

**HANWELL**  
Rural Community  
Special Meeting of Council  
December 6, 2022  
Minutes

**Attendance:**

Mayor Dave Morrison, Deputy Mayor Susan Jonah, Councillor Tim Fox, Councillor Holly Hyslop, Councillor Darren MacKenzie, Councillor Pat Septon, Clerk/Treasurer Terri Parker, Asst. Clerk/Treasurer Sherri Johnston and 11 members of the public.

**1. Calling to Order**

Mayor Morrison called the Special Meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

**2. Approval of the Agenda**

**Moved by** Councillor Darren MacKenzie and **seconded by** Deputy Mayor Susan Jonah to approve the agenda.

**Unanimously Carried #1-12-2022**

*Councillor Pat Septon declared a Conflict of Interest with item #3a.) and left council chambers at 7:37pm.*

**3. Closed Session**

- a) Matter pursuant to s.68(1)(j) of the *Local Governance Act* (labour and employment matters, including the negotiation of collective agreements)

**Moved by** Deputy Mayor Susan Jonah and **seconded by** Councillor Darren MacKenzie to move into Closed Session.

**Unanimously Carried #2-12-2022**

**Moved by** Councillor Darren MacKenzie and **seconded by** Councillor Tim Fox to move from Closed Session and return to Open Session.

**Unanimously Carried #3-12-2022**

*Councillor Pat Septon and 11 members of the public returned to council chambers at 8:30pm.*

**Moved by** Deputy Mayor Susan Jonah and **seconded by** Councillor Darren MacKenzie

On November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2022 a Special Meeting of Council was held in closed session, to discuss a matter pursuant to section 68(1)(j) of the *Local Governance Act* (labour and employment matters, including the negotiation of collective agreements).

**WHEREAS** Hanwell adopted By-Law #16-2019 “A By-Law Establishing the Code of Conduct for Council”, and

**WHEREAS** Hanwell also has a “Conflict and Complaint Resolution Policy” Policy #2022-08 which describes the procedure and the sanctions and Consequences for Council and Staff, and

**WHEREAS** Policy #2022-08 states the procedure of the Informal Complaint Process as: Individuals are encouraged to pursue the informal complaint procedure as the first means of remedying conduct that they believe violates the code of conduct. However, an individual is not required to complete this informal complaint procedure prior to pursuing the formal complaint. Any person who has identified or witnessed conduct by a member of Council or staff and that person reasonably believes, in good faith, the individual is in contravention of this By-Law or other legislated obligations may address the prohibited conduct by:

- A). Advising the individual that the conduct violates this Code and human resources policies and encouraging the individual to stop.
- B). Make a request to the Clerk to assist in informal discussion of the alleged complaint with the individual in an attempt to resolve the issue.
- C). The Clerk may offer to facilitate the resolution of the complaint; if the Clerk is unable to assist for any reasons, he/she may offer the assistance of a professional mediator.
- D). In the event that the Clerk is the subject of, or is implicated in a complaint, the person may request the assistance of the mayor, and

**WHEREAS** members of staff and all members of Council, except Councillor Holly Hyslop, brought forward verbal concerns/complaints regarding Councillor Pat Septon and his comments on social media, and internal emails, and

**WHEREAS** the Mayor and Deputy Mayor have discussed previous unprofessional matters with Councillor Septon it was determined that the Clerk research the alleged concerns/complaints. After researching the emails and social media posts from July 1- Nov 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 a report was brought forward to Councillor Septon and Council with a possible 26 violations to the Code of Conduct By-Law #16-2019. In a letter to Councillor Septon, the Clerk explained that the report would be brought forward to Council in Closed Session to review, and that Councillor Septon could address Council before a decision was made, but didn't appear at the November 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, and

**WHEREAS** Councillor Holly Hyslop disagreed with the procedure followed, a letter will be read into the minutes stating why she voted “No” for each alleged violation and that letter will be attached as part of this motion.

**THEREFORE**, I move that after careful deliberation in reviewing the violations presented that we through a majority vote have determined that Councillor Septon has breached the Code of Conduct By-Law #16-2019 for the following violations:

**Confidentiality- Section 6a.** "To disclose, either directly or indirectly, release, make public or in any way divulge any such information (verbal or written) or any aspect of the closed session deliberations to anyone, unless expressly authorized by Council or required by law to do so". (1 violation)

- Reason- All internal communication regarding information that will be brought forward at a meeting, should be considered confidential until it is brought forward.

