



Paul Brigg MCFADDEN, SUE Bryon Johnson/Metroland
Councillor Pat Saito (left) and Councillor Sue McFadden at the council meeting on Dec.12. 3.

COUNCILLOR MCFADDEN IN CONFLICT OF INTEREST FOR HANDLING EVENT MONEY

INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER INVESTIGATED COMPLAINT AGAINST COUNCILLOR

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ALI RAZA
aliraza@metroland.com

Visible rifts are emerging between some members of Mississauga city council.

Coun. Sue McFadden broke three rules in the Mississauga Council Code of Conduct, landing her in a conflict of interest, a report from the city's integrity commissioner concluded.

While McFadden accepted the findings of the report, she wrote in a letter to council that the "attacks" and "politically-motivated retributions" from some members of council will make it "difficult to move forward as a team."

It was Coun. Carolyn Parrish that filed a complaint against McFadden with Principles Integrity - the city's integrity commissioner - on July 31, 2018.

The complaint alleged McFadden and her executive assistant David Raakman were indirectly managing money received related to fundraising for the Canada Day Together Festival, that McFadden solicited and accepted sponsorship from individuals who were known to her to be actively involved in planning applications pending

before the city, and that McFadden failed to report the names of donors and the values of their donations to the integrity commissioner, as is required by the code of conduct.

"In other words, an alleged conflict of interest," Principles Integrity co-principal Janice Atwood-Petkovski told council.

She presented the report to council at a meeting on Dec. 12 and concluded that the allegations were true, but that McFadden's error was a failure of understanding of the code of conduct.

The code of conduct has rules stating that councillors or members of their office cannot handle money around a member-organized event. In her letter, McFadden said she failed to recognize the Canada Day Together Festival as a member-organized event.

Two unnamed donors for the event had a strong interest in planning applications before council, but the language of the clause in the code of conduct does not address soliciting from people involved in lobbying on a city-initiated-planning application.

And technically, Atwood-Petkovski said, that doesn't contravene the rules as written.

Her recommendation to council was that the rules be revised for clarity.

But that conclusion didn't land well with some councillors. Parrish and Coun. Pat Saito were notably dissatisfied with the conclusion.

Saito said "it should've been clear" that money for member-organized events should "never" be handled by the councillor or their office.

"She [McFadden] should thank you for being so generous to her," Saito told Atwood-Petkovski at the council meeting. "It's her third complaint. I think you've been very mild on this one. I think it should've been clear."

McFadden's first and second complaints were from two terms ago in 2013, Saito clarified with The News. At council, she recommended that councillors go through "every single clause" in the code of conduct at a governance committee meeting to "make sure everybody understands it."

The News contacted McFadden's office for a comment from the councillor, but was instead directed to refer to her letter to council. In the letter, after accepting the findings and admitting her error, she revealed an ongoing tension with her fellow councillor Parrish.

"By my count, this is now the third time I have been personally targeted since the complainant, Councillor Parrish, was sanctioned by the same Integrity Commissioner for, earlier in the year, sending a text message to me in my role as Chair of the Peel Police Services Board that contained racist and sexist comments regarding a high-ranking police officer," she wrote.