

CITY OF SURREY - ETHICS COMPLAINT

The following correspondence was received from a member of the RCMP Veterans' Association, Vancouver Division. The member requested that this information concerning this complaint be shared with other members of the Division for their information only at this time:

My complaint refers to a number of 'tweets' "originating from Surrey Safe Coalition social media, maligning the RCMP. My particular concern was a message posted 29 May 2020 referring to the RCMP as untrained murders. (Several references via internet). The message was deleted shortly thereafter. The Mayor was quoted in the Surrey Now – Leader as saying:

"I actually don't agree with it and looked into it and can say that it won't ever happen again. It was sent out by an unauthorized person. They recognized immediately that it was a mistake and they took it down within 15 minutes".

Mayor McCallum since, has reportedly apologized to the RCMP through a letter to Assistant Commissioner, Jennifer Strachan. I take the position that this behavior is egregious and that Assistant Commissioner Strachan does not have the right to forgive such behavior on behalf of retired members, RCMP support staff, family and friends. It is my position that a public apology is required.

I forwarded correspondence to Surrey Ethics Commissioner, Reece HARDING, on 17 Aug 2020. Following the much-publicized announcement that Surrey was the first city to appoint an Ethics Commissioner, etc., I contacted the City to inquire as to how to initiate a complaint. They didn't know - it had never been done. They contacted Reece Harding who, in turn, contacted me. I sent him an email as the "gist" of the complaint that I intended to pursue. We have since had several phone conversations, and have created quite an email chain. I have made it clear, in no uncertain terms, that the "tweet" on the Surrey Safe Coalition Twitter account referring to members of the RCMP as "untrained murderers" was highly offensive and derogatory to a much larger audience than the Mayor, or his Councillors, can imagine. I'm sure they think this is water under the bridge. Mr. Harding has undertaken an investigation into my allegations which now constitute my formal complaint.

The irony of the Ethics Commissioner is that he has no authority. Upon completing his investigation, he reports his findings and recommendations, in compliance with the bylaw, to City Council for their action/adjudication. Sec 85 c) provides that after the affected Council Member has made submissions to Council, the Council Member will leave the meeting room and those members without a conflict of interest consider the measures, if any to impose in accordance with section 76 of the Bylaw. The concern, as I see it, is that the Mayor is the only party named in the complaint. Safe Surrey Council members Elford, Guerra, Nagra and Patton as proprietors of the Safe Surrey Coalition social media could therefore be in conflict and should recuse themselves from any decision-making process. We shall see. I believe Mr. Harding has been fair and understanding to this point. As I mentioned, I have made it perfectly clear to Mr. Harding that there are more people upset about the Mayor and Surrey Safe Coalition's use of social media that would be interested in forwarding complaints. Mr. Harding was not receptive. I then told him that out of respect for the process that I would (for the time being let my complaint stand for others). I informed him that I would be happy to supply a list of names and organizations that he could contact if he felt it will assist in his investigation. I think it fair then the members of our association are informed that my complaint has been initiated and is presently undergoing a formal process. I think this may prove beneficial down the road if I know I have support of the members our Veteran's Associations. I will keep you informed as the world turns.

City of Surrey Code of Conduct Bylaw 202 No. 20020 is available online and can be accessed by [CLICKING HERE.](#)