

Letters

# Latcham Hall board member upset by council's actions

Dear Editor,

As the newest member to the Latcham Hall board, I am truly disappointed in the actions of council and the manner in which the disbandment of this board was done.

My tenure on this committee consisted of three meetings as my appointment was approved by council in the latter part of November. Although my presence was very short I observed a strong, committed and very conscientious board, whose main goal was to ensure that the best interest of the hall was maintained. The dedication of Mr. Hammond, Mr. Castonguay and Mrs. Sherban was evident at these meetings and also in the minutes of the year. The physical work in the maintenance of the hall, the extra time taken to do the maintenance, bookings and the time taken to volunteer their time for this board must be commended. As I understood, when appointed to this board, we as board members were to assume the responsibility of ensuring that the hall was looked after and used by the people of Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Yet when the best interest of the hall was ensured by the board, council voted to shut it down and have the town resume responsibility. I am baffled as to how this situation has come about. Volunteers are willing to take time away from their families to aid the town in managing a town facility. Now we have recreation staff managing with, I assume, town employees continuing with the maintenance.

My opinion of having councillors sitting on boards is mixed. Yes, I feel they should be present, but should they have voting rights on these boards? I now think this should change. Not much is gained by having board members vote, including councillors and then having council reverse decisions. What is the point of the board? Councillors may aid in the information process, but by voting on the board and then on council, isn't that two votes? Do board members get two votes? Councillors may chose to vote with the board and then change their mind and vote against the board at council - this does not create an effective working atmosphere for any board.

My sincere gratitude goes to the three ex-board members who took their time to return Latcham Hall to

the way it looks and functions today. As a resident of Whitchurch-Stouffville, I am very proud to say that I was a member of this board and shared the board's enthusiasm in the hall. To council, I say shame on

you for taking four dedicated people and treating them with such disregard. I truly hope that this situation never occurs again and will not deter other town people in volunteering their time and effort to boards and committees.

Council should be reminded that people who sit on boards are volunteering their time and are there because they care and are concerned. Council should take notes at one of the town's many existing board meetings to see

true commitment in action. Volunteers are the backbone of any town or city - wake up council before you lose any more committed townspeople.

Melanie Cox  
Stouffville

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