

From: Scott Thompson

Sent: Tuesday, March 23, 2021 10:51 AM

To: Clerks Richmondhill clerks@richmondhill.ca

Subject: March 24, 2021 Council Meeting Agenda Item 13.13

Re: Report from Norman Groot, Investigation Counsel PC, Integrity Commissioner for the City of Richmond Hill, dated March 11, 2021, regarding a complaint (Complaint File Number 0716-11247) under the City's Code of Conduct for Elected Officials

Hi,

It is unfortunate that this council needs to rule on another Integrity Commissioner's report pertaining to a breach of a code of conduct offence by a Councillor.

It is also unfortunate that council must rule on a member who is deemed to be a repeat offender. Another unfortunate thing about this circumstance is that this council actually has experience in making a ruling against a council member who is deemed to be a repeat offender.

In an October 2019 ruling, members chose to ignore the IC's recommendation of a reprimand and instead, imposed maximum sanctions upon council member Cilevitz who was deemed to be a repeat offender. None of the members tasked with making the ruling seemed to disagree on whether an offence had been committed, however there was a clear divide on council about the severity of the sanctions that should apply.

Those members who lobbied for the harshest penalties argued that such sanctions were necessary if there is to be any hope of changing member behaviour. Those members who felt that the harshest penalties were unnecessary had referenced the IC's belief that the committed offence was more of an oversight and that a reprimand was all that was necessary. Clearly each member is entitled to their opinion on the matter.

During the discussions on the October 2019 ruling Councillor Perrelli made reference to what he believes is the existence of hypocritical behaviour on council.

The current IC report does not suggest that the offence committed by Councillor Muench was an oversight; in fact the report indicates that he should have known that he was engaged in conduct that was clearly overstepping his authority as a councillor.

It will be interesting to see how these same members rule on Councillor Muench as a repeat offender. And while one would expect to see consistency when council rules on the current IC report, my observance of this council during this term suggests that we won't see consistency and will instead see where hypocrisy exists first hand!

Scott Thompson