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Nominees sought to fill vacant Council seat

By Peter Richardson

The sudden unfortunate passing of Councillor Tom Egan from cancer in July from cancer has left Council with a previously unexperienced dilemma: filling a vacant council seat.

Under Provincial law, once a Council seat has been declared vacant, it must be filled within 60 days of that declaration.

At Monday night's Council meeting, Mr. Egan's seat was, officially, declared vacant and newly appointed Town Clerk, Jennifer Willoughby informed Council of its options for filling that seat, for the remainder of the term, of Council.

Under the Municipal Act, S.O.2001,c.25, the Council has three options for proceeding. They may choose to appoint someone from the 2014 election candidates, they may issue a call for nominees, or a By-Election can be called.

With little support for the first and last options, Council chose to issue a call for nominees.

To qualify as a nominee, the candidate must be 18 years of age or older, they must be a Canadian citizen, they must either reside in or own land in the Town of Shelburne, or be the spouse of someone who does, and they must not be prohibited from voting under any other Act, or disqualified from holding municipal office.

When these qualifications have been met, the nominee must complete a Council Vacancy Application Form and a Declaration of Qualification, both of which are available from the Clerk's Office at Town Hall.

Applications will be accepted only until Thursday, September 14, 2017, at 2 p.m.

Candidates are also encouraged to submit a personal statement of qualification, for consideration, to Council.

This resume, if you will, must be typewritten, on 8.5x11 letter size paper and must be in 12 point type.

It must not be more than two pages long and must contain the candidates name and address. Any resume which does not correspond to these parameters, will not be accepted and will not be included inane Council meeting agenda. Neither will it be provided to Council, by the Clerk.

The Notice of Vacancy must be posted on the Town website and published in the local newspapers for a minimum of three consecutive weeks, following which a vote, by Special Council Meeting may be held, to fill the vacant seat.

In the case of Shelburne, that meeting will be held on October 2, 2017, in the Town Hall.

As the nominations are received and certified, the names will be posted on the Town website, as an unofficial list.

Once all nominations have been certified and the nomination period has expired, an official list will then be posted on the Town website.

Once the Special Council Meeting has been called to order on October 2, each candidate will be given an opportunity to address the Council, for not more than 10 minutes, following which each Councillor may ask whatever two questions they feel are relevant, of the candidate.

Each candidate will come before Council, in private, while the remainder are sequestered in a separate room. The order of speaking will be determined by lot. Each candidate will be timed and not allowed to exceed their allotted time.

Once all the candidates have been heard, Council will proceed to a vote.

This vote will be publicly held.

The Councillors will mark their votes on a ballot as well as verbally register their vote.

If a candidate receives more than half the total number of votes available, they will be recognized as the winning candidate. However, should no candidate receive more than that number, then the candidate with the lowest number of votes will be eliminated and the voting will continue in this manner until the candidate with the most votes does have a total of more than half the votes available.

In the case of a three way tie vote, the Clerk will, by lot, eliminate one candidate and the remaining two will face another vote. In the event of two candidate ending up in a tie vote, the Clerk will again eliminate one by lot. The final winning candidate will be announced, by the Clerk and his or her appointment confirmed by a By-law, by the Council.

The new Councillor will be administered the Oath of Office, at the next regular Council meeting, on October 14, 2017 and will hold the seat until the end of the current term, that being, November 30, 2018.

On another note, it was brought up by Mayor Bennington that due to his 20 years of service to the community as a Councillor perhaps it would be appropriate to honour that commitment by renaming the Fire Hall to the Thomas Egan Fire Station.

As Tom sat on the Fire Board, for perhaps, his entire career, as a Councillor, it seemed an appropriate tribute.

This or other suggestions will be discussed at a future Council meeting.