

Missing millions in HH

To the Editor,

This message is not getting through to your council.

It's about tax arrears and the inability of this council and staff to reduce them to within a very lax Ontario government standard; not a gold standard or an average standard compared to other municipalities.

At the last council meeting staff and council were in danger of dislocating some arms as they patted each other on the back about the improvement in tax arrears they anticipate for year end 2017. Why they are down to \$1.6 million, a reduction of around five per cent.

But they are still well out of the range of acceptable performance, as they have been for a number of years. On our municipal tax collection about a quarter of our tax revenue is missing.

When I asked at the meeting if they have a date in 2018 by which they plan to be within the Ontario government standard for tax arrears and what the date is, I got the usual 'trying hard' and 'very soon' waffle answers.

But one thing I learned years ago in business is that at some stage trying hard doesn't cut it... Performance does. Is 2018 the year HH finally gets arrears cleaned up?

If you are a taxpayer in HH this lax approach to collecting taxes is costing you dearly; at the same meeting HH had to get a line of credit approved for \$1 million in part because they don't get their taxes when they should. And as I have said many times, the money owing to the county and the province (about 40 per cent of your tax bill) must be paid whether it is collected or not

Maybe you don't care about this; you like paying more taxes than you have to because some folks don't pay on time

If not, it's time to talk to the mayor or your council about the continuing tax arrears problem in HH that is always going to get fixed next year.

Bill Cheshire

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