**Respectful Workplace- Section 10.** "All members of Council have a duty to treat members of the public, one another, and staff with respect and without abuse, bullying, or intimidation, and to ensure that their work environment is free from discrimination and harassment. Members of Council must ensure compliance with the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission and WorkSafe NB." (3 violations)

- Reason- Email sent to the principal that was very unprofessional
- Reason- A social media post criticizing the principal in public
- Reason- Unprofessional email about the Clerk and how contracts are discussed in closed session.

**Conduct Respecting Staff/Council- Section 12c.** "No member of council shall maliciously or falsely harm the professional or ethical reputation or the prospects of staff or other members of Council." (5 violations)

- Reason- Accusing the Governance Committee of arbitrarily changing motions/laws/policies.
- Reason- Accusing staff of falsifying documents when it was determined that it was a clerical error (typo in a by-law regarding a per diem payment for council when doing municipal work).
- Reason- After an apology by staff, Councillor Septon continued saying the changes to the by-law were intentional.
- Reason- Lack of respect to the Mayor and the Clerk's office for explaining the situation.
- Reason- Accusing the Deputy Mayor and Clerk of using charity/community budget for a private party on a boat in Yoho.

**Conduct Respecting Staff/Council- Section 12f.** "Members shall respect the role of staff as a corporate body who are in charge with making recommendations that reflect their professional expertise and a corporate perspective, providing advice and analyses, implementing Council decisions, and carrying out their daily responsibilities as required

under the *Local Governance Act*, and that staff are expected to do so without undue influence from any member or group of members. (1 violation)

- Reason- Disrespectful to the Clerk during the budget process, continually saying that he, Councillor Septon, had nothing to do with the budget yet he only missed one budget meeting and that it" wasn't his budget".

**Conduct Respecting Staff/Council- Section 12g.** "Members of Council are not to use indecent, abusive, bullying, harassing, or insulting words or expressions toward another member, any staff of the community, or any member of the public. (2 violations)

- Reason- An email sent to the Clerk and copied to Council "Once again, you can do no wrong, and the hours spent trying to make me the bad guy. Openness and transparency means something different to me than you guys. (*Insinuating staff and council*).
- Reason- A response from Councillor Septon to the Mayor in a threatening tone "Be aware, any action taken against me will be public, if any action is taken, please ensure you do it correctly this time around, as it will be brought higher."

**Interpersonal Behaviour- Section 13a.** Treat every person with dignity, understanding and respect: Members of Council shall abide by the provisions of the *Human Rights Act* and, in doing so, shall treat every person including other members of Council, committees, boards, municipal staff, individuals providing services on a contract basis, and the public with dignity, understanding, and respect. (1 violation)

- Reason- The email sent to the Clerk and Council about the Clerk doing no wrong and trying to make Councillor Septon look like the bad guy and then insulting council.

**Use of Social Media- Section 16a.** "Once posted on social media, any material or comment is accessible to anyone with an internet connection. Furthermore, the content can never be effectively removed. As public figures and representatives of the Rural Community of Hanwell, members should act with discretion and be judicious in what material they post on social media. As with any other communication, members are accountable for content and confidentiality. Care should be exercised in debates or comments on contentious matters, as feelings and emotions can become inflamed very quickly." (1 violation)

- Reason- Unprofessional email sent to the principal stating that he was working against the Minister of Transportation's guidelines to achieve safety!

**Use of Social Media- Section 16c.** "No member shall use social media to publish anything that is dishonest, untrue, unsubstantiated, offensive, disrespectful, constitutes harassment, is defamatory or misleading in any way." (4 violations)

- Reason- Stating that the RCMP did not want a crosswalk built, when there had been no communication with the RCMP.
- Reason- Stating that the Principal of the Hanwell Park Academy was not in favour of a path, “**sidewalk**”, or trail. The principal never said he was against sidewalks.
- Reason- A disrespectful email sent to the principal of the Hanwell Park Academy
- Reason- A social media post requesting that the principal make a public statement (the principal emailed the mayor saying that Councillor Septon is now blocked from all of the school’s social media).

