



Elect ALAR SOEVER For Mayor

The Town of The Blue Mountains

The Campaign So Far: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Welcome to the second of my three monthly inserts in the Review. If you missed the first, in last month's Review it can be found online at http://www.bluemountainsreview.ca/public_docs/news/August%20Newsletter.pdf

The campaign is now in full swing and candidates are starting to get there signs up. **To request a sign please contact me at campaign@alarsoever.ca, or call 519-375-6207.**

The Good

There is a lot of positive news to report. The community is engaged as never before:

- I have met a lot of people who care deeply about our community, and want to work to change the way we do things, so together we can better manage the growth of our community
- The Tuesday night presentations by individual candidates, followed by question and answer sessions organised by the Citizen's Forum, at Maiolos-Fifteen Harbour Street, have been extremely well attended and informative.
- Local groups such as the Blue Mountain Village Association, the South Georgian Bay Cycling Coalition, and The Blue Mountains Attainable Housing Corporation have engaged the candidates by sending questionnaires and have either posted, or will be posting the responses on issues.
- Most importantly we have a great group of candidates for all positions, and although they are competing for places on Council, most have shown an ability to get along.

Photo: At the Blue Mountain Ratepayers Association (BMRA) Vineyard Party at Georgian Hills with fellow candidates for election. A great event and fundraiser for the BMRA, Beaver Valley Outreach, and Events for Life.
 Back Row - Andrea Matrosovs, Paula Hope, Me.
 Front Row - John White, Gail Ardiel (my opponent), Peter Bordington, Rob Sampson.



Some candidates have shown the ability to collaborate in attempting to find solutions to issues which continue to divide our community, with 10 of 16 candidates signing an open letter urging the Town to move on from the Michael Seguin affair and pledging that *"If elected, we will all work to ensure that all people in our Community are treated with procedural fairness and respect, and that the matter with Councillor Seguin is immediately dealt with in a fair and equitable manner for all parties. If elected, the signatories all commit to respecting all codes of conduct required of elected officials at the Town of The Blue Mountains."*

Unfortunately some other candidates instead of contributing their views to the discussion, chose to distribute a draft of the letter to the press before all candidates could be heard from.

The open letter was, in part, a response to a poison pen letter being circulated in the community under the file name ["The Facts of the Saga July 21.pdf"](#). (more on this on the next page under the heading "The Bad").

I am proud to have signed the open letter, and I am pleased that we have people running who have a strong moral compass and want to work together to bring this matter to a fair and equitable conclusion for all parties, in a manner that heals the rifts it has created in the community.

Workplace harassment should never be tolerated, neither should abuse of process.

OPEN LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY FROM THE CANDIDATES FOR THE TOWN OF THE BLUE MOUNTAINS

We the candidates for various positions on the Town of The Blue Mountains Council wish to publicly state that:

1. Based upon the facts as we know them, we do not believe that the investigation into the allegations against former Councillor Seguin was properly carried out. Our opinion is reinforced by the fact that, based upon the recommendations of the Integrity Commissioner, the Blue Mountains Council rewrote their existing policies and procedures such that future complaints of a similar nature would be processed in a completely different manner than what was used to deal with the complaint against Councillor Seguin.
2. Based upon the facts as we know them, we believe that the sanctions levied against Councillor Seguin, which included being banned from the Town Hall unless supervised, were grossly disproportionate to the allegations. A summary of the allegations against Councillor Seguin and other documents can be found at [on the Review website](#) <http://www.bluemountainsreview.ca/the-review-the-facts-2017/>.
3. We believe that it is morally wrong for the Council to continue its pursuit of costs against Councillor Seguin, especially given that Council rejected all his good faith offers to settle the matter, proposed mediation, as well as Councillor Seguin's acceptance of Council's offer to settle.

If elected, we will all work to ensure that all people in our Community are treated with procedural fairness and respect, and that the matter with Councillor Seguin is immediately dealt with in a fair and equitable manner for all parties. If elected, the signatories all commit to respecting all codes of conduct required of elected officials at the Town of The Blue Mountains.

