

Mississauga News

Councillor weary of scandal

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Ward 10 Councillor Sue McFadden has concluded that asking the City's integrity watchdog to probe the "Missileaks" saga is "like airing your dirty laundry out in public," and it's time to end it.

"What happens among a family should be discussed together," McFadden said of the investigation into how an email offering councillors free tickets to Mayor Hazel McCallion's 90th birthday party was leaked to the media.

"To me, I think it's causing an issue with the division of council again."

Newly-appointed integrity commissioner **George Rust-D'Eye** has delivered a preliminary 33-page report in which he says leaking confidential memos "could prejudice the free and candid flow of information from staff to members of Council."

He was unable to determine whether it was a councillor, staff member or even a hacker who made two internal memos public.

The first, from City Manager Janice Baker, offered two \$350 tickets to each councillor. It was not marked "confidential." When it came to light, Mississauga residents voiced anger over what many saw as an abuse of taxpayer dollars.

But Rust D'Eye took issue mainly with the leak of a second email from Baker. That memo, which withdrew the ticket offer and expressed concern over the disclosure of information, read: "This email may not be forwarded to anyone for any purpose without express written permission of the author."

It was leaked "in breach of confidentiality and breach of trust owed by the city to members of its staff," Rust-D'Eye wrote.

To save time and money - Rust-D'Eye earns upwards of \$600 per hour and spent most of last week working on the report- the integrity commissioner asked councillors if they leaked the memo or had information as to who did. This did not lead him to the source.

It's ultimately the commissioner's choice as to whether he ramps up his investigation. But he's looking for council's input into whether he should proceed further.

Ward 6 Councillor Ron Starr, a McCallion ally, said he agreed with Rust-D'Eye's conclusion that the leak may be "a serious systemic problem for the City," and added that he feels the current report is incomplete.

He said he plans to bring up the issue at next Wednesday's council meeting, but would not go as far to say that he would push for more.

"You bring a report that's half done or three-quarters done, it's not fair to anybody who's trying to find the answers," he said, adding: "We shouldn't be so concerned about spending a minimal amount of dollars."

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