**Use of Social Media- Section 16d.** “Where members provide a personal view or opinion on social media, members should take steps to ensure that such personal views or opinions are not construed to be those of the Rural Community of Hanwell as a whole and/or that such personal view or opinion does not accurately reflect the decisions of council or bring the decision-making process of Council into dispute.” (1 violation)

- Reason- A decision of Council was made to not place a trail between Hanwell Place and the school, and no further discussion should have been discussed on social media.

It has been determined that the following consequences imposed on Councillor Septon will be:

- A public reprimand through a motion of censure will occur.
- A letter of reprimand will be provided by the mayor stating that Councillor Septon’s behavior will be reviewed on an ongoing basis, for the next year and that any further violations will be dealt with as soon as it occurs, at the next council meeting after the possible violation, to discuss further sanctions.
- Councillor Septon’s remuneration will be suspended for the period of December 7, 2022 to May 31, 2023. Any further violations may result in the suspension being extended.
- Councillor Septon will be required to take training at the expense of the municipality and the courses will be determined in the near future.
- All social media posts on Pat Septon- Councillor at Large, and emails from PSepton@hanwell.nb.ca are to have prior approval from the mayor before being released.

The following consequences must be actioned within 30 days:

- An apology must be given to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor in person and in writing.
- An apology must be given to the Asst. Clerk and Clerk in person and in writing.
- A public apology must be given to Principal Pierre Plourde in person as well as on social media.
- An apology must be given to Council in person and in writing.

**Yes Votes: Deputy Mayor Susan Jonah, Councillor Tim Fox, Councillor Darren MacKenzie**

**No Votes: Councillor Holly Hyslop  
Motion Carried #04-12-2022**

**Letter read in by Councillor Pat Septon**

*On January 28, 2021 at the height of the pandemic, I had a process server come to my door to serve me a legal document that I am to cease and desist making negative comments about the Rural Community, the then Mayor and/or its operations from the community, those documents are in the package. I was only a citizen of Hanwell then. Its leadership with all our checks and balances sent this to the lawyers to sue me. It makes one question the decision-making paradigm of our community.*

*I ran for council to address this obvious overreach and to ensure it doesn't happen to anyone else. I am exceptionally sensitive to government resources used to intimidate it's citizens. I ran to address the lack of transparency in our community and address the safety concerns I had of getting kids and families safely to the new pending school as no one could tell me how kids were going to get there safely.*

*Just over a month after being sworn in, I was called into the Mayor's office on July 27, 2021 and was threatened with my first Code of Conduct. I have only been invited into the Mayors office for code of conduct threats. What did I do? I posted a video on Youtube asking what our community thought would be a good solution to getting our kids to school safely. <https://youtu.be/Q5am58v706Q> where I engaged the public, my constituents via YouTube to ask what they think, is it an issue, do they - the people want to help, can we make a safe method to get kids to and from school. I had a lot of positive feedback by the community.*

*The Mayor adamantly and fervently expressed I am not to engage with the public and I shouldn't be talking about it, and I am not allowed to talk about it without his and council's permission. There was more in that conversation that I will keep personal for now. When I got home from that meeting I was sick, literally and threw up on my lawn and informed the deputy mayor of such. He clearly and emphatically stated that if I were to engage the public, I would be subject to a code of conduct violation. Thinking the Mayor is new, and needs time to get his sea legs, I let him know I would give him 6 months then expect I will be working to correct this.*

*February 11, 2022:*

*After 5pm on a Friday, I received an email from the Mayor, where I was found guilty of a code of conduct and was removed from all committee assignments. \*\*\* Noting I wasn't even aware there was a tribunal, trial, or accusation at this point \*\*\* I had to email and ask what it was about, and what I did. This completely secret investigation was done solely by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the Clerks office. For sharing literal and provably facts with the communications committee about the lack of a school crosswalk and how some members of staff and council don't see it as an issue.*

*To this day I have yet to see a single article or document on this. Except I was found guilty and stripped of all committee assignments for sharing facts with a public committee. Facts I would swear on the bible as true. A reason I can't serve on a committee today for fear that I will be stripped again for being honest.*