 Alar Soever, Candidate for Mayor	 Rob Sampson, Candidate for Council
 Gail Ardiel, Candidate for Mayor	 John White, Candidate for Council
 David Wilding-Davies, Candidate for Mayor	 Andrea Matrosovs, Candidate for Council
 Michael Martin, Candidate for Deputy Mayor	 Peter Bordington, Candidate for Council
 Paul Mitchell, Candidate for Deputy Mayor	 Paula Hope, Candidate for Council
 Odette Barnicki, Candidate for Deputy Mayor	 Alex Macquell, Candidate for Council
 Rob Potter, Candidate for Council	 Terrence Pettit, Candidate for Council
 Jim Uram, Candidate for Council	 June Porter, Candidate for Council

Note: Where a candidate's signature does not appear, they have declined to sign this letter as indicated.

Open letter as of August 10th, 2018

WORKING TOGETHER FOR OUR COMMUNITY



Elect **ALAR SOEVER** For Mayor

The Town of The Blue Mountains

The Campaign So Far: the Good, the Bad, and the Ugly (continued)

The Bad

While on the last page we commented positive and collegial relationship between most candidates, there are some disturbing behaviors creeping into this campaign. Whisper campaigns are being conducted about candidates and a poison pen letter about the Michael Seguin affair ["The Facts of the Saga July 21.pdf"](#) containing misrepresentations, half-truths, and outright misstatements of fact is being circulated in the community. This unsigned document is being distributed by e-mail, and when I contacted the sender asking to be put into contact with the author so I could correct errors and omissions in the so called "facts", I was refused. Others who have asked for the identity of the author have been refused as well.

Poison pen letters have no place in our community and I would ask that whoever wrote it come forward so there can be an open debate about its contents.

While I hate to spend time addressing this odious letter, it has seen wide circulation in the community, and it important to set the record straight. **Contrary to what is stated in the poison pen letter, neither the Integrity Commissioner or the Ombudsman have found Councillor Seguin responsible with respect the original allegations.**

In her report dated November 28, 2016 concerning my complaint about the disclosure surrounding the matter, the Integrity Commissioner stated "This report stays within the limits of this complaint and has avoided making any findings concerning the investigation into the original complaint against the member of Council which led to the communications under review." The Ombudsman in a letter dated December 23rd, 2016 stated "our Office did not make any findings about the investigative process used by the Town or the investigator's conclusions."

A fact, what the poison pen letter has carefully omitted, is that **both the Integrity Commissioner and the Ombudsman urged the Town to review their policies when dealing with complaints such as the one against Councillor Seguin.** In her report dated November 28, 2016 the Integrity Commissioner stated "This report advises Council on steps to prevent future misunderstandings about the operation of the Town policies and the Code of Conduct. This includes a recommendation to create a protocol for how complaints will be handled, particularly where multiple policies and/or legislation provides a process for handling different forms of conduct by elected officials which may give rise to complaints." In her letter report dated November 30, 2016 the Ombudsman stated "When we spoke on November 10 we discussed that the Ombudsman encourages municipalities to have clear, accessible complaint policies in place, and to have accountability officers available to review complaints at the local level. You advised that the Town has recently hired two Integrity Commissioners to review Code of Conduct complaints on a rotating basis. You also advised that the Town is seeking legal advice on how to investigate complaints that fall under both the Code of Conduct and the Town's harassment policies, in the future."

With the assistance of the Integrity Commissioner, the Town did review its policies and changed them. As a result no elected official can ever be treated in the manner in which Councillor Seguin was. The Town's new Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy (POL.COR.18.08) states "This policy applies to all Town Workers including students on placement, individuals contracted by the Town on a "purchase for service" agreement, Volunteers and to the Members of Public. The only exceptions are for Members of Council and local Boards who are subject to the Code of Conduct for Members of Council including the workplace harassment and discrimination provisions found in the Code of Conduct." The Town's new Protocol Policy for Complaints Related to Council Members and Local Boards (POL.COR.18.04) deals with how such complaints should be properly dealt with under the Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards (POL.COR.07.07) and requires a public report.

The Ugly

Unfortunately, the poison pen letter has inflamed tensions in the community, and my opponent for Mayor, Gail Ardiel, has reported to me that she has been verbally accosted in the community. Similarly, Catherine Sholtz, wife of Michael Seguin reported that an adult male made rude grunting sounds towards her as she hurried to attend Citizens Forum.

