

**Request for Inquiry Application**

This complaint and request for inquiry by the Integrity Commissioner is based on the Applicants' allegation of violations of Tay Valley Township's Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards, by Deputy Reeve Fred Dobbie, involving Section 7.0 General Conduct (Subsections 7.1 and 7.2), and Section 8.0 Conduct at Meetings.

This submission and request for inquiry is in regard to an incident which took place on August 12, 2025 at the COW meeting in the Council Chambers at the Tay Valley Township offices. The incident in question immediately followed the Agenda Item PRIORITY ISSUES 6(i) Report #CAO-2025-25 — Livestreaming and Council Chambers Audio/Visual System.

The persons involved in this incident were as follows...

**Deputy Reeve Fred Dobbie** ([fdobbie.deputyreeve@tayvalleytwp.ca](mailto:fdobbie.deputyreeve@tayvalleytwp.ca))

**Catherine Anderson** (applicant)

**Thomas Ellis** (applicant)

**Frank Sammut** (applicant).

Applicants' contact information is found on Page 1 of this submission form.

Witnesses to this incident are as follows...

**Witnesses—**

**Paula Champagne**

[paulakchampagne@gmail.com](mailto:paulakchampagne@gmail.com)

613-296-0854

**Mike Champagne**

[mike.c.champagne@gmail.com](mailto:mike.c.champagne@gmail.com)

613-297-1908

**Also Present at the COW Meeting—**

**Reeve Rob Rainer**

[rrainer.reeve@tayvalleytwp.ca](mailto:rrainer.reeve@tayvalleytwp.ca)

**Councillor Keith Kerr**

[kkerr.councillor@tayvalleytwp.ca](mailto:kkerr.councillor@tayvalleytwp.ca)

**Councillor Angela Pierman**

[apierman.councillor@tayvalleytwp.ca](mailto:apierman.councillor@tayvalleytwp.ca)

**Councillor Korrine Jordan**

[kjordan.councillor@tayvalleytwp.ca](mailto:kjordan.councillor@tayvalleytwp.ca)

**Councillor Marilyn Thomas**

[mthomas.councillor@tayvalleytwp.ca](mailto:mthomas.councillor@tayvalleytwp.ca)

**Councillor Greg Hallam**

[ghallam.councillor@tayvalleytwp.ca](mailto:ghallam.councillor@tayvalleytwp.ca)

**TVT CAO/Clerk Amanda Mabo**

[cao@tayvalleytwp.ca](mailto:cao@tayvalleytwp.ca)

**TVT Planner Noelle Reeve**

[planner@tayvalleytwp.ca](mailto:planner@tayvalleytwp.ca)

**TVT Assistant Clerk Aaron Watt**

[deputyclerk@tayvalleytwp.ca](mailto:deputyclerk@tayvalleytwp.ca)

**TVT Treasurer Ashley Lisnick**

[treasurer@tayvalleytwp.ca](mailto:treasurer@tayvalleytwp.ca)

**Summary of Facts as submitted by Applicants—**

It should be noted that the three Applicants in this matter were attending the August 12th COW meeting to follow the deliberations concerning livestreaming of TVT Council, COW and Public meetings, as voted in favour of by all Members of TVT Council on March 25, 2025, with the exception of Deputy Reeve Dobbie. Our concern was that the Agenda published for the August 12th meeting indicated that the CAO would be presenting a report to Council that reintroduced the option of maintaining the status quo (no livestreaming) for consideration. This concerned us, so we decided to attend in person to monitor the proceedings. We sat silently and respectfully in the gallery throughout.

To begin, please note that the Applicants did not request an explanation from Deputy Reeve Dobbie concerning his dissenting vote on the issue of livestreaming, neither at nor at any time following the March 25th Council meeting at which the vote was held. So his decision to step out of order in his role as Chair of the August 12th meeting to deliver such an explanation was very surprising to us. His remarks began at the conclusion of the Agenda Item concerning livestreaming. It appeared that Council was moving on to the next Agenda item, so we were preparing to leave. Just as we were about to stand, Deputy Reeve Dobbie started to speak about the Council Meeting on March 25th. He took out his phone and began by quoting from the motion about livestreaming that had been made at that meeting. It was immediately clear to us that he was directing his remarks to us since he was looking directly at us, so we settled back into our seats. He explained his decision to vote against livestreaming as being rooted in his concern for the Township's budget. He stated that he was a longtime resident of Tay Valley Township who had fought long and hard for budgetary responsibility and that was the reason he had voted as he did. We remember nodding along as he delivered his explanation, but surprised that he was doing so. However, at that point, Deputy Reeve Dobbie's demeanour and the tone of his remarks shifted. He proceeded to say that he is 'scared' about what the process of setting the budget will look like this year and moving forward, especially with the introduction of Strong Mayor Powers. He then veered off into comments about rising property values and anticipated MPAC reassessments, seeming to become increasingly agitated both visibly and vocally. He stared at us steadily, and gesticulated towards us with his index finger pointing in our direction. With an elevated voice and tone, he said 'You people living on lakes had better be prepared for big increases in your MPAC assessments'. He further stated, 'You'd better be sitting down when you open those envelopes', and he warned us, 'Don't come crying to me when your taxes go up!' At that point, Dr. Sammut rose to leave, but before leaving, he

