

This morning the ethics commission held a probable cause hearing to a complaint I filed in regards to Ms. Corrigan recommending and hiring her business associate, Linda Dykeman as the town's consolidated finance director and by directing and supervising her in that role. The vote was unanimous, 6-0, for those 2 counts that probable cause does exist that Ms. Corrigan violated the ethics laws.

I first raised the issue of Ms. Corrigan's appointment when she was appointed behind closed doors, in an executive session in June of 2017, as she was not an officer of the town. The town solicitor told me the council was within their inherent authority under the charter to make the appointment. I was also told by the council president that the appointment was only temporary. Apparently, neither was the case as Justice McGuirl ruled her appointment null and void as it violated the OMA and town charter and Ms. Corrigan has subsequently been appointed our permanent town manager.

After it was learned that Ms. Corrigan recommended that the then current finance director was to be terminated and that her business associate was to be appointed as a consolidated finance director, I raised an alarm again, during public comment about this hiring process, only to fall upon deaf ears. My initial concern was how can Ms. Corrigan and Ms. Dykeman come in and review the town's finance department and town manager's performance, end up with their jobs and that not be a conflict of interest and done without posting, advertising or vetting of this position.

What led to the ethics complaint was when it was finally learned during the James Perry trial that Ms. Corrigan had been the one to recommend her business associate for the finance director position, she set her salary and signed the term sheet between the Town and Ms. Dykeman, all of which either done behind closed doors and/or without the approval of the town council during an open session.

The initial approval to appoint Ms. Dykeman took place during an executive session on June 26, 2017 and using the same standard and logic as Justice McGuirl, that appointment, if challenged, would also be in violation of the OMA and should be null and void as well.

I cannot quite understand how this could happen considering we have paid hundreds of thousands of dollars over the past year for what should be sound legal advice. This is something that the solicitor knew or should have known and should have advised the council of this during the executive session, where he was present, but apparently, that did not happen.

This all happened under this council's watch. How was this issue ignored? The only person to raise a concern from the council was Dr. Schwager and he too was ignored.

This was not the only appointment that was done by Ms. Corrigan without posting, and advertising. This big city style politics and cronyism needs to stop and the residents and employees of this town deserve better.

Bill Higgins, 9/11/18