*This punitive document, brought on by Members of Council and staff, apparently every member except Councillor Hyslop the clerk stated. Who? Who are the members and if I were a reporter or citizen I would want to see what issues line up with what code of conduct to what councillor! It matters in some cases in this document. There are all kinds of incidents along the way that leads us here today. But this SHAM OF A DOCUMENT that is presented with "FACTS" to council is further of the bullying, and intimidation the weaponization of the code of conduct. Its solely punitive. Code of Conduct in this office, at least to me is used to make people tow the party line or stop asking questions. It is a blatant attempt to have me stop sharing what we are doing to the public, and more over to distract from the questions I have in my oversight role. Lets note that not a single conversation, or question by any councillor or staff member during this so called investigation has been directed to me, not even by the investigator. The impartial investigator was able to do an impartial investigation without communicating with me whatsoever.*

*I will be addressing each of these items, in a secondary document handed out, I am rattled, I am sleep deprived, so please excuse any spelling or grammar issues in any document I share. However I want to bring your attention to:*

*Policy #2022-08 Conflict and Complaint Resolution Procedure Policy. It is brought up in my sham of a code of conduct.*

*But 2. B of that document states:*

*2. B), i. All formal complaints shall be made in writing to the clerk and shall be dated and signed. In the event that the Clerk is subject or is implicated in a complaint address their complaint to the Mayor.*

*Moving on to another document mentioned in my code of conduct*

*Bylaw No 16-2019 A by-law establishing the code of conduct for council:*

5 a. Members of council will conduct their duties with integrity, accountability and transparency.

5 c. Members of council understand that the public has a right transparency in decision making process.

5e. Members of Council will avoid improper use of the influence of their office.

*It was clear that this was brought on by Staff and Council. I could ask the rhetorical question why we didn't follow our own rules, but I know the answer. This isn't about being fair, it's a process to be punitive for sharing with the public a motion that was going to come at the next council session. Specifically, the pending motion was to stop public recordings of Council sessions.*

*Email threads specific to this for those who wish to RTIPPA it.*

1. Subject - Admin Session Dated Nov 4, 2022
2. Subject - Pat Septon Councillor at Large Facebook Post Dated Nov 5, 2022

*But to take a quote out of this thread: "The motion will, in fact, be written to stop publishing them effective **immediately**. So the next meeting will not be published, if the motion passes."*

*I was threatened with a code of conduct by the Mayor for sharing that this motion was coming to my constituents. I refused and warned the Mayor and council I will not take this laying down this time and will defend myself. Part of my code of conduct here today is that I threatened council by stating I would defend my actions if they carry on with the threat with me. Hence why we are here today.*

*I would like to point out, as I was trained, we have NO legal rights to or expectations of secrecy. That all our debates are to be for public consumption, we are not afforded the rights as a Provincial Cabinet would.*

*Specifics of the Complaint: I recommend everything here be RTIPPA'd as I only dealt with Council as a whole or via email where I could.*

*Solar System/Councillor XXXXXXXXXX/Resident*

*It was August 16 for RTIPPA purposes: The Constituent, Mr. Robichaud was talking to me! I didn't disclose anything to him, it was he who I later found out filed a code of conduct regarding the solar installation and Councillor of Hanwell. I only found out about an investigation afterwards via email from the Mayor*

*Further, we budgeted \$40,000 for this project. To date, I believe we spent at least \$120k, and I believe more? Who authorized the extra expenses, it wasn't council! Did we pay extra for electrical work, or engineering. I don't know! On Aug 16 I asked for that information via*

*email and to this day, I still haven't received a single quote to review, let alone the contract accepted! My job is oversight. I asked for the invoice to review. There is no time to provide me that, but they have time for this sham of a process. There is something wrong, and it isn't me, I suspect my asking about this on behalf of the constituent above is the reason it is added to this sham list to get me to back off. I submitted this and other issues to the Ombund and am waiting for them to get caught up, but I have been assured it will be looked at. In the meantime, I get a code of conduct for it while we wait.*

#### *Policies & By-Laws*

*It was a deliberate act to change a motion after the fact, as recorded in emails. It wasn't false or fake, it HAPPENED! RTIPPA it and read it for yourself. I report to the people and Council, not the clerk!*

#### *Hanwell Park Academy*

*You can listen to the audio here: YouTube*

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0-wOqkWy0\\_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0-wOqkWy0_8)

