

The Brantford Expositor

Bradford docked three months' pay;

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Page: A1

Section: News

Byline: MICHAEL-ALLAN MARION EXPOSITOR STAFF AND TIM PHILP;

Illustrations: 1. City Coun. John Bradford

City Coun. John Bradford will have his pay suspended for three months after an integrity commissioner found that he harassed a municipal employee and failed to treat her "with dignity, respect and equality" at work.

Council voted 6-3 Monday to accept a recommendation from lawyer George Rust-D'Eye to suspend his pay, after agreeing with a report that Bradford violated the code of conduct for councillors in his working relationship with Laurie Schunk, an administrative assistant in the city clerk's office, who filed a complaint against him.

Coun. Vince Bucci's motion to suspend Bradford's pay was supported by councillors James Calnan, Dan McCreary, John Sless, Jennifer Kinneman and Greg Martin.

Opposing the punishment were councillors Richard Carpenter, Marguerite Ceschi-Smith and Mark Littell.

Bradford will lose approximately \$5,750 in salary.

RustD'Eye found in favour of Schunk's complaint that Bradford conducted himself in a hostile manner toward her and her employment over a personal

matter involving a dispute that included the councillor's daughter and her former husband, with whom Schunk now has a relationship.

The report also supported another complaint that Bradford's dissemination of private photos of her that he somehow acquired, and referred to in conversations around city hall, affected her reputation and caused her grief in the workplace.

"This attempt to demean and humiliate Ms. Schunk, arising out of, and relating entirely to family issues personal to the parties involved constitutes the most serious manifestation of Coun. Bradford's breach of the code of conduct," the report determined.

Council also voted unanimously to have officials destroy all the private photographs of her in her personnel file.

Schunk filed her complaint against Bradford in October, and council quickly voted to have the city solicitor, as integrity commissioner, to hire an outside lawyer to conduct an investigation.

When the report was introduced at council on Monday, Bradford declared a conflict and left the chamber. He later declined to be interviewed.

The majority of councillors argued that it was necessary to demonstrate that Bradford's behaviour was unacceptable.

"If anything, we as councillors have to be held to a higher standard than the average citizen," said Bucci.

Because of that, he council cannot stand for improper behaviour by any of its members toward the city's employees.

Sless said it was all the more important to send a message to the public that Bradford's behaviour cannot be tolerated because he believes "it's brewing in the culture of the city."

He also said he has seen other instances of people in authority exerting "undue" influence over subordinates.

Any employee should feel secure at work, he said. "It should be a workplace free of threat."

McCreary and Sless repeatedly referred to a passage in the report that says Bradford "has not ... accepted the disposition of his complaint, and the reasons for it, and still takes the position that domestic matters involving his daughter and Ms. Schunk are somehow relevant to his position and rights as a councillor, or the business of the city."

The majority of council also rejected a provision in the report that would have allowed Bradford to escape penalty if he gave a written apology that Schunk would accept.

Littell tried at one point to have that provision added as an amendment to Bucci's motion, but he was supported only by Ceschi-Smith and Carpenter.

City solicitor Larry Tansley advised that the provision was devised to be fair to Schunk.

She could decide to accept the apology, not accept it, or say nothing at all, he said.

"It's entirely up to her what happens here."

Ceschi-Smith said later that while she was "disturbed" by Ms. Schunk's treatment by Bradford, she could not support a penalty that did not give the victim the right to accept an apology.

"I think that the person who is in this situation still has some rights," she said. "My understanding was that her right to say yes or no (to council's decision over what punishment to exact) for what had been

perpetrated on her would have been taken away we had made that decision."

Martin said it's council's job to take a firm stand.

"By putting this kind of amendment in, we're simply condoning harassment."

In a later interview, McCreary criticized the three councillors who voted against penalizing Bradford.

"It should have been unanimous. I don't care how those who voted against this try to package it, it stinks," he said.

"I fear it will colour the public's perception of council as a whole."

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Ancaster News

Clark calls for new investigation on leaks about integrity commissioner

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Page: 01
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Byline: Kevin Werner

Stoney Creek councillor Brad Clark says the leaked information about the possible new integrity commissioner to the media continues a culture of "bad behavior" within city government and should be investigated by the new integrity commissioner.

"It puts Hamilton in a bad light financially, legally and morally," says the chair of the audit and administration committee. "I think there should be an investigation."

The accountability and transparency committee last week approved after an in-camera meeting a recommendation to refer Windsor's integrity commissioner Earl Basse as the top candidate for Hamilton's position. At the committee was David Broom, Joanna Chapman, Ted Charuk, Denise O'Connor and councillors Terry Whitehead and Scott Duvall. Eisenberger refused to comment on the selection at the time, saying that Hamiltonians "will be pleased with the candidate that is being recommended."

The selection committee, composed of Eisenberger, Chapman, Charuk and Broom, sifted through about 70 applications since this summer to make their final selection.

But this week Basse's name was publicly revealed as the top candidate.

Basse, a former RCMP officer, and former mayor for the District of Sechelt, British Columbia, as well as, the manager of investigations for the Vancouver Stock Exchange, did not return a phone call seeking comment at press time.

"It's ironic that the information about the integrity commissioner was leaked," said Clark, who had been a member of the accountability and transparency committee.

"This culture in Hamilton (about leaking sensitive information) has got to change," said Clark. "I hope the new integrity commissioner will educate councillors and staff about their responsibilities to the corporation."

Clark was the first city councillor to be investigated under the new integrity commissioner bylaw. Clark asked the integrity commissioner to conduct the investigation. He resigned from the accountability and transparency committee while under investigation. The interim commissioner, Toronto lawyer George Rust D'Eye, in his report, admonished Clark for releasing information to the media about Eisenberger's conversation with another member of the media as politically motivated.

But during the nearly year-long investigation on the councillor, information about Clark "was leaked 16 times to the public."

During this term of council Stoney Creek councillor Dave Mitchell, downtown councillor Bernie Morelli and Eisenberger have, along with Clark, been subjected to investigations.

During his campaign for his Stoney Creek council seat, the former Ontario cabinet minister lamented the lack of accountability at city hall, and has, along with Eisenberger, pushed to reform how councillors and city officials conduct themselves.

Councillors have approved the creation of an integrity commissioner, a revised code of conduct, and the accountability committee is now looking to craft a lobbyist registry.

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