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NEWS LOCAL

Council unanimously seeks answers from APH

By Elaine Della-Mattia, Sault Star
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City council has taken its own steps to ensure that public dollars and the community have been protected at Algoma Public Health.

A resolution was passed unanimously asking APH for a report to ensure that it has hired a qualified auditor to report on the integrity of its financial records during the period of time it employed an interim chief financial officer.

"This resolution is about integrity and accountability," said mover Ward 2 Coun. Susan Myers.

Council is also asking APH to report on what steps are being taken to ensure that its employee information was not accessed, obtained or retained by the interim chief financial officer and explain how he was hired and what is being done to ensure the hiring process doesn't have deficiencies in the future.

After a council meeting earlier this month, information was revealed that APH's former interim CFO, who used the alias Shaun Rothberg, is in fact Shaun Rootenberg, who was convicted in 2009 of various fraud related charges -including on his own brother -of more than \$2 million and spent time in a Canadian federal facility.

Myers said integrity is about honesty and fairness and accountability about accepting responsibility for ones actions.

"We have been elected by this community to be honest and fair and hold ourselves accountable," she said.

Mayor Christian Provenzano said that he fully supports the resolution because he believes it's important for council to recognize that there is an issue at APH and there needs to be accountability.

He said he's prepared to let the processes, reviews and audits ordered by the Ministry of Health, MPP David Oraziotti and APH's board to occur.

"We can't prejudge," Provenzano said. "We're asking for information because it's an important part of the process."

Provenzano said that once that report is presented to council, next steps can then be discussed.

"We need to know the community that we are mindful of their concerns," he said.

The sentiment was echoed by seconder Ward 3 Coun. Matthew Shoemaker.

Provenzano said each councillor has expressed concerns about the issue.

Ward 5 Coun. Marchy Bruni, one of council's three representatives on the APH – and the board chair – said a local audit and a forensic audit are both taking place and questions asked by Oraziotti and the MOH will be answered. Policies are also under review, he said.

Last week, Oraziotti said he's "extremely concerned" about allegations raised regarding the former interim chief financial officer and requested that the MOH conduct an internal investigation.

That request has been approved by the MOH and a financial audit of the board of health as well as an assessment of the board of health has been ordered under the Health Protection and Promotion Act.

Twenty-five percent of APH's budget is levied to taxpayers.

Bruni said he is hopeful that preliminary audit results will be completed in about two weeks.

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david mark • 2 hours ago

....and the pitch forks and torches come out along with the grandstanding on the soap boxes. There is already an audit being done by KPMG and the Ministry is doing an audit as well. Now the city counselors want their own "special" report...LOL, amazing how some try and take