*Some of us were trying to get a safe place for kids to cross the 640. It was told to us for months that the Principal of the Hanwell Academy, DTI and RCMP didn't want a trail or sidewalk that was required to have a crosswalk. Told to us by the Clerk, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Make no mistake there was no confusion in council why we who wanted the trail, wanted it. It was for the potential to have a cross walk. Speed is the only other thing needed to be looked at, but if the Irving can have one, surely our children could. That the Principal actively worked against this, then to find out the first day of school, a parent texted me a few photos of bike racks with bikes at the school. In July 2022 and many months prior the Clerk, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor reiterated over and over again that the Principal didn't want a sidewalk (a necessity to get a crosswalk). You ask every member of this council if I am wrong. But then to find out there was bike racks blew my mind, how did the Principal expect the bikes to get there? Magic? Of course I challenged his premise. He injected himself into our public debate.*

*The Mayor Transcript:*

*The Mayor Transcript:*

*52:52*

*for road improvements **be they crosswalks sidewalks traffic lights** and any other infrastructure anywhere in hanwell*

*52:58*

*regarding roads which in fact we do not own and do not have any control over is highly unjust **also dti has already***

53:05

corresponded with us that they will not support such a trail along the 640 and the Principal of the Academy has said he

53:11

is not in favor he stated that the trail in existence from Hanwell place to the Academy is more than adequate and safer

53:18

for the students to use, with this in mind I cannot support this motion and my vote is nay therefore the motion is defeated

thank you council at this time too I want to remind councillors bylaws 01- 2014

53:32

a bylaw respecting the procedures of council and administration section 5i any decision of council adopted in a

53:38

public meeting **is the official position** of the entire council again thank you

In this sham of a code of conduct the investigator comes at me for this. For making it up. And I remind people what was said in the recorded transcript by the Deputy Mayor:

Deputy Mayor Transcript:

45:04

... standards for the sidewalk and crosswalks and just because we don't necessarily agree with the answer it doesn't mean the standards are not the

45:10

Standards and we have been told repeatedly that DTI the Department of Education, Principal and I believe the RCMP do not

45:16

see the value in this trail

I could get into the subject that we don't control the sidewalks, but lets move onto the specific punitive code of conduct filed against me via this topic.

Further in an RTIPPA that I just got back Nov 29, 2022 from the School District, dated Sept 11, 2022. Via RTIPPA ONLY I received a letter that was written to the Clerk and the Mayor where he clearly states it is for Council. The Principal absolutely refutes the assertion provided by the Mayor and Deputy previously mentioned. The Mayor and the Clerk or "the investigator" have charged me with a code of conduct for posts that were not only righteous but brought truth to the situation. The truth just not shared with Council. It's as if they deliberately hid facts from council though clearly addressed to council via the Mayor.

*I do indeed with this new information only given to me because I RTIPPA'd a 3<sup>rd</sup> party owe Mr. Plourde, the principal of Hanwell Academy an apology for accepting as fact information shared to council via the Mayor and Clerk. I hope they apologized as well. You have that in your package.*

*The Clerk states she never stated that the principal didn't want the trail. But we in this room know that is patently not true. Emails may even bear that out. How does the Mayor and Deputy Mayor reconcile their statements recorded to council if that is so.*

*So when someone from this body comes at me with a punitive code of conduct about letting the public know about stopping the recordings of Council, you are DAMNED RIGHT I am passionate about it. Without it, it would be my word vs the hive. Facts Matter and the public has rights to know them!*

*To the media and the public, I have along with Councillor Hyslop done everything we could to arrange safety, dealing with contradiction after contradiction. I would recommend you reach out to DTI, get from them why they don't want safety for our community. And the RCMP. I am sure the clerk has the records of who informed her and the Mayor. My vote and effort in the subject is over. The motion can only be changed by someone who voted in the negative. This is only re-brought up now because of this sham, punitive code of conduct.*

*Closed Session Contracts:*

*This closed session was so secret, it was even secret to me up until 7pm that night. This was about garbage contract, and recycling that was open to the public just one year ago. And is too at the Ombuds office.*

*I wasn't given time to prepare, research or even know what I was to vote on. I have been charged with a code of conduct for sharing the PUBLIC PORTION of the PUBLIC debate on social media the next day! Let that sink in, it offends every sensibility I own! I still indeed question this, and I cannot work for a government who's desire is to hide things from not only the public but at least some of their councillors until the last minute.*

