

# \$169,568.85 to terminate former CAO

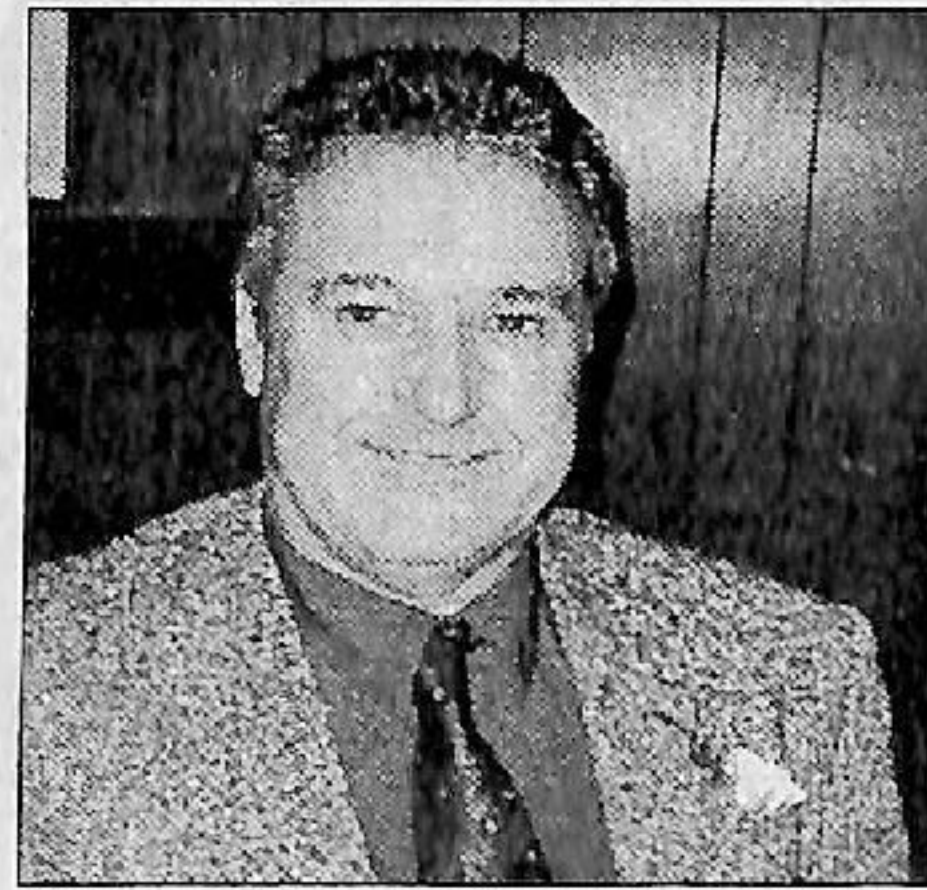
*COLBORNE CHRONICLE*  
Mayor Lee Dekeyser's statement continued  
JAN 13/06

"This involved structural and personnel changes, which at the best of times can be unsettling. Given the nature and makeup of our existing administration, it was not universally acceptable change.

"Merlin instituted organizational changes, and with the help of the office staff, effectively changed the Township for the better. Procedures and management structures were implemented which, once again, improved the efficacy and efficiency of the Township.

"This drastically changed on the Labour Day weekend.

"A roads staff member attempted successfully to subvert the chain of command and reporting structure, and met with some members of council outside the council chambers and outside the mandate of council. All council members were not present, and indeed, those members of council who did meet with staff were explicitly told not to. They were requested to meet later that evening in a regular and properly constituted council meeting.



Lee Dekeyser  
Mayor

"That meeting was properly convened with two members of council and the CAO in attendance. The three council members who had met previously with the roads staff member

chose not to attend, thus rendering the council of the township powerless as there was not a quorum. Business could not be conducted. When contacted they indicated they had no intention of attending the meeting and had a further agenda they wished to pursue, namely the ousting of Mr. Dewing.

"Shortly thereafter, a Saturday council meeting was convened, with council in attendance as well as our solicitor.

"The three Councillors who had decided that Mr. Dewing had to go were adamant in pursuing the firing of Mr. Dewing in mid-contract, without regard to the legal and financial considerations of such an action. The two members of council who were not in favour and the township solicitor argued for the consideration of a meeting with Mr. Dewing to see if a compromise could be effected. The solicitor advised council of the problematic situation of terminating without notice an employee on a contract, and without allowing that employee to defend himself.

"All to no avail.

"Two Councillors put forward a motion in the meeting to void the contract and dismiss Mr. Dewing immediately.

"A recorded vote was taken: Marc Coombs, Ray Kelly and Ed Van Egmond all voted to dismiss Mr. Dewing effective immediately.

"This action had immediate office staff problems and large and unnecessary financial implications for the Township and its ratepayers.

"The final figures, including legal fees and the settlement of Mr. Dewing's contract are \$169,568.85. This total must come out of the 2004 budget year."

# Three Cramahe council members issue a release in response to mayor

Members of Cramahe Council were asked for their responses to Mayor Lee Dekeyser's January 7 press release.

