

From: Shekar Chandrashekar
Sent: September-18-17 3:28 PM
To: Stevenson, Kirsten
Subject: Re: Letter from the Honourable Bill Mauro, Minister of Municipal Affairs

Mr. Mayor, Madam Chair and Members of A & A

Please, see attached from Right Honourable Mr. Mauro Minister of Municipal affairs and PSAB confirming Minister reference to PSAB. The City of Hamilton is in charge of Hamilton Police Service accounting records.

Also, I have attached Mr. Berton editorial comment Why publically funded operation is not providing information.

A & A is in possession of number of my delegations and all supporting documents.

Mr. Mayor, Madam Chair and Members of A & A committee please. don't receive and file it away but to **take action** on behalf of Private Citizen request. Hamilton Police Chief confirms it is in City accounting system. And, General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services it as well. I have been continuously appearing not only as a delegation but to appeal to grant permission to Provide Police Accounting "Available Funds Report" They all go through City books. Police Chief and General Manager, Finance and Corporate services confirmed..I am not asking for Operational. I am not asking for Personal confidential information. I am not asking for T-4. Simply "AFR" (Available report. As an accountant I need this to interpret goings and comings. It is 100% funded by Taxpayers of Hamilton

Question is why can't I get it?

We are talking about millions of dollars saving to taxpayers

This private Citizen not only invested his time but invested his own funds to protect and safeguard taxpayers interest

Shekar concerned Citizen

**Ministry of
Municipal Affairs**

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AUG 18 2017

17-71802

Mr. Shekar Chandrashekar

Dear Mr. Chandrashekar:

Thank you for your email regarding your concerns about the accounting transactions of Police Services.

As Minister of Municipal Affairs, I understand the importance of financial accountability on open and transparent governments.

Section 294.1 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, stipulates that municipalities "prepare annual financial statements for the municipality in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles for local government as recommended, from time to time, by the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) of the Chartered Professional Accountants of Canada."

Section 296 requires a licensed auditor under the *Public Accounting Act, 2004*, to audit the accounts and transactions of the municipality and its local boards. Furthermore, the ministry collects municipal financial information through the Financial Information Return (FIR) on a yearly basis as mandated by section 294(1). To ensure public confidence in public sector entities, legislation is in place to facilitate independently established accounting and assurance standards.

I encourage you to have a discussion and share your concerns with PSAB and/or the City of Hamilton.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to the attention of the government. Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Mauro".

Bill Mauro
Minister

RE: Letter frm the Honourable Bill Mauro, Minster of
Municipal Affairs

AA

Ali Ahmed <aahmed@psabcanada.ca>

Reply

Wed 09-06, 2:09 PM

You

You forwarded this message on 2017-09-11 5:35 PM

Hello Mr. Shekar,

I would confirm that Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) issues standards and guidance with respect to matters of accounting in public sector. Public sector refers to government, government components, government organizations and government partnerships.

These standards apply to all public sector entities that issue general purpose financial statements unless :

- (a) Specifically directed or permitted to use alternative standards by PSAB, or
- (b) Limited in applicability as outlined in the individual sections.

Kind Regards

Ali

September 15, 2017

BERTON: Reporters are needlessly obstructed by public agencies

The public should have access to public information

OPINION 07:00 AM by [Paul Berton](#) Hamilton Spectator

The Hamilton Waterfront Trust does good work for the city, but it shouldn't be so difficult to get ahold of documents that should be readily available to the public. - Hamilton Spectator file photo

If you ask me, I'd say Spectator reporter Natalie Paddon got the runaround from city officials in her ongoing quest to investigate the Hamilton Waterfront Trust.

And I would add, if you'll pardon the self-serving declaration, that without media inquiries, we would not have had [all the talk](#) this week from politicians about the need for more public "transparency" and government scrutiny.

Consider this: Paddon asked for the minutes from Waterfront Trust meetings 13 times over the last six or seven weeks.

Finally, last week [we were told](#) they would be available sometime before a city committee meeting Oct. 4.

Does that seem reasonable? Why all the fuss?

The Hamilton Waterfront Trust does good work with taxpayer money. It operates businesses and promotes tourism along our beautiful waterfront: a sightseeing trolley and boat, a coffee shop, an ice-cream stand, and a skating rink, for example. And it manages a beautiful building that was until recently an upscale restaurant.

The trust may be a bargain compared to what those operations would cost the city, but it also owes hundreds of thousands in back taxes. Should this alone not trigger a review?

Which brings us back to the mysterious minutes and the media's attempt to do just that. If an organization receives public money, it should be transparent.

The minutes and financials should be available to the public, barring any sensitive personnel or property matters. These documents don't need to be on the website,

but they should be available if someone asks, journalist or no, without a discussion at the board.

The fact that at least one city councillor, Donna Skelly, has now said she will put forward a motion for a forensic audit, while another, Matthew Green, wants to make documents from taxpayer-supported agencies public, is just one indication the trust has a communications problem.

In the case of the latter motion, why is it even necessary? The city gets the trust's financial statements (and has shared them in the past with the media), but it received the trust's 2016 documents only two weeks ago.

The answer is simple: Despite all the talk from politicians and government everywhere, transparency is not a priority.

Worse, as with most government organizations, secrecy is not only easier, safer and more convenient than transparency, it is both habit and human nature. It is ingrained in the bureaucracy.

In this case, perhaps it was simple lack of will? Maybe the trust simply didn't get around to doing what is necessary.

Again, to beat a dead horse, if it weren't for the media, many documents like these would remain unavailable at agencies throughout the land, and scrutiny, along with possible improvements and efficiencies, would remain elusive.

This isn't the first time the trust's operations have been questioned. The Spectator has done at least [two](#) major [investigations](#) in recent years and the answers are inevitably both complex and unsatisfying.

Is the debate worth revisiting?

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