*BUDGET PROCESS:*

*I won't speak too much on this as I don't know when I am allowed to talk about it. But I strongly suggest this community do an RTIPPA*

*Subject Revised Budget 2023 - Dated Oct 23, 2022 – Oct 27, 2022 and the **entire thread.***

*It resulted in an emergency meeting Nov 1*

*I stand behind all my statements that led me to this punitive code of conduct.*

*Council, think of all the drama I caused. All the hours I caused you in work, dealing with issues. Then think of who you are talking to about it because it certainly isn't me. If you look at the crux of what I am asking, it is to engage the public with facts, not to hide things, but let all issues land on their own merit. Not once, even in issues I have huge concerns with, did I ever relitigate a vote I failed on. Until today, I have never spoken negatively about council, you would have never heard a negative story about you from me. But I hear my name from your lips all the time. I only ask for openness and transparency. If you find me guilty on anything in this document it says more about you, than me. With the number of hours you have spent, the many hours poring over a document I feel you are trying to pick pepper out of a pile of poop. I hear repeatedly by members of this body that its hard to get the public involved. I argue it isn't if you let them be involved.*

*To the Community, you will invariably hear a lot of negative things about me in defense by this body to this action I have been forced into. Just know since November 2021 I have almost always exclusively emailed. Any facts shared should be easily provable. They may even be true. So I ask you don't just accept facts shared but ask to RTIPPA them, and don't accept parsed emails, ask for the FULL EMAIL THREADS to really see what my year was like.*

*I can't serve as Councillor if I can't engage the public on what I know to be true. I can't be threatened, not even one more time for sharing to the public, facts. This office has weaponized the use the code of conduct to keep me and items quiet. To inflame my reputation and what I am really trying to do, to other councillors, to make me look and feel like the evil guy. I simply asked that rules be applied fair and evenly. I indeed have issues with how we are running things, this is the public's money, and as a duly elected official who swore on the bible to uphold an oath, I am doing so here today. But I can't be alone anymore.*

*I ask the province to step in. Read these documents provided by our leadership. Do a public inquiry, even if one is asked for by this body I want the province to do their own. If I am truly wrong, share with the public, my constituents deserve to know if I am not worthy to serve. My faith in the process is shaken. There are a lot of new communities out there, and we cannot be the example for them. We are supposed to debate in public, tell the truth, share facts as we know them, vote, move on and have a beer. Personal tribal grievances have no place in good government, but all the room in the world at Hanwell Council.*

*When I showed this sham of a document to a trusted advisor he stated 'Pat, that isn't a condemnation of you, it is your resume going forward.'*

*It sure doesn't feel it. I admit to having a romantic view of how government should behave, how it should be driven by the will of the people. Open and transparent. But I can't carry*

*this alone anymore. Hanwellians, you either care and I will continue to care, or you don't and I will resign after. I am owed an apology, I don't care what your council tribal politics are. Truth is truth, facts are facts and the public has rights.*

*Your Worship, it just maybe I am coming at you in my defense here today. But I truly believe you to be a good person, and I can actually see a path I may vote for you again. I ask you apply critical thinking to what you are hearing and know I am not your enemy. Remember why you ran, how you felt and know that is how I feel now. Now ask how we got here. Its time we get some sunlight on our actions. Mine included.*

*I yield back.*

### **Letter read in by Councillor Holly Hyslop**

*SPECIAL MEETING RE: CODE OF CONDUCT INVESTIGATION---Dec. 06, 2022*

*In the past, when Council has been presented with a code of conduct complaint against a Councillor, a formal written complaint was received and dated and signed by the complainant. In this code of conduct complaint, this was not done...a formal complaint was not signed by anyone and was not included in our package.*

*If this was an informal complaint, then according to the clerk's letter, "an informal discussion of the alleged complaint with the individual" should have taken place. My understanding is that there weren't any discussions with Councillor Septon after the alleged violations that are noted in the document. Instead, a file was started on Councillor Septon dating back to July. Also, in the clerk's letter it stated, and I quote "After investigating, it has been determined that there are 26 violations to the Code of Conduct". So, an investigation had already taken place without any formal complaint being signed. These alleged violations were given to Council in November with the instructions that we had to examine the documents to determine if a breach had occurred and if sanctions were warranted or if a professional mediator should review the documents. Again, there wasn't a formal complaint filed so this should not have moved forward. The fact that there is a file on Councillor Septon and only Councillor Septon is extremely disconcerting and inappropriate.*

