additional cycling infrastructure
- 5) Maintenance of heritage light posts, including their use at the north end of Victoria and my amendment
- 6) That the municipality of Chatham-Kent develop and implement a street tree cover policy, to maintain and encourage tree coverage by continuing active surveillance and maintenance of trees on municipal right of ways, including replacement when required.”

At 12:05 pm the Chair of the Municipal Heritage Committee wrote to Members of Council to ask that they support Councillor Bondy's motion, to preserve the heritage of the street, and to trim rather than remove trees. Many others sent communications to Council making similar requests and opining on the charm and beauty of Victoria Avenue. Others sent emails supporting bike lanes on Victoria Avenue. Yet others sent emails expressing concern that placing the staff information report on the same agenda and after Councillor Bondy's motion was an attempt by administration to have Councillor Bondy's motion defeated.

Councillor Bondy at 1:03 pm advised the Clerk to change the reference from 6 metres to 2.4 metres and to change the reference to Erie Drive to directing the savings to be used for “the various needs of the community”. Councillor Bondy initially accepted the information provided to him by Mr. Kelly.

On May 25th, at 1:06 pm in an attempt to clarify this matter, Mr. Kelly emailed all Members of Council to attempt to clarify some of the questions they were getting related to sidewalk conversion to bike lanes and resulting AODA compliance, prior to the Council meeting.

At 1:12 pm Councillor Bondy advised the Clerk that he will “stick to the “6” and only adjust the last sentence.” Councillor Bondy advised that he did this after going back and looking at the original design, it had 3 metre wide multi-purpose trails on each side, resulting in an impact of 6 metres.

In response, Councillor Harrigan asked if there would be a staff presentation. The response was that one was not anticipated, but staff did organize a short presentation for the Council meeting that evening, as a result.

Councillor Brock McGregor, at 5:31 pm asked the Clerk if Councillor Bondy had amended his motion and was advised that he had not. Councillor Brock McGregor at 6:01 pm advised the Clerk that Councillor Bondy was sticking to his original motion and advised the Clerk that he would be asking for Councillor

Bondy's motion to be separated into six separate items saying "My understanding is that is consistent with his motion so isn't changing his direction but would allow us to vote on the components separately."

2. The debate at Council:

Councillor Bondy's motion was introduced by him and he made it clear that he was not against bikes or bike paths in the right place. His motion was intended to maintain the original design of Victoria Avenue, given the was "overwhelming public support to not change" it. He said he was counting on Council to support his motion.

Councillor Brock McGregor was next to speak and proposed a friendly amendment, which was accepted by Councillor Bondy, to add a request that staff be directed to develop a street tree cover policy. Councillor Brock McGregor began asking a series of questions, starting with a question about the consultant costs, at which time it was noted that there was a short staff presentation. When Mr. Chris Thibert, P.Eng. Director, Engineering and Transportation began the presentation, Councillor Bondy interrupted to ask why was the presentation about the Information Report. He then commented that he felt he was "getting railroaded and a sales job about this project", stressing that his motion was on the table and if successful the staff report was moot. I can only assume that the Chair agreed, because the presentation was not completed and instead Councillor Brock McGregor proceeded to ask questions of staff related to the project instead of asking staff to finish the presentation.

When the presentation was challenged, Councillor Harrigan advised Members of Council by email, that for the purposes of transparency, she had asked engineering that afternoon in an email: "if they would provide a presentation to help council understand the relationship between the motion by Clr. Bondy, and the information report by engineering. There is a lot of information about this, and I thought it would be helpful."

Councillor Brock McGregor stated that he could support some but not all of Councillor Bondy's motion. In response to Councillor Brock McGregor's request that the motion be voted on section by section, and he presented an alternative form of motion as is set out above in his email to the Clerk.

