

Added Item 8.3(a)

Narinder Nann
Councillor, Ward 3

Re: Monuments in City Gravesites

On 01 August 2019, my mother died at age 99; on 09 August we laid her to rest at the York Boulevard Cemetery, to join most of my Hamilton ancestors who have been there since the latter part of the 19th century.

Within hours, and with the soil hardly settled, I received an advertisement with an order form dated 12 August from the City of Hamilton Municipal Cemeteries promoting an offer to “complete the inscription work ... for \$270 and \$50 for painted letters” noting “these prices do not include HST which is added to the total”

Now my response is not only about the bald faced insensitivity of the letter, while those are in the early throes of intense grief at the loss of a mother and grandmother, but that the monument stone – like those of my grandparents and a list of granduncles and aunties -- had been created by a Hamilton craftsman whose industry and artistry we have relied on for years, and who was in line to “complete the inscription work”

Therefore, a second layer of offense was taken that this tax-supported division of the city (Hamilton Municipal Cemeteries) was using its power to compete with private commerce and enterprise and draw away from a boutique and small business industry in Hamilton – already under pressure as more and more persons are considering cremation not requiring a headstone – and using tax supported municipal departments to crush, using an unfair advantage, the small Hamilton entrepreneurs engaged in this niche market.

How ever did this come to be? It is offensive not only that the city of Hamilton is wielding its power to hinder small Hamilton business through unfair competition, but that it is using my tax dollars to enable it to do so.

My objections are plain. The City of Hamilton should be using its Municipal elbow and my tax dollars to support small businesses in Hamilton, not butting in to do what it can to crush, using unfair competitive edges, those in the local monument industry, even if it is a small band.

I would like an investigation into the source of this new advertising push – and hope that the whole matter will be left in the hands of Hamilton local private small business enterprise -- as in all the years of laying family members to rest at the York Boulevard cemetery, no one has ever been so aggressive towards families dealing with fresh grief with a “promotion” trying to undercut and price challenge the services offered by our local monument makers.

Yours truly,

Douglas Brown