This kind of behaviour has no place in our community, and I condemn it in the strongest of terms.

I ask all other candidates to do the same.

REBUILDING TRUST, RESTORING RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT



Elect ALAR SOEVER

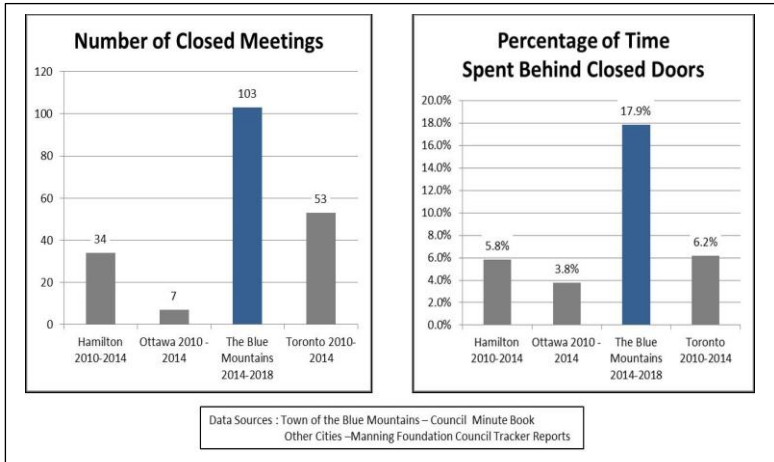
For Mayor

The Town of The Blue Mountains

Rebuilding Trust, Restoring Responsible Government

103 Closed Meetings in the Last 4 Years is Too Many

The last four years have seen unprecedented turmoil in our community. Issues were mishandled and Council retreated behind closed doors, meeting in closed session 103 times during the last 4 years. In total Council spent 17.9 percent of its time (108 hours) behind closed doors.



While it is desirable and even necessary to discuss some items in closed session, the Municipal Act leaves this decision to Council. During the last term the TBM Council chose secrecy three times more often than is reported for Toronto and Hamilton, and four times more often than Ottawa.

People lost trust in Council and Council lost trust in the people. A member of Council was quoted in the press as saying the public “cannot be trusted for the type of comments or concerns they might put forth”.

If elected, I will work with Council to reduce closed meetings to an absolute minimum. We will record and post the reasons for those meetings, so you better understand why closed meetings were held. I will also work to have all closed meetings recorded and securely

archived so that if there is ever any question as to whether they were proper, there is a record for the Ombudsman, who is our closed meeting investigator, to refer to.

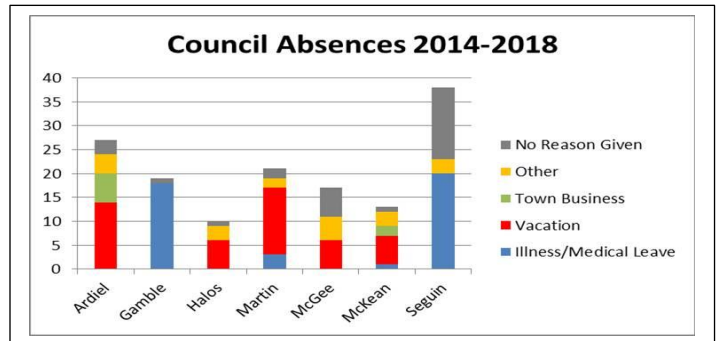
To further restore public trust and bring more accountability to Council, I will work to have every vote of Council recorded so that it will be easy for you to see exactly who voted for what. During the last term there were only 35 recorded votes.

We will also keep attendance records and post the reasons for Councillors being absent. During the last 4 years Councillors were absent a total of 145 times with reasons provided for 116 of the absences. The most common reason for being absent was vacation, which accounted for 40% of the explained absences.

Lobbying is defined as any communication with a public office holder by an individual who represents a business or financial interest with the goal of trying to influence a decision on any matter before Council or a Committee of Council, or staff member acting under delegated authority.

I will also work to establish a Lobbyist Registry which will provide transparency about who is lobbying our Town’s elected and appointed officials and senior staff.

