

# The Clearview Clarifier

Trying to make sense of local governance in Clearview Township, Ontario

## What's going to be the next "hit" to Clearview taxpayers' pockets?

- ◆ **\$30,000 for "booty"** – memory sticks and jackets for councillors, many of whom decided not run after only having those jackets for 6 months
- ◆ **\$40,000 "management error"** – the new building at the park in Creemore, where the contractor had to be replaced after taking their "down payment" and leaving a muddy hole in the ground for a second contractor to fix.
- ◆ **\$Who Knows\$** - for the Stayner library building?
  - ⇒ To the senior staff at Clearview one of whom is paid in excess of \$175,000 in salary and benefits, and with these issues not impacting their take home pay these wastes of tax dollars mean "diddley squat".
  - ⇒ To the average old age pensioner on a fixed income that combined amount of over \$70,000 represents over 6 YEARS of income!
  - ⇒ To the owner of a Clearview property its another \$10.00 property tax increase for which they get **NOTHING!**

### When are our elected officials going to start holding staff accountable for the wasting of our tax dollars?

Does council even understand just how much money is "hidden" from the budget discussion process?

### I suspect never, and here's WHY

Last year I used one of my "20 words or less, once a month" questions to CAO Sage asking for **AODA compliant copies of the budget documents in Excel format with formulae.**

The response from CAO Sage was that **staff does not even give that information to council, so there's no way YOU are going to get it.**

When I filed a Freedom of Information request for those records, CAO Sage took it upon himself to reject my request and refund my \$5.00 filing fee. This triggered an ongoing appeal where the Privacy Commissioner directed the township to provide me with the information **after agreeing that CAO Sage had no authority to act and was impeding the lawful delivery of a requested record.**

6 months later and the delegated head is now telling the Privacy Commissioner that she did not understand the request (the Act **REQUIRES** her to understand the request **BEFORE** responding) and accuses me of trying to increase the scope of the request by asking for the **ACTUAL** amounts spent by staff last year (ending Dec 2018).

As best I can determine based on the refusal to disclose to me the requested records of ACTUAL spending, the FICTIONAL Budget to Budget (B2B) information made available to councillors for the 2019 budget, failed to include the ACTUALS from 2018 that would allow them to see just how much staff is escalating their requests for funding.

**If councillors who are voting on spending taxpayers hard earned money are not allowed by CAO Sage and his staff to see HOW the staff generated their “award winning” budget (that seems to exclude ACTUAL spending values), then what hope do Clearview taxpayers have that their elected representatives will be able to hold costs in line?**

The 2019 budget came down to being approved by just 4 **ELECTED** councillors (Measures, Christie, Broderick and Lamers) and 3 **NON-ELECTED** councillors (Burton, Walker and Leishman, who has **NEVER** been elected) but effectively put in place by the 25 parties signing off on their application to stand.

**Councillors Paterson and McKechnie both voted against the 2019 budget and would appear to be the ONLY 2 councillors that could see the flaws in the budget prepared by staff!**

### *How much privacy information did voting in 2018 cost you?*

⇒ "The best hedge against cyberattacks is the fact that (Federal) Canada still relies on paper ballots that are counted by hand. You can't hack that," said Chief Electoral Officer Perrault.

⇒ Elections Ontario has publicly advised that there are no internet-based voting systems that meet the legislated standards for privacy, **yet the staff and council for Clearview know better** and for the last two elections has used an internet-based voting system that allows third parties to know **EXACTLY** who you are and where you voted from!

Why did Clearview councillors **FORCE** voters to disclose their privacy information to Intelivote, ScytI and Google as a **CONDITION** of being allowed to vote in 2018 and did ANY member question the electoral officer on her decision to **REQUIRE** the disclosure of privacy information in order to vote?

Residents who used the **internet based** Intelivote voting system forced upon us by the Township of Clearview for the 2018 municipal election were questioning why it was necessary to divulge their **FULL** birthdate and go through the Google ReCaptcha process **BEFORE** they could cast their votes.

After investigations by a number of citizens it turns out that the voters of Clearview were “sold out” by the electoral officer and the former council, whose decision to **REQUIRE** voters using the internet-based voting system to provide their birth date and undertake a Google ReCaptcha verification process **FORCED** the release of your personal data and exact **LOCATION** information possibly to third parties located outside of Canada!

In response to a Freedom of Information request, Clerk Pamela Fettes admitted that neither she nor the Accessibility committee had tested the voting system for Accessibility (AODA compliance).

In response to the request for records by another Clearview resident showing if the requirement to input a **FULL (D/M/Y)** birthdate was for Clearview to gather that information or if it was being used to verify a date already given out to the software provider (Intelivote/ScytI), she refused to respond (Now under appeal with the Privacy Commissioner).