Councillor Bondy refused Councillor B. McGregor's request, stating that it would run contrary to his motion, and he was not comfortable with it. Following discussion about whether Councillor Bondy had called the question when he asked for a vote now, Councillor Bondy stated that he would be fine with hearing the rest of the speakers but that he wanted his motion voted on in its entirety; that if his motion passes, this issue is finished. Councillor Brock McGregor, advised the Clerk that if Councillor Bondy's motion fails, he would move to remove the addition of the roundabout; move forward with heritage light installation; move forward with on street bike lanes.

Discussion followed concerning traffic calming measures, what work would be done on Victoria Avenue if Councillor Bondy's motion was successful, the purpose of the first vs. second PIC and timing. A motion to postpone a decision on Councillor Bondy's motion until after the second PIC was defeated. Councillor Bondy commented that he did not support delay and that Council had "a habit of kicking things down the road". Discussion followed about removing Councillor Brock McGregor's friendly amendment to include a tree policy and voting on that separately, and Councillor Bondy agreed that it be voted on separately.

Council then proceeded to vote on Councillor Bondy's motion of March 2nd, and it was written, and the motion was defeated by a vote of 8 (in favour) to 10 (opposed). Councillor Bondy's request for a roll call vote determined how the vote was taken.

A subsequent motion was presented by Councillor Brock McGregor providing that the design include: 1. No roundabout; 2. Heritage lights; 3. On-street bike lanes and 4. direction that the Municipality develop a tree cover policy.

Friendly amendments followed and the motion that passed at the end of the debate at 9:26 pm, was as follows:

"That the final design include:

1. No roundabout at Stephenson and Victoria.
2. Maintenance of heritage light posts, including their use at the north end of Victoria
3. On street bike lanes.
4. That the Municipality of Chatham-Kent develop and implement a street tree cover policy, to maintain and encourage tree coverage by continuing active surveillance and maintenance of trees on municipal rights of ways, including replacement when required.
5. That Chatham-Kent endeavor to reduce the impact to existing trees.
6. Widening of Victoria Avenue at Grand Avenue and McNaughton Avenue to include left turn lanes.
7. Retain the sidewalks in their current location."

These matters were voted on individually and the votes recorded for each item. Items 4, 5 and 7 were supported by all Members of Council. All parts of the motion were approved with a different number of votes in favour and opposed to each of the remaining items. Councillor Bondy opposed item 3 (bike lanes) and item 6 (widening Victoria Ave. to include left turn lanes. Item 3 carried 11 votes to 7 opposed, and item 6 carried 10 votes to 8. Those who voted in favour were not all aligned, and of note is that three Councillors' votes moved between the majority in favour and those opposed, between items 3 and 6.

3. Social Media posts by Councillor Bondy

May 15, 2020

On May 15, 2020 being 10 days prior to the Council debate, Councillor Bondy posted on FaceBook:

"Hi Everyone,

The motion to cancel the Victoria Avenue redesign will be heard at May 25th Council meeting. I wanted to hold off until we were back in Council personally but that has proven to be risky. I spoke with administration yesterday and they plan on bringing an information report on Victoria at that meeting. They say this would not happen. My fear is that the information report could put the proposal on the table and the design could be approved without my motion ever being heard. **A sabotage could happen. I have seen it before and there is too much at stake to chance it.** I apologize that this happened so fast but that is the way it works. I was contacted yesterday and spoke to the Mayor, CAO and Thomas Kelly. A decision regarding the May agenda was necessary. Too bad things work this way but that is part of the

new game. We will win this. Heavy pressure on Councillors right up until the 25th! If anyone has any questions please call me at 519-352-4284.”

Residents responded with comments ranging from “Good call Mike” to **“It seems like an underhanded tactic on the part of the admin”**.

I do not have access to the entire email chain but note a reference to 58 comments is noted on the image. Other comments posted in this chain:

If you call someone out for sabotage, you should actually back it up with facts. I am very interested to hear more about this. Was it the Mayor? Was it a few rich people in Chatham-Kent? Was it economic development? I can name names if you don’t want to. Sadly this is not my job. It is yours. You made the statement.” It ended with Councillor Bondy saying **“I have explained it on this feed. It is a procedural issue. You can call me and I can explain it.** My thumbs are tired and it is a long story.” The resident asked Councillor Bondy to Private Message him in response.