*In Councillor Septon's rebuttal, it is noted that according to the clerk every member of Council except me, made a complaint against Councillor Septon, however, not one Councillor filed a formal complaint. It does beg the question, which Councillor made what complaint? I believe Councillor Septon has a right to know who is making a complaint against him and accusing him of violating the code of conduct. The fact that I was the only Councillor not involved in these allegations also makes me question the discussions that the rest of Council were having and if this is happening on a regular basis. This creates an atmosphere of mistrust.*

*In my opinion, this investigation without a formal complaint is not acceptable. The process set forth in our conflict and complaint resolution policy has not been followed properly and therefore in my opinion this investigation is not warranted or valid.*

*Quite simply, all members of Council that made a complaint against Councillor Septon should be considered biased and should not be part of this adjudication process. If any investigation should take place, it should be carried out by an impartial third-party mediator.*

*Respectfully,  
Councillor Holly Hyslop*

**Letter read in by Clerk/Treasurer Terri Parker**

*December 5, 2022*

*Mayor & Council,*

*I am writing this letter in response to the Code of Conduct on Councillor Septon and would like to have this read into the minutes at the Special Meeting of Council on December 6, 2022.*

*Councillor Septon,*

*Back at the beginning of the year, a lawyer was hired and after reviewing many, many emails/documents found that I had grounds to legally charge you with Harassment in the Workplace; Cox & Palmer found that it was on the low end of the scale but was still legally valid. I agreed that I just wanted you to learn from your mistakes and not be a keyboard warrior and decided to not move forward with the lawsuit. On February 28, 2022 you met with the mayor and deputy mayor and agreed you were "you acknowledged the situation and was looking forward to rebuilding a relationship with the Clerk's office." During this time, you accused me at a committee meeting and have since mentioned it a few times that I do not care about the safety of the children in Hanwell, and I find this so hurtful and rude. It is my job to provide council with information pros and cons so that they can make the best decision regardless of the topic.*

*Since then, you have accused my staff, part of the Clerk's office, of falsifying records, which is a very serious accusation considering the number of important records and large amount of funds that we handle. The so-called document that we have been accused of falsifying does not even benefit us as it was discussing a per diem for councils' pay if they missed work. The only words that were "falsified" was that we didn't change the words 'up to \$300' as Council agreed it should be amended to 'shall be \$300'. This is called a typo which we quickly apologized for the error and changed it and put it on the website correctly, yet even last week you continued to accuse us of this.*

*Then Council made a motion to donate funds of \$500 to the Yoho Lake Association for their*

*summer festival, and you turned around in an email to council, and said that the deputy mayor and I used those funds for a private party on a boat in Yoho. That is an absolute lie and I do expect an apology. I live out that way and I can watch the fireworks on the side of the road, swimming in the lake or on a boat, that is my right, and you had no right in accusing me/us of more or less stealing municipal money!*

*During the March Administrative session I explained to council that during a meeting on January 8th with EECD, DTI and SNB that we were told that sidewalks/walking/biking trails were the responsibility of Hanwell and I asked DTI to provide it in writing that we were allowed to do infrastructure on DTI property as the Hanwell Road/Route 640 is a provincial highway and as a Rural Community we do not own any roads in Hanwell and especially not a provincial highway. (For the record, we are still waiting for this in writing). DTI responded on February 11 asking for additional information to my questions. The Operation Branch answered one of my questions regarding the possibility of a crosswalk being installed once the sidewalks were built. "Based on the prevailing speeds in this area of the Hanwell Road, this location (across the road from Hanwell Place) would not be a candidate for an at grade crosswalk. Based on the current roadway environment, the posted speed limit will remain at 80kms/h outside of school hours." This was also stated in a letter from the Minister Jill Green that a crosswalk is not feasible due to the speed limit on the Hanwell Road.*

*This was presented to council at the February council meeting and the conversation changed from the sidewalks to having the clerk look into the possibility of a trail along route 640 in order for students to have a safe means of evacuation from the school.*

