

### More info:

I post regularly on my Facebook page which is open to everyone. You can also see many of my posts on my website.



facebook.com/walterschummer.ca



walterschummer.ca



wschummer@townshipofbrock.ca



705-432-8464

### Open Houses:

Open house events will start up when safe to do so due to COVID-19.

Watch my website for dates and times.

### Councillor Grants:

I continue to donate up to half of my councillor salary to our local non-profit organizations and groups.

During these trying times I urge local non-profit organizations to apply.

Full details and application procedures are on my website.

## A Recommitment to Communication

This has been a trying year for communications. While I have been diligent about keeping my constituents up to date through my social media posts on Facebook I have to admit things have fallen through the cracks on publishing my regular newsletter and updating my website. My website encountered a number of technical problems which have now been corrected and the newsletter publishing simply did not find time in the schedule.

I do hereby pledge a recommitment to improved communications between myself and you my constituents. In fact, in the coming months I will be publishing more than a monthly newsletter in order to catch you up on a number of developments in The Township over the last few months. With a greatly diminished local press (both in print and online) I feel it's even more important to take this opportunity to update you on what has been happening with your Council.

## COVID-19 in Brock

COVID-19 has been playing havoc in Brock Township over the last few months. The Township remains in a state of emergency and will likely remain in such a state into early September. A state of emergency invokes special abilities by The Township. It also initiates the Township Emergency Control Group made up of The Mayor, Township CAO, Fire Chief, and Township department heads.

This ECG has regular meetings to review the circumstances in The Township and make decisions affecting operations in Brock. Some of the significant changes were various closures in Brock like parks, harbours, beaches, playgrounds, and facilities. Many closed items have been reopened while others remain closed or have restrictions on them. Currently, only Brock residents may use beaches in Brock and you need to verify your residency to police or by-law enforcement staff. Many members of Council have expressed their desire to have significant decisions brought back to the Council Table and future significant decisions including facility re-openings will be brought to Council.

While many initiatives, including additional staffing and facilities renovations for COVID have placed economic demands on The Township we have been able to also save some costs. Furthermore, the federal government has announced funds to assist municipalities across the country. Brock will be receiving over \$300,000 in financial assistance designed to assist in covering COVID costs. These funds must be closely monitored and reported on to The Province with unspent funds carrying forward to cover future COVID costs.

While Brock has weathered the COVID costs well so far other municipalities like The Region have had serious impacts including dramatic drops in transit revenues. The Region is also receiving assistance but COVID could still cause a funding issue for The Region which would have to be addressed through property taxes in 2021.

### **BROCK ASSISTANCE:**

Brock Township has initiated a series of financial assistance programs for businesses and non-profit organizations. Two intakes for local businesses have completed through a bailout program funded by The Township but managed through South Lake Community Futures Development Corporation totalling \$150,000 which also included an intake for assistance to non-profits who own property or operate a "business". That program is now complete. A Township granting program for other non-profit organizations is currently in place and accepting applications until September 4. Full details and an application is available on the township's website.

Funding for these initiatives have be done through some savings and reductions to road and sidewalk work as well as cancellation of local downtown improvement initiatives. I am not happy with the fact that some of this is funded by not doing additional roadwork or improvements to our sidewalk network.

After a few months of waived interest charges on overdue property taxes residents who have fallen behind on their property tax payments are now seeing interest charged. An application will be forthcoming to permit residents to apply for relief on these charges. The relief will not come until the end of November. More information and the

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## Front Line Workers Earn Special Praise

While the 2020 Cannington Canada Day Festival was cancelled this year it did not stop the Cannington Lions from awarding its 2020 Citizen of The Year.

The 2020 Citizen of The Year is awarding to all of the hard working front line workers and essential workers in our area.

Thank You!



## To Our Local Non-Profit Groups

Feel free to let me know what's going on with your group or organization and I'll try my best to promote it on my social media page, website, and newsletter

Also, don't forget that you can submit posters and information to The Township to be included in the electronic monitors which were installed at the municipal building in Cannington. Thanks to the Cannington Lions Club for donating the monitors.

This newsletter is produced by Walter Schummer, Ward 3 Councillor and is not a publication of The Township of Brock. Opinions and comments expressed herein are those of Walter Schummer and not The Township of Brock

application will be available on the township's website.

