

Special meeting called for Wollaston council

By Jim Eadie

For the fourth meeting in a row, this time a special meeting of Wollaston Township Council on Aug. 21, council has debated the position and job description of the public areas manager which is currently vacant. Disagreement has centered around whether to look at contracting out or other options to get the work done versus hiring a permanent staff person. One faction of council wants to hire a full-time employee immediately, while the other favors a short-term contract of some sort while the position is re-evaluated. Already, the position has been advertised twice with changes to the conditions of employment in the second advertisement, and one round of candidate interviews have been completed.

The agenda for the special meeting called for discussion and motions on the procedure related to the public areas manager position. Immediately, it was clear that the discussion would turn on semantics, and interpretation of the new procedural by-law recently approved with the assistance of a mediator.

"Before any discussion on this matter, we need to go to a vote," said deputy-reeve Michael Fuerth. "Section 5.3 of the procedural bylaw, motion to reconsider."

Section 5.3 reads: "When a motion to reconsideration is introduced, no discussion of the original motion shall be allowed unless the motion for reconsideration is approved by at least two thirds of council members present."

Reeve Graham Blair took the position that council is not "reconsidering" the original motions, but "amending" or "rescinding" the original motion. Since the procedural by-law is unclear on that point, then council defaults to *Roberts Rules of Order* which allows the discussion if notice was given to council members ahead of time, which was done by way of publication of the meeting agenda. Fuerth continued to insist that the procedural bylaw is clear. "Whether to amend, or rescind? it Is reconsideration," he said.

"That's fine, and that's your opinion," said Blair. "At this meeting, my opinion prevails. I am head of council, and I am ruling on a point of order."

"Our procedural by-law is clear," said Fuerth. "Anything falls under reconsider."

"Michael (Fuerth) ? enough. It has been decided," said Blair. "Stop bogging down our meeting, or you can leave. We will default to *Roberts Rules* as there is poor clarity in the procedural bylaw. The bottom line is ? at the end of the day, the will of council should prevail."

Moved by Councillor Dave Naulls, seconded by Councillor Bob Ireland:

"Be it resolved that the council of the Township of Wollaston rescind resolution No. 8 of July 11 and No. 3 of Aug. 8 and the terms of the employment vacancy for the position of public areas manager. Wollaston council approves the employment vacancy for the position of public areas manager. A selection committee composed of the environmental safety services manager, roads superintendent, and the clerk shall conduct interviews and hire the best candidate for the position. This position shall be a full-time employment position, subject to the terms of the municipalities human resources policy."

The motion was carried with Naulls, Ireland and Blair voting in favour, and Fuerth and Councillor Lynn Krueger dissenting.