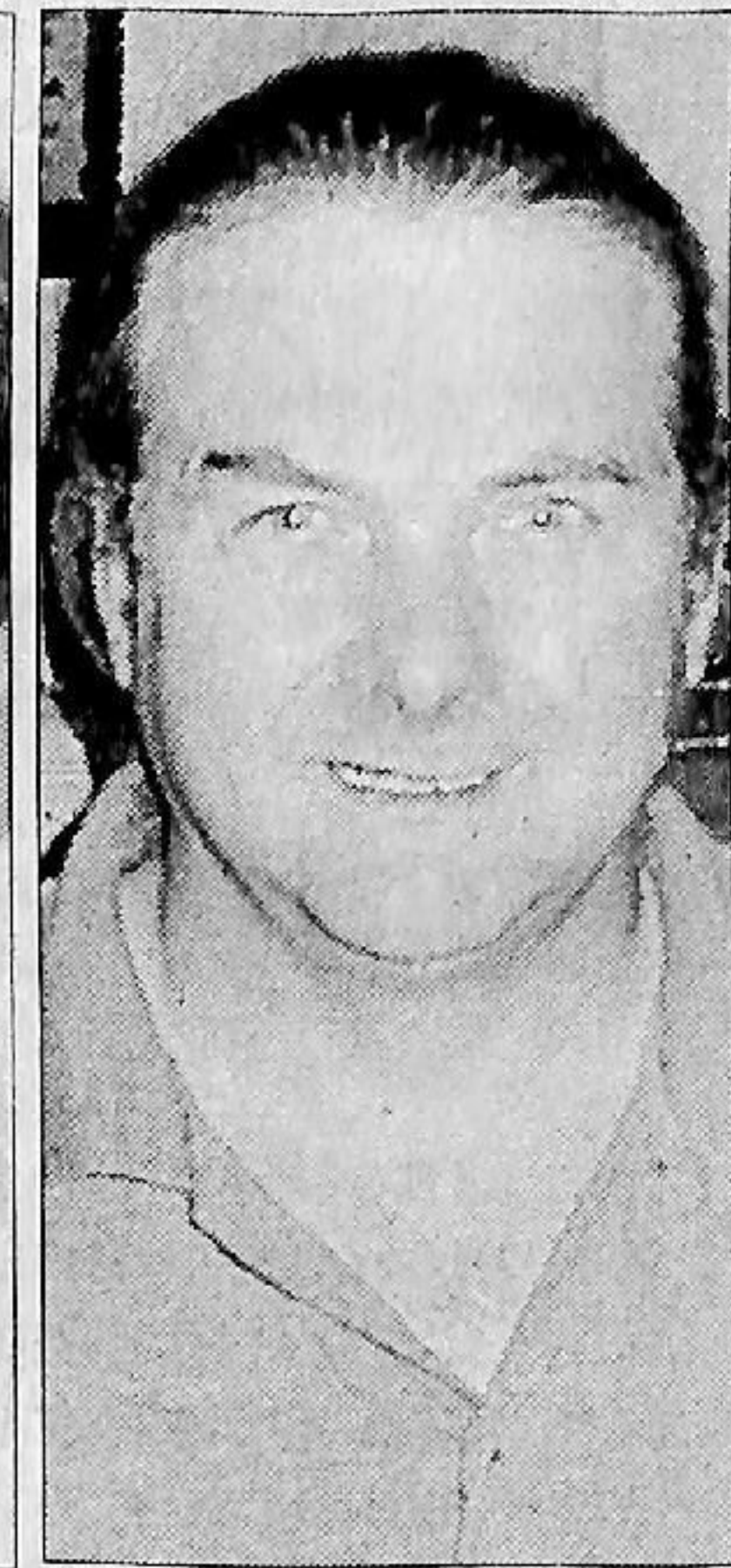
Deputy Mayor Ray Kelly, Councillors Marc Coombs and Ed Van Egmond issued the following joint release in response to the Mayor's statement:



Ray Kelly  
Deputy Mayor



Marc Coombs  
Councillor



Ed Van Egmond  
Councillor

"Following Merlin Dewing's dismissal in September, all members of Council shook hands and agreed to work together in an open government for the betterment of the community.

"At a meeting on January 5, 2005, the Mayor encouraged everyone to work together. We supported the Mayor in that vision for 2005.

"We were extremely disappointed with the Mayor's statement of January 7 and his interpretation of the facts. His statement contained numerous inaccuracies.

"In the spirit of the January 5 meeting we wish to proceed in a

positive manner with the governance of Cramahe Township. Our application for grants for the new sewage treatment plant expansion is one example of our willingness

to work together.

"There are critical issues facing Cramahe Township and we must work together to build our community and keep taxes down."

# Councillor Post responds

Members of Cramahe Council were asked for their responses to Mayor Lee Dekeyser's January 7 press release. The following are Councillor Tim Post's comments taken in a phone interview on January 9.

After hearing the text, Councillor Post agreed with Mayor Dekeyser, commenting, "That's as I remember it. I was at the meeting at Deputy Mayor Ray Kelly's at the request of Works Foreman, Jim Black. I told them that I was only there to listen. I did not agree with Jim Black going to this group. When the conversation went to other topics, I left.

"I agree substantially with Lee (Mayor Dekeyser), and agree with how he felt.

"I listened to Jim (Black). He was requesting a buyout."



Tim Post  
Councillor

Councillor Post stated Jim Black explained at the September meeting that his request was related to the mayor's proposal to have Lakefront Utility Services Inc. take over the operation of the Cramahe sewage treatment plant. The result of that would

be a reduction in Mr. Black's responsibilities and he wanted a buyout.

Mr. Post explained at the time that the group of councillors could not resolve his problem there without the Mayor or CAO Merlin Dewing present.

Coun. Post pointed out January 9 that the conversation then turned to a discussion of Mr. Dewing and he left.

In summary, the Councillor said he did not think the Merlin Dewing situation had not been properly dealt with. He did admit he wasn't saying it would have turned out any other way if it had been done differently. He was more upset with the process than anything else.

- BOB OWEN