

**Form: Request to Speak to Committee of Council**

Submitted on Friday, February 8, 2019 - 6:05 pm

==Committee Requested==

**Committee:** Audit, Finance & Administration Committee

==Requestor Information==

**Name of Individual:** Michael Woloch

**Name of Organization:**

**Contact Number:**

**Email Address:**

**Mailing Address:**

**Reason(s) for delegation request:**

In light of the recent news of the suppression of a critical report on the safety of the Red Hill Valley Parkway, I suggest that the City of Hamilton review its employment of registered Professional Engineers in key positions for the management and oversight of public works. If necessary, the City could work with PEO (Professional Engineers Ontario) the regulating body for Engineers in Ontario.

Professional Engineers, licensed and regulated in each province by law, must meet minimum standards for education, experience, and follow a code of conduct which holds public safety paramount. If a Professional Engineer had suppressed that report without taking action (even to point of whistle-blowing publicly), they would have faced criminal charges under the Professional Engineers Act.

This action is not unlike the Walkerton E.coli outbreak, where unqualified persons were given the responsibility for life-critical public safety. But without oversight or regulation, even by their own self-regulating professionals, these individuals failed to serve the public trust. And people died.

Moving forward, I suggest that the best way that the City of Hamilton can regain the public trust, is to review each department and ensure the involvement of Professional Engineers where public safety is critical. I suggest engaging the PEO directly on this issue.

For full disclosure, I am myself a registered Professional Engineer in Ontario and have been since 1999. I am also a Hamilton native and have lived in Hamilton for most of my life, attending the University of Waterloo from '89 to '94, and in Arizona from 2011 to 2015. I presently reside with my elderly parents in East Hamilton, only a few minutes away from the Parkway itself. I use the Parkway regularly. My extended family continues to live in the city.

The engineering profession doesn't have the high profile or prestige of the medical or legal profession, but the City would no more permit an unlicensed physician to treat patients for the city, or for a "self-taught legal expert" to represent the city in court. I'm quite sure that people understand this - the planning department requires building plans to be reviewed and stamped by an engineer or architect - so why would the public trust, be trusted to someone who has no formal legal obligation to public safety.

I am not dismissing the experience of those employed by the city, but actions speak louder than words and credentials. Without professional credentials for people in these technical positions, the city puts itself at risk, not only for litigation and

financial penalties, but a loss of reputation and public trust. I do not have a formal presentation, but I would be pleased to discuss this with the appropriate committee(s). This issue is very new and fresh, and I have not had time to even consider a formal presentation. I am sending this at the suggestion of Mayor's office (I sent them e-mail yesterday), as hiring practices and promotions should be considered and reviewed - again, with the full public involvement of the PEO (who are more than qualified in recognizing which offices and departments should have oversight and involvement of Professional Engineers).

This is not something which can be outsourced to consultants - the consultants who prepared this infamous report obviously did their work correctly, but keeping the report hidden was not their decision. It would be foolishly naive of me to say that Professional Engineers are perfect, but they are held to a higher standard - morally and legally - like your doctor. It is time to do something before the public at large starts feeling that the City doesn't care about their safety, or their lives

**Will you be requesting funds from the City? No**

**Will you be submitting a formal presentation? No**