

Comments Bill McMahon on April 16 2015
Committee of the Whole

taken off life support
Oct 2016

The size of council issue should have been ~~laid to rest some 4 & 1/2 years ago~~, when the question on the ballot: "Are you in favour of Council commencing a PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS to REVIEW the size of Council for the County of Prince Edward?" fell short of the necessary "At Least 50% of eligible electors in the municipality voting on the question."

When the province, virtually forced amalgamation on the County nearly 18 years ago, provincial officials had high praise for Prince Edward County's choice of a single County level, so much so it was often referred to it as a model for other areas to follow. Part of that arrangement then, was that each former township would retain its own name, and that the representation established at the time of amalgamation was also to remain.

One has to wonder after enduring the damaging curse of Amalgamation, where this perverse drive to reduce the size of council originated. This has been an issue for Council for 9 or 10 years now. WHY? Just imagine all the time and expense spent to date by council and staff. The Composition of Council Committee, OMB hearings, questions on the ballot, time wasted at Council repeatedly running it up the flagpole, and The Citizens Assembly.

Prince Edward County is well administered and well served by its present council and the more brainpower you can bring to the table, the healthier the outcome. Debates can be time-constrained and business can be carried out at a quicker pace. This is up to the Mayor/Chair to show leadership, to manage and direct "this group" into an effective and efficiently run council. If initiative and direction is not exhibited, indifference will prevail. Slashing council size and reducing and/or eliminating the traditional wards against the original promises will lead to far more problems than can be imagined.

The County, takes in almost 1050 square kilometres, has over 800 kilometres of shoreline, and includes many sensitive land use issues: agriculture protection, wetlands, wildlife and habitat concerns, safe drinking water sources, wind and solar energy, economic development, historical tradition, much more. A municipality with this much territory, diversity, & historical importance Needs "People on the Ground."

This, is hardly the time to be cutting municipal representation.

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Municipal governance has a greater impact on our everyday lives than that of the provincial or federal levels of government. And since our representation on those levels has been in effect done away with, this is certainly not the time to condense our representation at the County level.

Sometimes you, as members of council have to give up the battle, especially a battle that was clearly not mandated you fight post the 2010 election.

LEAVE WELL ENOUGH ALONE IF IT AIN'T BROKE...DON'T FIX IT!

“We don’t see things as they are; we see them as we are.”

-Anais Nin