

IS SHE BACK OR NOT? RM ADMINISTRATOR'S STATUS UNCLEAR

BULYEA SK: On any given day, the RM of McKillop either does, or does not have an Administrator.

Last reported by RM Council after the September 1st meeting, Michele Cruise-Pratchler (MCP) was being rehired for 90 days as Interim Administrator. Just before the Council Meeting on September 22, 2017, the ratepayers observing the meeting were informed that MCP “doesn’t work for us”. And that seems to be the case. At that meeting, legal counsel from the RM arrived from Regina and served in the role of secretary to the meeting, taking minutes etc. at whatever her hourly rate as counsel is. The market rates for lawyers in Regina are between \$200 and \$600 per hour. Seven hours times at low estimate of \$300 per hour equals \$2,100 for the RM lawyer to take minutes at the RM Council meeting on September 22nd. Though it’s unknown at this time what the RM’s legal counsel charges, you can decide if this is money well spent by council.

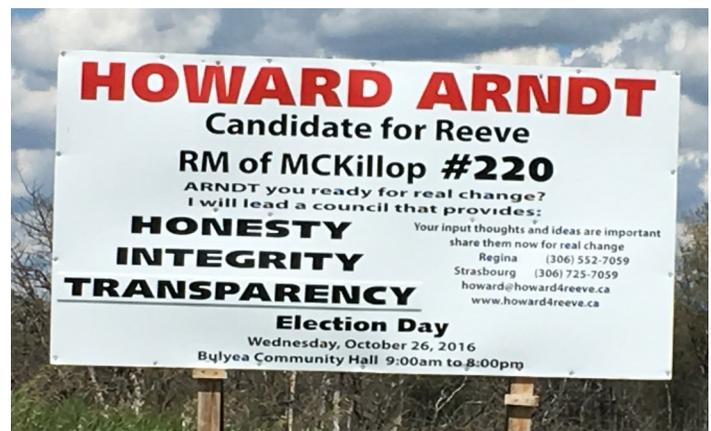
And regarding legal counsel invoices, the RM 220 Ratepayers Association is on its third request to have access to those legal invoices, access to which ‘any person’ is entitled under section 117 of the *Municipalities Act*— the Administrator “shall” provide that information “within a reasonable time” for the requisite fees. But the Administrator—if we have one—and Council have stalled, so that information is not available to the people who ultimately pay the bill.

Adding to the general confusion, several statements were made in the September 22nd meeting indicating that MCP had in fact done several tasks for Council, but then, when Reeve Arndt was asked by one of the Councillors why she was acting as an Administrator if she is not the Administrator, there was no response. It’s not getting clearer. Why is RM Council being so vague concerning the employment status of the former? Administrator?

Of perhaps greater consequence, the petitions submitted to Council for a managerial audit and a financial audit have been rejected by Council as being insufficient. As with most kinds of petition in *The Municipalities Act*, it is the Administrator who is responsible—for this kind of petition—under section 140.1 of the *Act* to determine whether a petition is “sufficient”, and then to report that result to Council. Since the RM doesn’t appear to have an Administrator under contract, who made the determination of insufficiency and who reported it to Council, as required under the *Act*? In the event that Council asked its legal counsel to determine that sufficiency, one wonders where the authority to do that came from. Those legal bills are mounting.

In addition, the members of the public who were present at the meeting were given no opportunity to ask questions about these turns of events. So it is impossible to report any information about who is doing what, why it happened as it did, and on what grounds the petitions are considered to be insufficient.

All of this, mind you, is occurring under Reeve Howard Arndt’s banner of “honesty, integrity and transparency” that many of us pass daily along highway 20.



BACKGROUNDER: The Rural Municipality of McKillop No. 220 lies along the east shore of Last Mountain Lake, north of Lumsden, south of Strasbourg. There are 732 permanent residents and approximately 2,000 ratepayers in the RM.

If you have any questions please contact us at rm220rpa@gmail.com

Thank you.