## *How much privacy information did voting in 2018 cost you? (cont..)*

Although there was no request for records supporting the legal requirement for delivery of a birthdate and going through the ReCaptcha process, **the clerk made it quite clear that, as the returning officer, legislation gave her the SOLE right to use any process she chose as a condition of allowing residents to vote.** Which bodes the question, as the delegated head for Freedom of Information and privacy. did she undertake the required analysis of privacy concerns related to that decision legislated by the Act and if so, **Where is it?**

The refusal of the clerk to provide the requested records showing exactly WHY YOUR privacy information was given out to a Canadian (Intelivote), Spanish (Scytl) and American (Google) company has now been forced to a costly appeal process against the township with the Privacy Commissioner.

As for Google ReCaptcha, the response of the returning officer has confirmed that she only understands a few of the components of the privacy breaches that this process uses to take a picture of your whole desktop, the cookies that it collects and the very personal ways in which you use your computer/tablet.

Despite the purported privacy and integrity covered by the Privacy Act, the clerk for the Township of Clearview, apparently supported by council FORCED EVERY VOTER using the internet-based system to inadvertently give up their privacy information to foreign entities as an **UNSTATED PRIOR CONDITION** of being allowed their constitutional right to cast their ballot!

**Remember—Elections Ontario has publicly advised that there are no internet-based voting systems that meet the legislated standards for privacy, so why does this municipality keep using a system that discloses your privacy information to foreigners?**

In a future issue of “The Clearview Clarifier” we’ll be publishing the entropy analysis that shows just how much information the process of voting over the internet released to the township of Clearview and its third parties.

For now, let me just say that it was sufficient for Google, Scytl and Intelivote to determine your personal details right down to the day you entered this world along with the location of the place you cast your vote and includes more information about your computer or voting device (tablet, mobile telephone) than you can imagine. **What I cannot show you is HOW that information will be used for by these foreigners**

In the meantime, interested residents might like to read this from the Federal Privacy Commissioner:

[https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/opc-actions-and-decisions/research/explore-privacy-research/2013/ip\\_201305/](https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/opc-actions-and-decisions/research/explore-privacy-research/2013/ip_201305/)

The *Clearview Clarifier* Is a resident -generated newsletter countering the perceived negative philosophy of Clearview Township to waste tax dollars on ever decreasing resources by publishing an expensive, paper based, taxpayer funded, ecologically unsound, ego gratifying and non-“accessibility compliant” (AODA) publication called “THE CLEAR VIEW”.

Get your copy of the “*Clearview Clarifier*” on the [www.clearviewtownship.com](http://www.clearviewtownship.com) web presence.

## *The Clearview Township CODE OF CONDUCT for councillors*

... the latest way that Staff and Principals Integrity have finally neutered our elected councillors against standing up for the rights of the electorate!

Interesting the extremely weak Code of Conduct written by Clearview staff for Clearview STAFF is not subject to oversight by an Integrity Commissioner, **instead it is handled very conveniently by the same staff to which it applies!**

If you were under the misunderstanding that the newly implemented Code of Conduct for councillors was in most part related to **THEIR** conduct or integrity – **You are forgiven** – it's just the next step in protecting **NON-ELECTED civil servants** from any oversight attempts by **ELECTED** parties to ensure that Ontarians receive value for their tax dollars from “professional” public sector employees.

A layman's read of the document proudly created by Principles Integrity and the “Township of Clearview” (Read - Staff?) now handcuffs any councillor who **DARES** to question the actions, “advice” or undefined “PROFESSIONALISM” of staff and leaves taxpayers open to writing open-ended checks to cover the costs of an investigation and ruling by Principles Integrity when a staff member cites “Breach of conduct”.

The Clearview Code of Conduct developed jointly by Principles Integrity (chosen by staff and council to be the Integrity Commissioner) **effectively being the “judge and jury in any investigation”** and the township **who are the prospective “miscreants” breaching the code, is akin to letting our criminals choose their judge and then sit down with him/her to develop the laws to which they will be subject and over which the judges have jurisdiction!**

**Why is the provincial government not stepping in to STOP this blatant abuse of the process that they recently legislated into effect!?**

What is needed from the Province is a **COMMON Code of Conduct** for **BOTH staff and Council** and put in place across **ALL** Ontario municipalities by the Province **AFTER** consulting with Ontarians as to what constitutes appropriate levels of “bribery and corruption”. Having as many as 440 different codes of conduct being administered by different commissioners who have no common legal education means that every municipality operates under a non-standard set of community values.

What is “professionalism” as referenced in the Code? That seems to be left up to the Integrity Commissioner to determine. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines professionalism as “the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person”; and it defines a profession as “a calling requiring **specialized knowledge** and often **long and intensive academic preparation.**”

The closing sections of that Code of Conduct should be very concerning for taxpayers. It takes a majority of 2/3 of councillors to remove/replace Principles Integrity as the commissioner for Clearview which bodes the question –

**WHY does that condition form part of the Code or is that some form of “payoff” for developing the Code of Conduct?**

Think I'm being overly concerned? One equally concerned councillor has already referenced his concern on a local Facebook page over this neutering of his potential to serve the residents of Clearview!