

The Rockwood MILLER



Gibson Smye appeals to Ontario Press Council

Former Guelph/Eramosa mayoralty candidate Teresa Gibson Smye has contacted the Ontario Press Council about stories in the Wellington Advertiser during last month's municipal election campaign.

In her second letter Gibson Smye accused the township's mayor and Wellington Advertiser editor Dave Adsett of "appalling lack of ethics and integrity" in using "his paper to support his own agenda and denigrate" her.

She also said the paper's account of council business was biased.

Gibson Smye said she declined to participate in the Advertiser's questions to candidates which were to be published in the paper, preferring instead to respond at the all candidate nights.

She also noted letters she



Gibson Smye



Adsett

sent to the Advertiser were not published even though the paper appeals to its readers for letters to the editor.

Adsett said the letters from Gibson Smye bordered on libelling his paper and the editor wasn't about to print them.

"I notice none of you other papers printed them either," he said, pointing out that copies of the letters were sent to three other papers as well as the Advertiser.

Adsett says it has been made clear to Gibson Smye that he neither writes nor edits his paper. Nor does he tell reporters what to write.

"My (news) editor is Dave Meyer," Adsett says. "If I

overrode his decision about printing her letters then I would be doing exactly what she has accused me of interfering with the paper's content. I can't win."

Adsett says Gibson Smye lost an Ontario Municipal Board hearing against the Township and blames him personally for that loss.

Regardless, he says, "I'll remain as (managing) editor of the family newspaper and as mayor for three years. And if that means I've got a bull's eye on my back that's the way it is."

Adsett said the Press Council has asked him for a response to her letters and that will be sent.



HOLIDAY VOICES: Students of Rockwood music teacher Debbie Tilson welcomed the holidays with Christmas carols at their music recital at Eden Mills United church on Saturday - Frances Niblock photo

LETTERS

Councillor deaf to plea

To the Editor,
I am still amazed at the ignorance of some people - one such person sits on the Eramosa Town Council, Les Foote.

The Mayor and Members of Council was to pass a policy for provision of a Hearing Interpreter. According to their solicitor the municipality has no legal obligation to provide any form of interpreter, it is only a courtesy. Even so the council put forward a policy that requires a four to six week request period if an interpreter is required, which is the standard. There is also a cost of \$50. per hour and kilometers paid by the city. I believe that they were being fair given the circumstances and the cost.

Unfortunately Les Foote felt that if we were to give this service to "deaf people" we would have to also provide this service to every person in the community that could not speak English. Doug Breen pointed out that not speaking English is a choice

and being deaf is not. Doug went on to explain that if a deaf person in our community want to participate he or she should have that opportunity. Even after this explanation Les Foote again blindly defended his position that council cannot just give out services like this to everyone, after all what's stopping every person in the community who can't speak English from requesting the use of an interpreter. May I remind you we live in a rural community in Ontario not Toronto and I don't think you will have an overwhelming amount of individuals who can't speak English requesting the use of an interpreter.

I was so outraged by this show of such behaviour I could only think of one thing "Archie Bunker" from the 70's show All in the Family is alive and well in our community.

I must admit that this issue is close to my heart. Over the last few years I have been slowly losing my hearing and without the use of technology

and my ability to follow conversations by focusing on lips I would not have been able to attend that meeting last night. I would not have been able to hear a word anyone was saying. I assure you, Les Foote, I did not choose to lose my hearing and I am sure the individual who has previously requested an interpreter does not feel that being deaf and not speaking English is the same issue.

Mr. Les Foote you need to apologize to the deaf community for your ridiculous comparison and may I suggest sensitivity training.

Sandra Boyd

Consider interpreter

Guelph/Eramosa council is looking at whether to provide an interpreter for those with hearing impairments if an interpreter is requested for a meeting.

The issue arose from a request for an interpreter at an all candidates meeting last month. No interpreter was provided and the hearing impaired constituent raised the matter at the meeting and with councillors later.

At council's inaugural meeting last week a report from staff said council is not obligated to provide any service for the hearing impaired. However, an interpreter can be arranged through the Canadian Hearing Society for a fee and with sufficient notice - usually two to four weeks.

While council felt it was in its best interest to provide the service upon request, Coun. Les Foote had reservations. Foote was concerned at where the line would be drawn between interpreters for hearing impaired residents and those for non-English speaking residents. If hearing interpreters were given, would foreign language interpreters also be expected? he questioned.

Coun. Doug Breen pointed out that people who don't speak English have an option to learn the language. Those with hearing problems have no option. That he said, could be council's guideline and

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