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## NEWS LOCAL

### Council sets boards, committees

By Elaine Della-Mattia, Sault Star

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City council used its newest of appointment processes to appoint themselves and members of the community to about 35 boards and committees.

This process saw a committee of council meet behind closed doors, review applications of interested community members and select those they believed would be appropriate for the job.

Those names were then presented to city council, along with the names of councillors who also indicated a willingness to participate on the board or committee.

Council moved through the process fairly quickly Monday, offering up their own names where councillor vacancies still existed or withdrawing their name when too many volunteers had offered to sit on a particular board or committee.

But for Ward 3 Coun. Matthew Shoemaker, the process doesn't result in the accountability he believes the public demands.

"I was not in favor of this process from the outset," Shoemaker told The Sault Star. "A task force picked the applicants and council got the entire list of applicants last week, including those who were not selected and we could have sent in comments if we had any."

Shoemaker said he wasn't about to send comments and keep the process behind doors when he's been advocating to move it into the public.

"Sure, the process was quick, but that's not our job," he said. "We're there to govern and in my view, talking about snowplowing for 45 minutes is not governing and neither is sharing a happy news story at the beginning of each meeting. We need to spend our time on the important things at we should be governing."

In November, council adopted a new way to select boards and committees, designed to protect the privacy of applications.

The council task force conducted its review behind closed doors and brought candidates recommended for approval to council during the open meeting.

Councillors have grappled with various ideas and processes, some of which keep the process behind closed doors and others that want to see a more open and transparent process in the public realm.

A year earlier, the entire process was brought into the public forum with a simultaneous recorded voting system implemented but privacy concerns of applicants were raised as well as the need for some boards to focus on skills-based appointments.

The process used Monday adheres to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, ensuring only the names of the applicants are released, not their personal information.

Shoemaker said he's still deciding whether or not a motion to change the process again will get the support of enough fellow council members.

His wardmate, Judy Huppenen voted against the boards and committees appointments – but for a specific reason.

She said she had been contacted by a member of the community who had submitted an application to a board but was not chosen. This individual tried to lobby councillors for their support but the new process didn't really allow for those last minute changes to be made unless a councillor requested they go in council to reconsider a specific board.

"I went as far as I could for that person but the process is what it is," Huppenen said.

While she believes this year's process is an improvement over last year's process, "some fine tuning may still be needed."

"I think we need to continue to check with other municipalities to see what's working for them and see how that may fit into our process," she said.

Council participation on various boards and memberships have changed.

Most notably, Ward 2 Coun. Susan Myers had withdrawn from a number of boards and committees, including the District Social Services Administration Board of which she was a member for about seven years.

"Last year I said I would be there to get them through the transition but I believe that it's time for someone else to get a feel for what it's all about so I asked (wardmate) Sandra (Hollingsworth) if she'd be interested in the spot," Myers said.

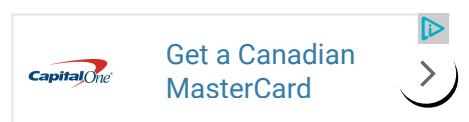
Myers said that throughout her term of council she has been fortunate to have been able to participate in almost every board or committee which a council member is chosen to sit.

"I really believe that everyone should have the opportunity to learn from the different boards and I was looking at where I haven't participated yet or can make a difference," she told The Sault Star.

Myers said she is involved in a number of committee of councils and is currently the co-chair of the Canada 150 committee. She also is a member of the CAO review committee and the council review committee.

She has not been a member of the police services board and although she had indicated an interest in serving on it for the next two years, she withdrew her application to allow Coun. Marchy Bruni to remain a member with Mayor Christian Provenzano.

"People shouldn't read a lot into that," she said when asked if she was starting to wind down her councillor duties. "I sit on a number of other task committees and I'm putting my energy into those. I've thought about now running (for council) again but then I've thought about running again. We need to really see what happens with the council review and there are still two years left of this term. A lot can happen over that period," she said.



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