

**COUNCIL**  
**INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER**

**REPORT**  
**FEBRUARY 2, 2021**

**SUBJECT: COMPLAINT FROM STAFF AGAINST COUNCILLOR GRAHAM SPECK**

**AUTHOR: ROBERT SWAYZE, INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER *PRO TEM***

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the compensation paid to Councillor Graham Speck as a member of Council be suspended for a period of 30 days commencing with the next pay period.

**ORIGIN AND BACKGROUND:**

I was appointed Interim Integrity Commissioner by Council effective from November 10, 2020 to January 21, 2021 when I was informed that the permanent Integrity Commissioner was appointed. The terms of my contract provided that if my contract terminates while conducting an investigation, I will be permitted to complete that file.

I received a complaint against Councillor Speck on November 24, 2020 from member(s) of staff who requested that they remain anonymous. I served the Councillor with the complaint and he requested an extension to the time I required him to respond beyond the holidays. I granted him an extension until January 15, 2021 and he sent his response to me on the last day.

The complaint alleges that Councillor Speck posted comments about staff on Facebook which were disrespectful, unprofessional and discourteous, contrary to the Code of Conduct for Members of Council (the "Code").

Councillor Speck embarked on a campaign with staff to have them recommend that the paving of Lyons Creek Road be upgraded to asphalt contrary to the City policy applying to the road which is not located in the urban area. Staff are opposed to the change and he admits that he knows that Council will not approve the upgrade without a staff recommendation.

His posts about staff not supporting the upgrade are numerous, but for the purpose of this report, I need only quote the following:

"I just wanted to highlight this is what we as councillors are dealing with when we communicate with staff. This is not all staff and this is not on every issue but certainly with something of critical importance to the residents along Lyons Creek I would have expected a more professional reply. "

This post elicited a comment from a resident calling staff "a bunch of beauties".

The Code in Section VII provides as follows:

“Members are expected at all times to treat staff with respect, professionalism and courtesy.

Members shall be respectful of the fact that staff are charged with making recommendations that reflect their professional expertise and corporate perspective without undue influence from any individual Member or group of Members.”

**COMMENTS AND ANALYSIS:**

I served Councillor Speck with the complaint and his response to me contained further severe criticism of staff which I will not make public. He argued that Councillors are “free to disagree with staff” which is true. They are free to disagree in open Council and vote against staff recommendations so long as they do so respectfully. If a member of Council has a problem with the performance of any staff member, he or she may complain privately to the staff member’s supervisor (preferably at the director level) and if not satisfied with the result, take the matter to the CAO. If still not satisfied, the Clerk can be requested to hold a closed meeting with Council to discuss the staff member’s performance. Staff are not immune from any of these actions by a member of Council.

However, this Councillor seems not to understand that you are not permitted to damage the reputation of staff publicly or to use undue influence against them. A member of Council has one vote and no part to play in the staff chain of command at the City. His proposal to upgrade the road should have been brought to Council by Notice of Motion and if it is defeated, that should have been the end of it.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:**

The Facebook posts by Councillor Speck clearly contravene the Code as behavior not respectful of staff. I have also taken in to account the vitriolic attitude towards staff displayed in his response to the complaint. I recommend that the compensation paid to him as a member of Council be suspended for 30 days commencing at the next pay period.

**ATTACHMENT:**

None.



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**Robert Swayze**  
**Integrity Commissioner *Pro Tem***