



Office of the Mayor

Monday, October 12, 2026

Yesterday, shocking revelations were revealed by the Cobourg Police Service Board. The press release is linked below;

<https://cobourgpolicesservice.com/2026/10/11/cobourg-police-service-board-reaffirms-commitment-to-financial-accountability-and-transparency/>

It was made public by the Board on a holiday, when most people in Cobourg were sitting down for Thanksgiving dinner.

What is contained in this press release is both concerning and dismaying. I wish I could say I am personally shocked, but the public record will show **I have always believed financial malfeasance was possibly taking place, specifically in regard to the CPS Budget.** I have tried to bring this to the public on multiple occasions, right up to the special Council meeting I have called for tomorrow to address these issues once again.

I fully believe that my recent motion, as part of the special meeting I called to address these very important financial issues while seeking even a modicum of transparency from Deputy Mayor Beatty and Councillor and CPS Board Chair Adam Bureau, is the sole reason for the timing of this damning press release.

These individuals, as Council representatives, have been our Town's representatives on that Board for four years. I will highlight some deeply concerning words directly from the release:

"In response to ongoing financial concerns, the Board initiated a detailed budget review conducted by the Financial Manager to gain a clearer understanding of the Service's financial position.

Within hours of the Board reviewing the final report, it was forwarded to the Inspectorate of Policing. The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) was also consulted.

The report was also shared with the Town of Cobourg Treasurer, who was asked to complete a comprehensive peer review."

I, as Mayor, had no knowledge of this. Only Deputy Mayor Beatty and Councillor Bureau would have been aware of this information. The Board is saying these actions are supported by documentation, What documentation?

Continuing, Councillor Adam Bureau, as Cobourg Police Board Chair, states: *"We have faced difficult decisions, asked tough questions, and taken steps to ensure that these financial concerns are properly examined"*. Not once, in any manner, have these concerns been raised with Cobourg Council.



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In fact, both Adam Bureau and Nicole Beatty refused to second my motion regarding the CPS budget that would have led to this information being made public at the Council meeting back in August. Bureau then states, "*We recognize that there are serious issues to address*".

These "issues" should never have been kept secret from either Cobourg Council or the taxpaying public that fund the Cobourg Police. Continuing, Bureau says, "*Accountability is not about pointing fingers or assigning blame before all the facts are known.*" There is obviously enough concern for the OPP and the Inspectorate of Policing to be involved. Hiding behind a dithering of word soup is not acceptable when it is clearly very serious.

Both Deputy Mayor Beatty and Councillor Bureau have an obligation to Council and to Cobourg taxpayers. They have known, as has the entirety of the Board along with the new Chief, that I have been looking for the facts and truth regarding the CPS Budget and accounting for quite some time. My efforts to bring serious financial improprieties to light, across all public finances, are on public record, both as Chair of the County Finance Committee and as Mayor of Cobourg.

When I just recently succeeded in having confidential closed-session reports on major issues with the Town of Cobourg's finances released to the public, it was Deputy Mayor Nicole Beatty who immediately moved to amend my motion by removing a key section. That amendment would have prevented any outside scrutiny, legal or otherwise, from reporting back on the Town's finances. It did not receive a seconder.

The attempt to throw all blame on the previous Administration is ridiculous. Both Nicole Beatty and Adam Bureau have been on the Police Board for the last four years as council representatives. They were responsible for providing than three years of oversight and guidance to the previous administration.

I want to commend Chief Leather, the actual person responsible for reporting this issue to the appropriate agencies. As Mayor, I thank him for his depth of character and personal integrity. With more than three decades in policing, his actions clearly display significant concern.

This is why I have called a special meeting of Council to vote on four important motions:

1. Release the closed-door financial records from the last term of Council.



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2. Get straight answers in writing to the questions staff's October 8 report, immediately, with firm dates for the overdue audits and FIR filings.
3. Let the CAO speak for herself, if she chooses to, about what she knew and who she told, so that all can know the truth.
4. Tell the community what has happened to police finances over the past four years.

The CPS Board asked for a 20.5% increase for 2026, after more than \$2.5 million had already been applied to bring it down that far. In August, Council fully rejected any opportunity to even speak about a possible review. **Now we have heard the Board has done one but behind closed doors.**

Over the past four years, the Cobourg Police Services Board has used more than **\$9 million dollars in Business Centre profits**, generated with Cobourg tax dollars, to fund basic police operations. That was never what those profits were meant for. A Memorandum of Understanding was finally passed in 2025 to end this poor financial practice, yet in 2026 the Board drew even more than it did in 2025, despite the MOU with the Town.

Relying on this money has allowed members of the Board to avoid the hard, necessary and timely decisions required and has artificially inflated the Boards financial position. It also pushed the large tax increase into the election year further risking the future financial viability of the Cobourg Police Services. The Service is now more than \$1.5 million over budget this year and heading toward a \$2 million overrun.

I can assure the citizens of Cobourg that, should any inappropriate actions that have been taken by any previous terms of Council come to light if and when this Council finally releases all closed sessions of the previous term of Council, they will be brought forth for appropriate public scrutiny, with any and all consequences resulting.

From the press release, and the most important point of all to remember, "*That the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) were engaged to conduct a review in light of the **seriousness** of the issues identified within the report.*" This speaks of the extraordinary circumstances we find ourselves. As a police officer who means a great deal to me said when I was young and making excuses, "... being **forced** to do the right thing, isn't being moral or virtuous, its only showing the world that you didn't **choose** to do the right thing when you should have."

Lucas Cleveland
Mayor of Cobourg