

We were extremely surprised to learn yesterday that there was an item on the Consent Agenda (meaning there will be no discussion simply a consent to receive and file) entitled 2022 Municipal Election Plan.

This document has been produced by the City Clerk's Office. The City Clerk is charged with the responsibility of crossing all the t's and dotting all the i's in terms of the running of the Burlington and Halton Chair election in the City of Burlington.

Unlike the Provincial and Federal election who have an oversight body the buck stops at the City Clerk's desk for a fair and accessible election for those who will be given the authority under Section 5 of the Municipal Act to make decisions on prioritizing and serving the needs of 3086 shy of 200,000 people. In 2022 this was accomplished from an operating budget of \$283,000 million from which 67% (\$191.5 million) is funded from Property taxes which works out at around 957.5 per resident. A huge amount of money when one thinks of there not being an oversight organization such as there is for Federal and Provincial elections.

The lack of an oversight body should, we believe, see the Clerk ensure the election is accessible by every candidate who wishes to file a nomination paper and every member of the electorate who wishes to cast a vote.

There is no doubt that I, Anne Marsden, have the most experience in the city of Burlington of being a candidate in a municipal election. My first time I registered being in the 80's when I ran for School Trustee and I believe there have only been

two elections I missed, one because Dave retired in October 2010 and had planned a month RV tour and two cruises that were leaving from Florida, and he was going with or without me!

I have in previous elections engaged with the City staff responsible for the election, normally Angela Morgan, and made delegations from a very different looking council chamber on issues that dealt with decreased accessibility for candidates with disabilities given the city's understanding of the extent of my significant mobility disability covered in local newspaper articles on several occasions.

My first recommendation was to a Walter Mulkewich council that certainly took my point very seriously that there was a step up to the podium where councillors sit which made it inaccessible to those who used a wheelchair or mobility scooter and sent the wrong message regarding access to a seat at the Council table. Walter Mulkewich, bless him, immediately removed the step and replaced it with a sloped ramp making our council table accessible.

The Clerk at the time and the Mayor were the only ones I know who have properly responded to accessibility issues affecting candidates and there have been many more. In 2018 I brought up several issues including the handicapped parking sign set a time limit for parking at city hall with a \$400 fine for going over the limit. This limited the time I was able to spend at city hall at meetings versus those who did not have a mobility disability who simply fed the meter. The sign still reflects a time limit indicating my engagement with the city clerk's

department about a candidate accessibility issue was ignored and was not contained in the final legislated report.

There are two issues that I have engaged with City Hall on related to candidate accessibility issues at least one of which has been discussed with members of this Council, Councillor Bentivegna and Kearns and more recently CHCH raised my point with Mayor Meed Ward on a Wednesday interview.

The issue being why are there three electric car chargers in the city hall parking lot and at least one across the road and yet there is no means of boosting my electric mobility scooter, which Councillor Bentivegna is fully aware meant I had to call for a tow when I ran out of power after paying my respects at the City Hall Cenotaph which is sometimes a daily visit.

This election I have posed the question to Mayor Meed Ward and others as to where are the charging units throughout the city for those like myself who run their campaign, from a mobility scooter rather than an electric car such as Councillor Bentivegna utilizes in terms of his campaign message with a larger than life photo of him on this electric car.

There has been no response to that question so Clerk Kevin Arjoon this is my notice to you that seeing as you chose not to engage with myself, very clearly documented in the Burlington election files as being the Burlington record holder in terms of numbers of elections where I have been a Burlington candidate, that a report is forthcoming on unanswered accessibility of candidates to the 2022

election issues which I expect to read about in the post-election report, which will be the first time, if it does happen.

Reviewing this report shows there is not a single reference to candidate accessibility issues, which believe you me from experience are numerous. Rather the report deals with voter issues and engaged with the Accessibility Committee not real live candidates like myself who have made an appointment on July 14, 2022 to file my nomination and endorsement papers for the position of Mayor.

I should inform you, that a federal human rights complaint that I addressed in terms of lack of access to my polling station at Central High School which Mike Wallace among others will remember I could not get resolved on the last day to cast a vote, was very successful and did lead to appropriate compensation.

In past elections candidates with and without disabilities simply had to show up at the Clerks Office and their nomination would be filed. Not this year, though as candidates have to make an appointment. To ensure I got the time slot on July 14, 2022 that I wanted I requested my appointment more than two weeks ahead of time and was first asked if I could change it to another date as all those able to file my nomination, Clerk and Deputy Clerk were at meetings outside of city hall that day and were not available to file my nomination which clearly is at odds with the Municipal Elections Act which states nominations can be filed at the Clerk's office any time city hall is open. My response that I could not make July 13, 2022 led to agreement that the Clerk would ensure he was back for my 3:30 p.m. appointment on July 14, 2022.

*in terms of
an accessible
filing process*

As members of Council that may well be treated differently in terms of accessibility than those the Municipal Elections Act requires to be accommodated and yes I understand there are hidden disabilities and have been an advocate for such I would suggest that you pull this report from the Consent agenda or be prepared to explain to our new MPP Natalie Pierre who is also a Parliamentary Assistant and the returning Minister Steve Clark why you are refusing to take the need to engage with candidates with mobility disabilities in term of their accessibility questions that have been ignored for well over a month now.