There is a tremendous amount of local knowledge and experience in our community. I will work to establish citizen advisory committees on specific issues to tap the huge pool of talent and experience we have in our community.



County of Peterborough Department Monthly Expense Report - April 2018 (Net of Payroll and Recoverable Taxes)			
Department	Vendor Name	Invoice Reference	Expense Amount
General Administration	Iron Mountain	Shredding	\$ 101.90
	Keene Correspondent	county connection ad	\$ 395.00
	Kraft, Patti	Employee Mileage Reimbursemt	\$ 283.31
		omhra conf. expenses	\$ 503.55
		working lunch	\$ 99.10
	Lakefield Herald Ltd.	Newspaper ad	\$ 173.15
	Metroland Media Group	Mar'18 ads	\$ 691.97
	Millbrook Times, The	county connection ad	\$ 152.64
			\$ 292.02
			\$ 292.02
			\$ 292.02

I will restore the publication of accounts and invoices which was discontinued by the last Council, so you know exactly where your tax dollars are being spent. Other municipalities including Peterborough County publish theirs.

I will ask for a better accounting from Grey County as to how the almost \$16 M dollars we sent them last year was spent for the benefit of our community.

We need to restore effective, accountable, responsible governance to effectively manage the rapid growth and social change in our community.

REBUILDING TRUST, RESTORING RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT



Elect **ALAR SOEVER**

For Mayor

The Town of The Blue Mountains

Managing Change - Keeping our Community Liveable – Attainable Housing

Rapid growth and soaring real estate prices have pushed our community to the breaking point. With no attainable housing for young families with modest incomes, there is a labour shortage and jobs are going unfilled. Help wanted signs can be seen in almost every store window. If we don't do something to make sure that people who grew up here can afford to stay and live here, and young families can afford to move here, soon the businesses that we rely on like the pharmacy, the grocery store, doctor's offices, etc. will not be able to find staff, will become unsustainable, and our community will cease to be liveable.

Attainable housing has been an issue that has been largely ignored for far too long. Other recreation based communities with high real estate prices started taking action decades ago. Whistler started in 1983, and in 1997 established the Whistler Housing Authority (WHA) a not-for-profit housing authority. The mandate for the organization was to create high quality, durable and affordable resident housing that would suit the diverse and evolving needs of Whistler's growing community.

The WHA succeeded in creating over 2,300 beds (778 units) in 6 years. Over the next eleven years, from 2004 through 2016, the quantity of resident housing inventory has nearly doubled with the creation of an additional 4,101 restricted beds (1,125 units).

Towards the end of 2017 an additional 75 beds (27 units) were completed in Cheakamus Crossing.

The WHA now has a resident restricted housing stock of 2,034 housing units (946 rental units and 1,087 owned units, 6500 beds). This has, in part contributed to enabling 78% of Whistler's workforce to live in Whistler, and Whistler has much higher real estate prices than we do.

The Whistler Housing Authority is financially self-sufficient, and does not rely on the municipal residential tax base. The time for half measures is over. It works there, why not here? It's going to be a lot of work, but we have a successful model to follow.



Attainable Resident Restricted Housing in Whistler

THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW LET'S ELECT A COUNCIL THAT IS WILLING TO MOVE FORWARD TO MANAGE CHANGE AND KEEP OUR COMMUNITY LIVEABLE

**DID YOU KNOW THAT THERE ARE CURRENTLY
66 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (4,828 units)
IN VARIOUS STAGES IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS IN OUR TOWN?**

IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE I WILL DISCUSS HOW WE CAN MANAGE THIS GROWTH

TO HELP GET ME ELECTED, YOU CAN

- Share this insert with your friends and neighbours
- Donate to my campaign (either online at alarsoever.ca, or by mailing a cheque payable to: ALAR SOEVER FOR MAYOR, 203 Sunset Blvd, P. O. Box 89, Thornbury, ON N0H 2P0
- Volunteer to host a meet and greet for your neighbourhood
- Volunteer to knock on doors

TO VOLUNTEER:

Please e-mail campaign@alarsoever.ca or call 519-375-6207

MANAGING CHANGE FOR OUR COMMUNITY