

# **Municipal Code of Conduct Consultation Meeting with Minister Dunlop and Western Region Municipalities**

## **AGENDA**

### **ITEM**

#### **Opening Remarks from Minister Dunlop**

Consultation Questions:

**1. What changes do you feel are needed to the existing requirements for the content of municipal codes of conduct?**

- *Make it a Provincial Code of Conduct, have a provincial standard and a provincial judge to make decisions. Asking smaller councils to make decisions can be difficult and often ends in no action being taken.*
- *Better training at the beginning of each term for all of council and senior staff.*

2. The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) has made recommendations to improve accountability for members of council, including:

- increased financial penalties;
- suspension for certain violations;
- removal from office in certain circumstances; and
- better training and standards for integrity commissioners.

Which of AMO's recommendations do you think would help improve accountability for council members?

- *Support all four recommendations, ensure are standard for all Ontario municipalities.*

- *Municipalities should have access to a core of integrity commissioners so no delay in addressing issues.*
- *The process lacks the teeth to ensure regulations are followed.*
- *Better training standards for integrity commissioners as well as elected officials. Take training to get certified for it. Need an accreditation system. WE ALL need to be accountable for the positions we take, if you don't take the training then you lose your seat and this should be enforced.*
- *Better standard in training. All other industries have an accreditation process.*

### **3. Do you have any additional suggestions for a more effective enforcement and a broader range of penalties for violations of the code of conduct?**

- *Provincial standard for what the standards are that would warrant suspension.*
- *Strong support from everyone on enhanced training. For staff and council.*
- *Standard code of conduct across the province with standard training and accreditation.*
- *If a councillor does something that we would remove a staff person for then the same should apply to council members.*
- *Standardized training for council, commissioners, senior staff and have a provincial judge.*
- *Need to be further consequences for members who through their actions and comments impede the ability of council to do it's job.*
- *Need more effective enforcement by financial penalty, perhaps a penalty for each infraction of the code of conduct. Feels municipal councils are reluctant to use the rules that currently exist.*

- *Improve integrity commissioners' response time, have them assigned through a central system on a rotating basis that would have a quicker response time.*
- *Reports come back to council for council to decide what the penalty is, IC should be making that recommendation. It should not come back to council for them to debate.*
- *Complaint handling should be done in a safe environment with a degree of anonymity. Staff fears can embolden the elected officials' poor behaviour.*
- *How does Code of Conflict legislation compare to Conflict of Interest legislation. Ensure there is consistency around the province.*
- *Used example of a spouse or partner who becomes the spokesperson because they are not restricted by the codes. There should be rules regarding this as well.*
- *Members of the community should not have as much leverage to ensure they are not just going after someone they don't like.*
- *Integrity Commissioners should have the authority to make the decision and not have it brought back to council for the decision.*
- *In the case of vexatious complaints there should be a uniform IC across the province. Should be able to submit the history behind them.*
- *Should not be council making the decision about penalties – needs to be a third party who is not impeded by the code of conflict.*

#### **4. Under what circumstances do you believe additional or stronger penalties for violating a code of conduct would be appropriate?**

- *Desire is to change behaviour, so removing a person maybe more of a deterrent than a financial penalty.*

- *Ongoing violations should have stronger/larger penalty applied for continued harassment and bullying. Penalties should increase with each infraction. Incremental penalties.*
- *Should include information from all terms served. Not just current term.*
- *Consider the adverse affect on the public perception. Look at nature or frequency of actions. Potential consequences on the environment and safety of others. Is it malicious, is remorse shown?*
- *Stronger penalties should come from province.*
- *Look at past practices of resident or councillor.*
- *Does the action inhibit the trust of the public towards council.*
- *How does the action affect the head of councils' ability to move the meeting forward.*
- *A record should be kept of infractions and people penalized according to their record.*

## **Closing Remarks from Minister Dunlop**

**Would welcome a formal submission from each council before July 15<sup>th</sup>.**

**Share survey with council and staff.**

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