

# Mississauga News

## Council to rush through conduct code

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A code of conduct could be in place for members of City Council and the mayor when their new term of office begins Dec. 1.

City of Mississauga solicitor Mary Ellen Bench will ask Council to adopt the code and hire an interim commissioner at its final meeting, this Wednesday.

Bench will recommend that **George Rust-D'Eye** be appointed for a term of up to one year in order to allow time for a job search.

Rust-D'Eye, who works for Toronto law firm WeirFoulds LLP, is a specialist in municipal law and municipal litigation and was named to the 2011 edition of Best Lawyers.

Last May, as the City of Brantford's interim integrity commissioner, he dismissed a code of conduct complaint by a City employee against a councillor. The employee complained that the councillor had verbally abused and harassed her in a telephone call.

Bench says Rust-D'Eye's experience will also assist the City in assessing and implementing any recommendations from judicial inquiry Commissioner Douglas Cunningham that could impact the code of conduct.

Although Mississauga's code was more than half-a-year in the making, councillors on Sept. 8 referred it back to staff for a second round of public input. The first round elicited only a handful of responses.

The code, developed by councillors Eve Adams, George Carlson and Katie Mahoney, with staff support, recommended Mississauga follow the lead of Vaughan and Toronto and employ its own commissioner.

But some councillors felt that route would not ensure the commissioner's independence.

Meanwhile, Mayor Hazel McCallion is complicating the issue by asking the Association of Municipalities to create an integrity commissioner service for its 444 members. Governments such as Mississauga will use the service only whenever it's needed instead of each hiring their own commissioners.

Once the new term begins, three councillors will be appointed to interview candidates and make a recommendation on an individual to Council. The office will be a part-time position.

Mississauga's draft code contains 18 rules, from requiring councillors to conduct themselves with

decorum during Council meetings to curtailing significant gifts from the public and developers.

If Council believes the code has been violated, the issue will be referred to the integrity commissioner.

The office is expected to cost the City \$100,000 annually.

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