

County of Grey Council Members

Based on the letter I recently had read aloud at Owen Sound City council's last meeting, it is clear that the City of Owen Sound STILL believes that the finances of the Board of Health are not the City's business. This is an odd position to take as all Owen Sound citizens are, by default, Grey County taxpayers and therefore contributors, according to the funding formula, to a percentage of the Board of Health budget. We have two people representing our Owen Sound council and OS residents on Grey County Council: Mayor Ian Boddy and Deputy Mayor Brian O'Leary. Mr. O'Leary is also on the Board of Health, and as such, reports on the Board of Health at *every City council meeting*. This would make it appear as though the City DOES think the Board of Health is part of its regular business and yet they will do nothing to address their financial planning or recent spending. Now I turn to the County of Grey.

The public should know that the Board of Health is composed, in large majority, of elected representatives from municipalities in Grey and Bruce Counties. Presumably the municipal elections every four years where citizens select their representatives is precisely the way the Board is accountable to the people of Grey-Bruce. We citizens will be asked to consider this same accountability again in 2022.

Although Mayor Boddy has repeatedly not permitted questions or discussion of public concerns regarding the Board of Health he did see to it that the Chair of the Board, Ms. Sue Paterson and Dr. Arra *were invited to attend the council's March 29th meeting and he allowed them to address the council*. Together they spent the majority of their presentation attempting to answer the original questions posed in a letter signed by four councillors that had yet to be officially asked or even to be made public.

Ms. Paterson took the opportunity to explain why the Board had expected their employee, Dr. Arra, to work, what amounts to be (according to Arra's own self-reporting), an unconscionable – and by Canadian labour standards, unsafe and unhealthy – number of hours for most of a year.

Dr. Arra, in his turn, spent his time demonstrating his position as “victim” outlining the emotional impact of those long hours (insert photo of wife and child here) and by exclaiming the many ways he could have made more money in less time in the private sector or by patenting ideas. He further added that he could have worked weekend locums “across the water from the Health Unit at the Owen Sound Family Health Team” for \$10,000 per weekend. When these statements were later shown to be false and uninformed at best, Arra pivoted to explain that he had been “extrapolating from previous experience”, AND he amended that he did not mean OUR Family Health Team, although that was precisely what he had said. Included in his lengthy justifications, Arra also stated that Long-Term Care physicians make \$800,000 a year with very favourable tax breaks – both claims that also have been disproven but have yet to be publicly corrected.

Winding up his “poor me” display, he spoke of William the Second returning from the grave with a flamethrower to make Owen Sound council great again by eliminating one seat. This statement went without comment by the Mayor or any other council member or the Board Chair herself. This violent and aggressive “wish” has STILL to this day not been privately or publicly addressed by those who should and MUST address it

I ask you now, will you follow Bruce County council's lead, which unanimously passed a letter to the Grey Bruce Board of Health on June 3, expressing concern about "the prudent use of public funds" at the Health Unit, about "additional costs that might be incurred in 2021, with the continuation of pandemic conditions" and in asking the Health Board "to provide an overview of their proposed budget and the implications for municipal funding"? It is fully time for the County of Grey to do their part. Surely Bruce County shouldn't have to be the only responsible grown up at the table?

If our sitting elected representatives will not hold the Board of Health accountable, then the voters must hold the council members accountable in 2022.

Cordially

Micheline N. Mann