*I met with the principal and explained the suggestion by council to have a trail in the front of the school connecting the two properties. The principal did not feel this was needed, as he stated Hanwell Place would not be large enough to accommodate all students therefore it is not known if they would use Hanwell Place as an evacuation location. If an evacuation had to be done and could use Hanwell Place, students could be directed through the existing trails behind Hanwell Place that connect to the school.*

*I DID NOT discuss sidewalks, or crosswalks with the principal and take great offense in you stating in emails, and on social media that I have lied to council. During your RTIPPA request you received a letter that was addressed to the mayor in September, that I didn't have during the research process for this code of conduct, or I would have included it as it does not say what you are applying. It does not prove that I have lied as the principal's opening sentence is "In late March or early April, in an informal conversation with Ms. Terri Parker, I was asked about the use of a sidewalk (which was actually a path in the ditch) along route 640 connecting the Hanwell Community Centre to the school so parents can use as a drop off for their children to come to school. I responded by explaining there was no need for a sidewalk as the school had a built-in design that had adequate and separate (from the buses) drop off land and zone for parents. I was not privy nor had anyone approached me about the building and use of sidewalks to have crossing lights and other safety features."*

*This is proof that I didn't lie, I never discussed sidewalks with the principal and never said that he was against them. Then you had the audacity to ask on November 30th what other secrets do I keep from council. I share everything with council, my office is an open book but if you are the one that chooses not to listen that is on you.*

*I especially do not like your accusations when you stated on Nov 30th "I don't believe you understand how much trouble we can potentially be in. I believe that if a kid gets hurt, errors and omissions will not cover some people on Council. Lets pray we never need to find out.*

*I am not an expert in insurance and that is why I have to listen to the professionals that do, but I find this comment very ironic and I will use your social media quote "It boils my onions" that you have so much negativity about the school on the first and second day of the opening, yet you approve a motion to have a multi-purpose surface and skating rink placed on the side of Hanwell Place and to use your other quote "How in bloody hell do you expect kids to get here" or use our bike racks. Instead of singing the phrases of the original council, MLA Dominic Cardy, and the many residents who worked together on a committee to lobby the government to build the school in Hanwell instead of Fredericton, you used social media for your platform to ridicule the principal on those first two days. In my personal opinion, shame on you Councillor Septon!*

*You have challenged my position as Clerk stating that this Code of Conduct process should not have been in closed session but be advised that I felt this was in the best interest for you to discuss it in closed session and then all decisions/motions would be in open session. I contacted Local Government today, Dec 5th, and have received confirmation that I followed the process correctly.*

*Councillor Septon, this year has been so busy for us with the endless requirements for the Municipal Reform and having you as a councillor, when you are constantly undermining the Code of Conduct, Procedural By-Laws, Harassment in the Workplace but especially your negativity on social media and communication with the Clerk's office and council, it is mentally draining. Furthermore, I must address the amount of money that you have cost our taxpayers due to the endless meetings that were required with the mayor and deputy mayor as well as overtime required for me to complete my required duties that were extended into evenings and weekends as we were constantly putting out fires that you had created. Your actions have taken me away from my private time as well as my family time.*

*You would be the perfect councillor, as I am all for public engagement and sharing information but show some respect to our contractors and at least give me a few hours to contact our contractors before informing the public; it is not trying to hide information, it is called respect for others! You did an amazing job with Spookfest, you are knowledgeable in so many areas and you are always willing to help, when required, yet you get behind a keyboard and all the good you do, goes out the window once you hit the send button.*

*Councillor Septon, I have not charged you with anything, I brought forward a report of violations and it was council that had to deem them as violations or not, not me. You have stated in emails to council and on a social media post that you have no faith in the Clerk's office, and you are going to resign if found guilty, so if that should be the outcome and you stand by your word, I wish you all the best!*

Regards,

Terri L Parker  
Clerk/Treasurer  
Hanwell

**4. Adjournment**


**Moved by** Councillor Darren MacKenzie and **seconded by** Councillor Tim Fox to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 pm.

**Unanimously Carried #05-12-2022**

Respectfully submitted by,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Sherri Johnston  
Assistant Clerk/Treasurer

Certified Correct,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Terri L. Parker  
Clerk/Treasurer

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dave Morrison  
Mayor