Also **I had a motion regarding the arena that was sabotaged** because a conflicting recommendation was placed before it on the agenda. That’s the short version.” (May 15, 2020)

May 25, 2020

Following the May 25th Council meeting, Councillor Bondy made several posts on FaceBook. Most of what was forwarded to me came from the Save Victoria Ave -Voices for Victoria Facebook site. The posts that are of most concern that have been provided to me are as follows:

“Sorry everyone. I tried my best. Here come the bike lanes. Trust me, admin will come back and tell us the bike lane is close to the sidewalk so therefore... Disappointed in Council, well 10 of them.” And then “Not easy. **The corruption and collusion is so clear.**” And “Both sides. 1.5 metres wide. Goodbye boulevards.” Resident: “and sadly this will affect our trees.” To which Councillor Bondy replied “Yes it will.”

Note: the reference to 10 councillors is difficult to put into context because only five Members of Council consistently voted with Councillor Bondy.

Resident: So do we now replace our orange ribbons with black? Councillor Bondy reply: “Yes. Quickly before the trees are cut down.” In the same email chain a comment that is not the Councillor’s: **“..make no mistake, it’s all a show. The Thomas Kelly and Brock McGregor show. Bike lanes were added. Period. The rest is smoke and mirrors.”**

Resident: **“Sabotage” “Railroaded” and tonight following the Council meeting-Michael Bondy in response to a comment on the Save Victoria Facebook page “Not easy. The corruption and collusion is so clear.”**

Resident: **“Wtf is wrong with those a**holes in CK Council? So much blatant corruption and nothing is done.”**

Councillor Brock McGregor also posted on this website, explaining his motion. In response, Councillor Bondy replied: **“The difference in your motion was the inclusion of bike lanes. Big difference. And no, I did not agree to your rewriting of my motion on the Friday before the vote. Clearly I wanted my**

motion voted on, which you voted against. You do not have to apologize for your actions. Your mission was successful: bike lanes on Victoria.”

Residents’ responded in a mixed way, some thanking Councillor Brock McGregor and saying things like “now we have both sides of the story” while some were less polite, and others focussed on the actual provisions of the Council decision. I do not have access to all 57 comments.

The last social media post to be brought to my attention is with regard to a post placed on the personal account of a staff person who was very involved in this matter. It reads: “Knock one of those trees down on Victoria. **I dare you corporate paid sheep.** Wake up and listen to the residents instead of going on your boring family vacations with tax payers money. You’re payed by the people of ck **and nobody wants bike lanes or trees removed on Victoria. Not one person except you. Try and cut one tree down. Try it.”**

Bolding was added by me to emphasize certain comments for reasons that will be clear later in my report.

Other matters raised:

A separate issue that was raised with me by four individuals concerns the appearance that Councillor Bondy may have been intoxicated during the April 27, 2020 meeting of Council. I raised this matter with Councillor Bondy and he acknowledged that he may have appeared to have imbibed, but that in fact he had a medical condition that caused him to appear that way, and in particular to raise his voice without being aware he is doing so. No evidence in support was requested or provided and as this is not an Inquiry, my powers to require such evidence are limited, and are subject to the Ontario Human Rights Code. I have not investigated this further.

Analysis:

Council and Staff Roles and Responsibilities

The role of Council is set out in section 224 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* as follows:

- a. to represent the public and to consider the well-being and interests of the municipality;
- b. to develop and evaluate the policies and programs of the municipality;
- c. to determine which services the municipality provides;
- d. to ensure that administrative policies, practices and procedures and controllership policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of council;
- d.1) to ensure the accountability and transparency of the operations of the municipality, including the activities of the senior management of the municipality;
- e. to maintain the financial integrity of the municipality; and

- f. to carry out the duties of council under this or any other Act.