I am pledging to everyone in Brock that given the fact Council has found close to \$200,000 to fund these initiatives and upward of another \$90,000 in interest relief my goal for the upcoming Township budget for 2021 is to have at least a zero percent property tax increase for our residents. We owe everyone in Brock some assistance during these trying times.

## Integrity Commissioner Finds I Did Nothing Wrong

In 2019 Ward 5 Councillor Lynn Campbell filed an Integrity Commissioner complaint against me for a litany of issues she found offence to (many before the last election). This past month the Integrity Commissioner submitted his report which found I have done nothing wrong. The bill for this unnecessary investigation is close to \$6,000 which is payable by the taxpayers of Brock Township. The following is my public statement on the issue. Full report from the Integrity Commissioner is on the township website.

I welcome receipt of The Township of Brock Integrity Commissioner's report on the complaint filed by Ward 5 Councillor Lynn Campbell against me last year. The Integrity Commissioner conducted a fulsome review of all issues brought forward and found no wrong doing by myself.

In addition to the items identified in the report there are some other facts which I believe would be useful for members of Council and the public to know. Should anyone wish documented confirmation of any of these statements I would be happy to provide it.

1. On more than one occasion prior to this complaint being filed I reached out to Councillor Campbell proposing that we meet to discuss any differences and gain a better understanding of where each of us were coming from. These offers of reconciliation were either ignored or refused outright. That of course is Councillor Campbell's right to do so. Unfortunately, the filing of this complaint will cost the taxpayers of Brock close to \$6,000 in legal fees. Much has been said lately about why this had to reach the Integrity Commissioner. Rather than having a productive discussion she made my overtures of reconciliation part of her complaint. This is Councillor Campbell's complaint and it is Councillor Campbell who refused my attempts to discuss and possibly reconcile any issues.

3. Some of her complaints were a result of her not carefully reading or understanding that The Township Social Media Policy does not apply to members of Council. It's unfortunate that The Integrity Commissioner's valuable time was wasted with a complaint about a policy that does not even apply.

4. Many of Councillor Campbell's complaints did not even have to do with my time on Council and at times pre-dated this term of Council by many years which would be out of the realm of responsibility of the Integrity Commissioner. Many of the complaints were baseless and lacked any supporting evidence. In fact, for a complaint which included accusations of personal attacks by me Councillor Campbell made a number of statements in the complaint which could easily be considered personal attacks against myself including accusations of misogyny and chauvinism. Councillor Campbell also made the baseless accusation that I only attacked women through my social media posts. This very personal accusation of chauvinism against me is also unfounded and I gave numerous examples where I criticized male members of Councils... I do not discriminate.

5. Criticizing our politicians is an important part of our democracy. It is also important to note, as I indicated to The Integrity Commissioner, that I have not always criticized Councillor Campbell. In fact, I gave evidence of a half a dozen samples of social media posts where I either supported or commended actions and statements by Councillor Campbell. This is not the behavior of a so-called cyber-bully.

6. It is disappointing that it has taken the Integrity Commissioner and almost \$6,000 in fees to make it clear that members of Council are NOT expected to follow herd mentality. The Integrity Commissioner has clarified something we all should know... That we are individuals and we are free to express our dissatisfaction and opposition to policies set forth by The Municipal government we are a part of. The idea that we should all "tow the party line" is as absurd as the idea put forth by Councillor Campbell in her complaint that I, as a member of Council, should automatically agree with anything a Lions Club does simply because I am a member of a Lions Club. We do not abrogate our rights and freedoms simply because we have been elected.

7. I also must say that I am disappointed in the involvement of others in this complaint behind the scenes. During the investigation it became evident that private correspondence between myself, The Mayor, and the former interim CAO was provided to Councillor Campbell as she used this as evidence in her complaint.

8. There is one apology I would like to make at this time. I would like to apologize to the taxpayers of Brock Township for an almost \$6,000 bill levied against them for an unnecessary process which I attempted to reconcile before the first hour was billed.

This process, again, could have been avoided if all parties involved (both those at the forefront of this issue and those behind the scenes) had agreed to sit down and discuss matters. As The Integrity Commissioner has said... The complaint process is to be the "last resort". Running off to The Integrity Commissioner should not be the first move especially for a member of Council. It is sometimes the only option for a member of the public but there should be better resources at The Council Table to work through disagreements and problems. The recent trend of thinking The Integrity Commissioner is the way to solve all problems is troubling to say the least. This is now the second Integrity Commissioner complaint leveled against a member of Council by another member of Council in the last year and that is a troubling trend indeed.