



Office of the Mayor

October 14, 2026

In yesterday's Special Council meeting, I was accused, in a coordinated, pre-planned attack by Deputy Mayor Nicole Beatty and Councillors Bureau and Darling, of "bullying and interrogating" Town of Cobourg CAO Tracey Vaughan. This is, of course, patently false.

To be clear, as part of the video record and public record, I asked CAO Vaughan the following questions:

- Was every recommendation you made to the last term of Council followed the way it was during this term?
- At what time did you become concerned with the financial health of the Corporation?
- As I'm trying to understand this, because this all happened before I was elected Mayor, were the recommendations you made (to the last term of Council) all in public, or did you make some recommendations in closed meetings? I understand that you cannot speak about those recommendations.
- Were the recommendations made in closed session followed by the last term of Council?
- Since this Council, these seven members, found out about the issues, do you believe we have taken the appropriate steps to prevent what has already happened from ever happening again, to the best of our ability?
- In the last two years (since I, as Mayor, found out about the issues), is there anything that you have recommended (financially) to this Council to do or fix that we have yet to do?
- What kind of specialist did you hire, and maybe tell us why you hired that specialist?
- When you say understaffed, I'm going to ask for clarification: understaffed, or did we have a wholesale department change, like the one that recently occurred at the Cobourg Police executive team level?
- Not knowing what the recommendations you made to the previous term of Council in closed session were, and you not being allowed to speak about those recommendations, perhaps you can answer this question: had the recommendations that you made in closed session to the previous term of Council been followed, would we all be in the same situation today, or would we have had a two-year head start?



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Ms. Vaughan was interrupted from answering the final questions first by Deputy Mayor Beatty, who raised a point of order, which was then overruled. Immediately after, Councillor Bureau then immediately raised another point of order, and before I could understand or rule on the new point of order, Councillor Darling then “called for the vote,” procedurally ending all questions and preventing CAO Vaughan from answering any questions about the previous term of Council’s decisions, their lack of decisions and what impact not taking action may have had on the Town’s current financial health and issues.

At no point was my tone or tenor attacking, bullying or, more ridiculously, interrogating.

Ms. Vaughan, after reading an approximately 17-minute verbal report, said she was “happy to answer any questions,” and then reaffirmed her willingness to answer questions immediately after the Deputy Mayor’s baseless accusation.

Our CAO is a senior bureaucrat at the top of her profession. She was fully aware of my interest and questions around what members of the previous term of Council knew, what they did or did not do with those recommendations, and what they did not act upon regarding recommendations from Tracey prior.

Despite the theatrics based on pre-planned collusion, it was clear that four members of Council are determined that this critically important information from the last term of Council never becomes public.

I welcome outside human resources or legal expertise to evaluate and scrutinize whether my approximately seven minutes of questions constitutes an interrogation.

Lucas Cleveland
Mayor of Cobourg