

# MONO MULMUR CITIZENS' COALITION

SEPT. 16, 2018

## QUESTIONS FOR COUNCIL CANDIDATES

### Response of Ralph Manktelow

1. Why are you running for office? What vision for our community drives your participation in municipal politics? What do you think you can contribute to our municipality.

I am running for office to protect our natural spaces and to maintaining the quality of life for our residents. I recognize that the Mono hills and valleys with their fields, forests, and streams are very special.

My vision is to preserve and protect our natural spaces for our children and their children. These natural spaces should be our legacy. I am passionate about protecting them.

Maintaining our quality of life does cost tax dollars. I want to ensure that our Mono budget expenses are maximized for the most effective use of these tax dollars. With my fiscal experience and my four previous years on Council, I can be an effective watchdog of our budget process.

2. Do you subscribe to the theory that increased residential development will reduce the tax burden on residents, and if so what would you do to encourage such development in our community? What about other types of development: industrial, commercial, etc.?

I believe that the tax benefits of residential development will come with an equal burden of costs - i.e. new residential development will be not decreasing our tax burden. It is interesting that our tax rate is the lowest in all of Dufferin County and we do not have a large commercial or residential base. Lets keep it that way!

3. What would be your approach to maintaining municipal services while keeping taxes stable?

Our tax dollars must be spent effectively. As we did for the last four years, we must annually go over the budget line by line and ensure that we are getting good value for each dollar. In addition, we must articulate individual goals for every sector of our budget – protection, roads, recreation and governance. We must decide on

what we want to achieve and how we can most effectively spend to achieve these goals.

Our overall goal should be to keep the tax increase to less than the annual increase in the cost of living.

4. Aggregate mining is a major industry in Dufferin County, including in our communities. How would you propose to limit the expansion of aggregate mining?

1) Increase the fee for an aggregate application to an amount that is commiserate with the real application cost to the Town – which is likely well over \$100,000. This will deter significant numbers of applications.

2) Push for a repeal of the Aggregate Resources Act. Municipalities should have the final say on all applications.

5. We live in “Headwaters” communities and ground water is our most important resource. What steps do you feel the council should take to ensure the protection of our water?

Ensure that all activities that have the potential to contaminate our groundwater are carefully monitored and measured - including, industrial activities, fill projects and septic systems. This includes setting up a plan for community wide septic inspections. For these measures we will need a more robust by-law enforcement service, which I would support.

6. What are your plans to manage the ongoing problem of noise pollution in our community?

Council has approved the production of a new Noise bylaw. This is presently being created.

Council should look at it very carefully. The present Noise bylaw is complicated and difficult to enforce. Created in 2004 and containing 86 pages, it has been unnecessarily complicated and hard to enforce. I understand that there have been no charges in the bylaw's 14-year history.

7. The dumping of contaminated landfill is an increasingly serious problem for our area. What will be your approach to addressing the fill dumping issue?

This is a most important issue. Council took a strong position on a fill project that tried to circumvent our fill bylaw by going directly to the Normal Farm Practice Board. We fought this application and won. This strong position will be a deterrent to other applicants. Furthermore, we have recently rewritten the fill

bylaw. It is more nuanced and is readily enforceable. It should be a deterrent to importation of dirty fill.

8. How do you propose to increase citizen engagement and participation in council business? How can the council improve transparency? Will you support continuing with regularly scheduled town hall meetings? Do you support the creation of and full support for effective council committees (e.g.: clear mandates, regular reports to and interaction with council, etc.)? What other forums for transparency and citizen involvement do you foresee?

Two town halls per year per year have been created. The format has been to present a topic of particular interest to the community and hold an open Q & A session. I feel that these have been successful but need some fine-tuning.

We have also much improved our outreach to citizens through social media, email and the newsletter. We now use both Facebook and Twitter. A few years ago we initiated email blasts to citizens, and created "Council In Brief" – a timely focused report on each council session. We have much improved the twice-yearly newsletter. The weakness of all forms of communication except for the newsletter is that they require residents to sign up for the service. Registration has been low. It is hard to gauge the effectiveness of these six different approaches to engage with our residents. Unfortunately, I feel that our Town still has difficulty informing the residents of issues and events in a timely way. We still have to improve the degree of outreach of our communications with our citizens.

However, Citizen engagement is a two way process. Members of Council and Town Staff we need to be available to residents and have a well developed "ear". The Town must give prompt and appropriate responses to citizen's requests for information and assistance. This involves continual effort at maintaining and improving a clear culture of respect for citizens and problem solving of concerns.

The advisory committees of council are critical to the provision of information and direction for council decisions. The committee mandates are clear and periodically reviewed and updated. All recommendations go to council through committee minutes and "Advice to Council". This system works.

9. Our communities have Codes of Conduct that aim to ensure dignity and respect for participants in the municipal government process. What do you feel could be done to improve the current Code of Conduct?

Mono By-Law 2016-08 is a Code of conduct for members of Council. The Code deals with what is proper for a member of council, and among other things, discusses bullying, harassment and proper decorum and respect. During the last four years on Council, I have experienced dignity and respect from all

staff and council members. The conduct of council is not only respectful of persons but appropriately, it is issue focused. I do not see a need for any “improvements”.

10. For Mayor and Deputy Mayor candidates: you will be our representative on County Council. Will your actions on County Council be directed by the instructions of your local council? What will you do when county needs and priorities conflict with your municipality?