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politely asked for an opportunity to respond. He was abruptly and loudly denied by the CAO, and perhaps by others in the room. The three of us quietly left.

(Note: words and phrases highlighted by single quotes represent our best recollection of Deputy Reeve Dobbie's words)

### **Applicants' Response to the Incident—**

Deputy Reeve Dobbie's remarks were absolutely unprovoked and unwarranted, and highly inappropriate. The fact that he referred to Township residents residing on lakefront properties in a derogatory way by using the phrase 'You people' was insulting. He appeared to be blaming us for something that we are not at all clear about. As an elected representative of the residents of Tay Valley Township, the fact that he warned us not to 'come crying to him' if our taxes increase was experienced by us as rude, abrasive and disrespectful. He appeared agitated and angry, and his words were shocking to us. We felt targeted. Perhaps even more inappropriate than Deputy Reeve Dobbie's words were his actions. His jabbing finger pointing in our direction as he spoke was experienced as intimidating and insulting. His gaze was experienced to be intense and unwavering, and he made us feel very uncomfortable. Deputy Reeve Dobbie's behavioural choices that evening were in direct opposition to what we have every right to expect from our elected representatives on Council.

Deputy Reeve Dobbie did not conduct himself with decorum and professionalism, neither in his position as Deputy Reeve, and in particular not in his role as Chair of the Meeting. Our view is that he abused the position of Chair by failing to respect the Rules of Order. He took advantage of his position of Chair to make unsolicited personal and contentious remarks when he should have been moving on to the next agenda item. Even more-so, our view is that he abused the power of the Chair by inappropriately and deliberately singling out and disrespectfully addressing members of the public in the gallery, who were left without an opportunity to respond. He treated the Applicants in a disrespectful, insulting and bullying manner. Our experience leaves us questioning the wisdom of attending future TVT Council meetings, with concerns about what protection those in the gallery have from being targeted in such a way, particularly by a meeting Chair who is in control of the meeting.

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As the attached correspondence illustrates, we have asked Deputy Reeve Dobbie for an acknowledgement of the inappropriateness of his actions, and for an apology. That has not been forthcoming from him. In fact, he has initiated no direct communication with any of us. We asked Reeve Rainer if Deputy Reeve Dobbie was being sanctioned as a result of what transpired, and he initially indicated that he saw no reason for the Deputy Reeve to apologize or to be sanctioned. He stated that the Deputy Reeve's remarks "were impromptu and, to some extent, off topic. While they are subject to variance in interpretation, they were nonetheless of a general nature and they were not directed to any specific person(s) in particular. They also were not or meant to be derogatory, although we appreciate those in the gallery might have received them that way." We strongly disagree with that characterization of what happened that evening. Reeve Rainer later appeared to reverse his position about an apology, when he relayed to us a statement of regret, purportedly written by Deputy Reeve Dobbie, but on which he was not even copied in the Reeve's email to us. This attempt at an intermediary apology was experienced by us to be inadequate and disingenuous. It serves to risk eroding our trust, and it does not provide an avenue for resolution. We have requested a public verbal apology from Deputy Reeve Dobbie at the next Council meeting on August 26<sup>th</sup>, or at the next scheduled Council Meeting following the resolution of this inquiry. We were publicly rebuked by him and feel it only appropriate that he publicly apologize to us, to be reflected in the Minutes of that meeting. This will also reinforce that Council is committed to upholding the Township's Code of Conduct. We are further requesting a written apology from Deputy Reeve Dobbie, coming directly from his own email, so that we can be assured that the words are genuine and heartfelt. That is especially important for those who may be unable to attend the Council Meeting at which the Deputy Reeve issues a verbal apology.

We respectfully request that the Integrity Commissioner recommend the issuance of both a public and a written apology directly from Deputy Reeve Dobbie to those people in the gallery at the August 12th COW meeting of TVT Council, along with any additional sanctions that are deemed suitable.

Respectfully submitted by...

Catherine Anderson

Thomas Ellis

Frank Sammut