The role of the administration is set out in section 227 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* as follows:

- a. to implement council's decisions and establish administrative practices and procedures to carry out Council's decisions;
- b. to undertake research and provide advice to Council on the policies and programs of the municipality; and
- c. to carry out other duties as required by this or any other Act or any other duties assigned by the Municipality.

The role of the Chief Administrative Officer is set out in section 229 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* as follows:

- a. exercising general control and management of the affairs of the municipality for the purpose of ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the municipality; and
- b. performing such other duties as are assigned by the municipality.

The relationship between a municipal council and its professional staff is critical to the overall success of local government. Former CAO and Ontario Deputy Minister Michael Fenn and political science Professor David Siegel in a paper titled "*The Evolving Role of City Managers and Chief Administrative Officers*", have helpfully examined the nuances of these relationships between municipal councils and professional staff, and like many Integrity Commissioners, I will reference their commentary in respect of these relationships and in analyzing the issues raised in this complaint.

Fenn and Siegel stress that the success of a municipality is determined partly by the quality of its elected officials and partly by the quality of its staff. Municipal councils are elected by popular vote, and therefore accountable to an electorate, which requires members of councils to be in tune with local issues and able to explain and answer for their actions every four years. This creates a high level of public accountability and it will influence policy decisions.

Fenn and Siegel note as well that while senior staff members must be aware of local concerns, they also have an obligation to look to the long-term needs of the municipality through the lens of specialized professional expertise.

The tension between political accountability and professional expertise that sometimes results, between the Council and staff, is a "healthy dynamic", and one that can lead to good public policy. It is not a state of opposition. Fenn and Siegel say the best decisions represent a melding of the two perspectives.

The interrelationship between Members of Council will impact the decisions Council makes as a whole, and will therefore reflect on Council's ability to fulfill its statutory obligations. Our system of local governance does not allow political parties to run candidates and there are no natural connections between the individuals elected as a result. While the Mayor provides leadership, each Member of Council shares a role in creating the culture of the municipal Council. The Code of Conduct, Council-staff relationship policy and other policies regarding respectful workplace and human rights matters are tools designed to guide conduct, but it is up to each individual to interpret and apply them to their actions on a daily basis. Municipalities need Council and staff to be respectful of their different roles for the municipality to thrive.

Applying the legislation and Code of Conduct to the Facts

The Victoria Avenue infrastructure improvements has become a complex and contentious project.

Councillor Bondy was unequivocal in his desire that any infrastructure upgrades not impact in any way, the appearance of Victoria Avenue and acted appropriately in forwarding a motion to the Clerk dated March 2nd, voicing his objectives.

The staff report itemized each component of the project to assist Members of Council and of the public, to understand what was being proposed and why. It is what is expected from a professional staff. The staff report was also clear on its face that it was intended to provide information to Council and the public. Staff were not seeking a decision from Council at this time.

It was clear from the many, many emails sent that the public was seeking information about what was going to happen with Victoria Ave. following the February PIC. The CAO tried to answer as many questions as he could by email. Councillor Bondy emailed the CAO copying the Mayor to say that no action should be taken to bring the matter forward, but Councillor Bondy is only one Member of Council and he did not put this matter before Council.

Members of the community have been very vocal in expressing their concerns as well as support for various elements of what was proposed. Residents have taken all action possible to ensure that Members of Council are aware of their views, and Councillor Bondy has expressed the concerns of those who oppose changes to the look of Victoria Ave. to staff before the matter was discussed at Council, and during the Council meeting itself.

Councillor Bondy exercised his right to introduce a motion that asked for Council support to allow the portion of the project related to replacing the underground infrastructure to proceed and asking that much of the remaining items, including the bicycle lanes and tree removal, not proceed. Although the project had been approved by Council earlier, it was only at the design stage and there is nothing inappropriate with the intent of Councillor Bondy's motion to carve out elements of the project that neither he or the resident's group supported.

