

From: Tara Lindemann <tara@haldimandpress.com>

Sent: Friday, November 24, 2023 2:49 PM

To: Clerk <clerk@HaldimandCounty.on.ca>

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Dear Council (the letter)

Dear Mayor and council;

I am asking you to defer motion on 10.8 and 10.9 in the proposed amended CLE-11-2023 - until the corporation of Haldimand County can produce researched, transparent enough information for both the public and the media. Then and only then, decide.

The restrictions may seem alright, they are the opposite.

We the press know you are effectively voting this solely in reaction to discomfort surrounding the actions of Jesse Little - one uncomfortable actor. You will, with this ratification, only serve to protect yourselves at our expense, and as glaringly obvious at CIC, because it was lawyered.

I realised watching you as Gordon Cameron made his delegation that you'd already decided. It was infuriating. I'm grateful I held my temper, because council, this is not about one bad actor and your own interactions with him.

It is an over reaction that, should you ratify your previous vote, serve to control only corporate narrative - and not in fact, represent the residents of Haldimand County each of you was voted in and has sworn to serve.

I sympathize with discomfort. As a journalist in this county, I've been assaulted twice, followed multiple times, been on the end of some really bad behaviour by other bad actors (on county property, btw, something you've yet to enforce effectively), and even hit in the head by a beer can with an "F*** the media!" yelled as they drove by. All on a dime and benefits far below your own.

This is a time for thoughtful courage, and not an overreaction and blind support to get someone thrown out of chambers to serve you both personally and professionally. Rather, you need to remember to serve all of us, with knowledge of the past, the present and demonstrate a remote understanding of the future, and how media and public restrictions interfere with the whole.

There is nothing in any of these reports to support that the county has thoroughly looked into this issue - the county merely said it "didn't mean to" offend

journalists, and lawyered up and if you vote it in as is, you are a participant of that overcorrection.

There is no evidence to suggest a danger in chambers, nor has audio or video been used to disrupt. Yet you ban the public and restrict the media.

Without evidence, without research, without examples.

When is this acceptable, council, for you to all 'yay'?

The county didn't do its homework. It only went to daddy for them to say it's okay to proceed.

Don't make me quote the multiple theocratic examples where this kind of restriction has served, with time, to stifle legitimate public outcry.

The county has not provided the public nor the media - nor YOU, council - but you council has confoundingly agreed to a bind report.

Moreover, when a councillor says, "I think I know why we're doing this" followed by an assumption that the media did not understand motive - it's shocking and tremendously frustrating (and offensive, but I'll get over that). Residents need to believe their councillors will ask for evidence and thoughtfully consider each proposal.

Council, defer this decision and put up with some gallery discomfort for another month or two. Then demand two reports:

One to look into making all committee and board meetings accessible via livestream in some effective capacity (and fixing this ridiculous current system), and the other to thoughtfully look at how to work a recording restriction that does not restrict media and does allow for enforcement of decorum in that arena. There are many of we journalists who would be happy to offer help.

Respectfully,

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