

Borough gets letter from Minister of Municipal Affairs

Some expenses by borough mayor and council questioned by ministry

By Kevin Woodhouse
The Suburban

The borough of Pierrefonds-Roxboro's council and mayor received a letter from Laurent Lessard's office, the Minister of Municipal Affairs dated March 14 noting that a complaint has been lodged against the borough for certain expenses.

The letter notes that due to complaints from some citizens, the ministry had some recommendations for the borough that included having councillor Bert Ward cover his own cellular phone bills when he is out of the country. While he continues his duties as councilor when he is away from the borough, the letter suggested that it was not up to the citizens to foot the bill.

There was also a mention of using

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funds for dinner for elected officials during meetings, refunds are not permitted if "not all the elected officials took part."

Another complaint lodged against the borough was costs accrued in the function of the borough with their "twin" city of Richmond, British Columbia. No wrongdoing had been recorded according to the ministry pertaining to Mayor Monique Worth's visit as well as reception held for delegates.

Lessard's office suggested that the borough adhere to the correct procedures and that the letter is to be read aloud to the citizenry at the

borough's next council meeting taking place on Monday, April 4 as well as posting it publicly as a notice.

The Suburban spoke to Mayor Worth about the letter. "We did receive a complaint from a resident about some of our expenses," Worth said. "There was an incident where flowers were sent to a citizen but it was a few years ago."

Worth, who has been in public service for the last 21 years, is also a member of the Montreal Executive Committee dealing with sports and recreation. She works three full days a week in the borough offices and then works about 60 hours a week for her other duties. "I want to reassure the population that we would never spend taxpayers'

money for our own personal interests. I have been in public service for many years and my commitment to the citizens has never been doubted."

Worth said that the expenses that were questioned by the ministry following a complaint were "all done in good faith."

The borough mayor also noted that councillors and mayors do have expense accounts for some expenditures.

Worth found the original complaints to "be a mystery" until she discovered that the complaints came from a political opponent that had run unsuccessfully three times against her in previous municipal elections. ■