As one Member of Council however, Councillor Bondy does not have authority to tell staff how to handle a report. Only Council can do this. If he wished to determine the timing of the staff report he had the option to bring a motion at Council to direct staff to hold the report, and to determine when to place the matter before Council. Instead Councillor Bondy chose to write emails to the CAO. Councillor Bondy's emails of March 31, 2020 and May 14, 2020 in this regard are inappropriate in terms of content and tone, and do not respect the role of Council or the role of the CAO.

Councillor Bondy exhibited a great deal of agitation in both his written and verbal comments before, during and after the May 25th Council meeting. It appears he may not have accepted that the staff report was only for information, despite there being no recommendations in it. In so doing he has also exhibited non-acceptance of the COA's assurance that this matter would be considered at a regular meeting of Council, after the COVID 19 crisis has passed. This lack of trust in the administration is of concern and is why I have included analysis about the critical nature of the relationship between Members of Council and staff, from the materials written by seasoned professionals, Michael Fenn and Dave Siegel. Their

comments provide a meaningful expansion on the concepts identified by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing in the Ontario Municipal Councillor's Guide, 2018.

Councillor Bondy's comments in his emails leading up to the May 25th debate, and in the Council meeting itself, show a lack of respect for the professional opinion of staff and a lack of respect for the Members of the Council of Chatham-Kent. It matters not if that was his intent. His choice of words and he ought to have known the impact they would have on anyone reading them.

Councillor Bondy's words posted on social media have resulted in many similar comments being made by members of the public, evidencing the impact of the words used. Social media is a powerful tool to be used to inform the public, but words like 'corruption', 'collusion' and 'sabotage' should never be used by a councillor in discussing municipal councillors or municipal staff. In choosing to use these words to describe Council decisions, Councillor Bondy has led members of the public into believing there are serious concerns and possibly illegal behaviour happening, while providing no evidence to support these statements. The Members of Council and staff of Chatham-Kent have paid the price for Councillor Bondy's poor choice of words. Councillor Bondy has failed to meet the ethical standards set by the Municipality of Chatham-Kent Code of Conduct for Members of Council.

The Oxford Dictionary defines sabotage to mean: "deliberately destroy, damage, or obstruct (something), especially for political or military advantage". The Macmillan Dictionary defines it as: "to deliberately stop someone from achieving something, or to deliberately prevent a plan or process from being successful." Many other dictionaries contain similar definitions.

Councillor Bondy does not dispute social media posts he made following the meeting in which he posted: "Not easy. The corruption and collusion is so clear."

Going back to the dictionaries, the Oxford Dictionary includes the following definition of corruption: "Dishonest or fraudulent conduct by those in power, typically involving bribery; the action or effect of making someone morally depraved; the process by which a word or expression is changed from its original state to one regarded as erroneous or debased."

The Oxford Dictionary defines collusion as: "secret or illegal cooperation or conspiracy in order to deceive others."

While Councillor Bondy may have been frustrated by process, his choice of words leaves a very different impression, and as a Member of Council he owes a duty to speak concisely and not to bring the meeting, the Council or the professional staff of the municipality into disrepute. Councillor Bondy's words "Your mission was successful: bike lanes on Victoria." In response to a post by Councillor Brock McGregor after the meeting are designed to challenge the integrity of another Member of Council. Several resident's post about staff and Council, where they repeat comments about corruption are offensive, and the comment threatening a member of staff are of great concern.

Councillor Bondy does not dispute that he was out of line in some of the language he used at the Council meeting, that he might have referenced being sabotaged and that he was "probably not the nicest guy that night". Councillor Bondy described issues he was having with the on-line platform and frustration that Council was accessing alternate wording proposed by Councillor Brock McGregor. These are two distinct matters. Reviewing the tape of the Council meeting, I note at one point Councillor Bondy advised he had an audio issue when explain a slowness to respond when called upon to do so. This was the only

comment made about the online platform. Access to an alternative motion is a matter that is provided for in the Procedure By-law. No challenges were raised in this regard.

Councillor Bondy told me when I interviewed him that he had accepted the rewrite but at no time did he say he would use it, and that was why he felt he was “getting burned or sabotaged” by “staff with some councillors”. When questioned about his choice of words and whether he felt Members of Council or staff were acting in bad faith, Councillor Bondy immediately replied no and explained that he meant getting caught up in council procedural rules, something he has seen before.

Members of Council are expected to treat each other, and members of staff with respect and decorum. Councillor Bondy has acknowledged that his choice of words was not appropriate and does not reflect the standard of decorum expected of an elected official. His comments on FaceBook were directed at the individuals with whom he disagreed and not the substance of the staff report or of the revised motion.

Councillor Bondy removed the most offensive FaceBook comments when the inappropriateness of his language when this was brought to his attention, but as the material forwarded to me proves, those comments still live on the internet.

Councillor Bondy when interviewed, said he meant to say the system of municipal government is corrupted and unfair because Council’s decision did not reflect the overwhelming public opinion. When presented with my notes, this was clarified: “When I stated that “staff with some Councillors” were burning my motion, my intent was to state that staff and Council were procedurally beating me. I did not mean that they were working together but rather playing by the rules and some Councillors were benefiting from the direction staff was taking regarding my motion. I did not mean anything was done wrong. Again, I believed the process was flawed. I do not accept this explanation as a reason for the language chosen. While this explanation implies that proper procedures were followed, it once again suggests that staff had an improper motive in how this matter was presented to Council, and that other Councillors took advantage of it.

Councillor Bondy was also very clear in the Council meeting and in our discussion, to advise that he has been on Council for 11 years. Councillor Bondy’s comments at Council lead me to believe that he understands the rules set out in Procedure By-law #109-2018 and how to use them to challenge procedures he does not believe are appropriate. If his concern is with the legislative requirements that govern all municipalities, he has not presented me with any evidence that he has taken any action to change those. I am certain that if he had these concerns, he would have raised them at some time before this debate.

Members of Council are expected to engage in healthy debate and to disagree on matters. The different levels of support for each of the seven matters Council ultimately voted on show there was limited common ground between Members of Council on this issue. That is not unusual. This is part of our democratic system.

Members of Council may ask questions concerning the professional advice of staff and may choose to act contrary to it, but at no time should a Member of Council disparage staff or fellow members of Council. The language Councillor Bondy chose to use to express himself are not appropriate at any time. Councillor Bondy’s choice of words imply that Members of Council and staff acted for political or private motivations at the May 25th Council meeting, and that they were negligent or failed to meet ethical standards. I do

not find that the choice of words was without thought. The language used by Councillor Bondy on social media was intended to incite a reaction in the community, which it did

Staff were acting professionally when Councillor Bondy was advised that the facts in his motion concerning the additional width and impact of the bike lanes were wrong. Councillor Bondy's first reaction was to ask the Clerk to correct the reference to 6 metres and replace it with the correct 2.4 metres. Councillor Bondy shortly after changed his mind, which suggests he was well aware of the impact this incorrect information would have on the public that was his audience. The fact that staff and councillors were treated with disrespect and called names on social media as a result, and Councillor Bondy took no steps to correct the information on the Save Victoria Ave -Voices for Victoria Facebook site is of concern. The fact that Councillor Bondy himself contributed to the public perception he helped create, around improper motives with the posts set out earlier in this report, is of concern. The fact that a staff member was subsequently threatened by a resident adds significantly to this concern.

Based on the evidence provided to me, I do find a pattern of behaviour that is present in the language and tone that Councillor Bondy chooses to use when addressing staff in emails and in the Council Chambers, that is disrespectful and shows a lack of acceptance of his authority to direct staff as a single Member of Council. It is reckless to disregard the impact of such language on other persons.

The Code of Conduct is a living document that is meant to reflect the highest standard of conduct by Members of Council. Councillor Bondy was present through its development and is aware of the kind of behaviour the Code exemplifies. Councillor Bondy knew or ought to have known that his behaviour was contrary to the Code of Conduct when he attempted to direct staff to bury a report and in his tone in doing so, when he accused staff in open Council session of "a sales job against my motion", in his conduct using social media as a platform to disparage the municipality, its Council and the administration. It is his responsibility to live by the Code of Conduct.

In terms of the impact of the COVID-19 emergency measures and the timing of the debate on Councillor Bondy's motion, there is obviously a lot of community interest in this issue as indicated by the number of emails circulated to Members of Council and the number of deputations filed with the Clerk, and yes these are unique and challenging times as all governments struggle to carry on at a time when meetings cannot be held in person. Municipalities across the country are taking actions to carry on business that mirror the actions of Chatham-Kent. Our municipal system of government is not the only model of governance, but it is the one legislated but it has shown itself to be very effective during the COVID-19 emergency. Chatham-Kent has been pro-active in providing provisions in its Procedure By-law that allow for electronic participation in volunteer committees of Council and I suspect was a leader in thinking through the challenges faced because of COVID as a result.

Recommendations:

In my opinion, Councillor Bondy has shown a lack of respect for the integrity of the role of Council, and for the role of administration as set out in the *Municipal Act, 2001*. He has sullied the reputation of members of staff and of the Municipality as a result. His conduct is in violation of the Principles set out in section 5.b. of the Code of Conduct as it brings into disrepute and compromises the integrity of the Municipality and Council. Councillor Bondy has shown a lack of respect in his behaviour during a staff

presentation contrary to section 13 of the Code of Conduct and has shown a general lack of respect when interacting with staff, contrary to section 14. The language used verbally, in emails and in social media in describing the Council process as one of “corruption and collusion” constitute discreditable conduct on the part of Councillor Bondy, contrary to section 15 of the Code of Conduct.

Section 19.c (iv) of the Code of Conduct requires me to provide my report within 90 days of first receiving the complaint. It also provides me with the authority to make a recommendation to Council on penalty.

Under Section 223.4(5) of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, Council may impose either of two penalties for a violation of the Code of Conduct:

- a. a reprimand, or
- b. suspension of remuneration paid to the member for a period of up to 90 days

It is my recommendation as Integrity Commissioner, that Council formally reprimand Councillor Bondy. Furthermore, Councillor Bondy should be asked to formally apologize to Council and the administration for his actions, failing which, it is recommended that Council suspend his remuneration for a period of one week. I recommend that one week is sufficient time for Councillor Bondy to issue a formal apology.

Finally, I wish to conclude by publicly thanking all of those who participated in this investigation and responded to my requests for information, including Councillor Bondy, the complainants, the witnesses including Members of Council and the administration.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ellen Bench

Municipality of Chatham-Kent, Integrity Commissioner

From: Michael Bondy <Michael.Bondy@chatham-kent.ca>

Date: Monday, Aug 03, 2020, 7:58 PM

To: COUNCIL <COUNCIL@chatham-kent.ca>, Judy Smith <JUDYS@chatham-kent.ca>

Subject: Letter to Council

Dear Council,

I have read the report from the Integrity Commissioner and accept the findings. I wish to apologize to anyone I have offended with my over zealous behaviour during the May 25th Council meeting regarding Victoria Avenue. I realize my choice of words during both live Council and on various social media platforms hurt people's feelings and were considered disrespectful to both Council and some in administration. I am sorry for that.

I was very engaged in the issue and felt that I was doing my best to represent our constituents and bring their concerns to our meeting. As you are all aware the feedback from the public was very vocal and I assumed was in my favour. I accept the opinion that I was argumentative during the proceedings. I will try to contain my emotions in the future.

Sincerely,

Michael

Michael Bondy
Councillor, Ward 6
Municipality of Chatham-Kent

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