



October 7, 2020

### **Statement from Mayor Ken Hewitt & Council**

First, let me congratulate you all on your efforts in working together to keep our community safe and to keep our numbers down. We must remain diligent knowing that many people living in Haldimand work and/or travel outside of the region and in particular into the GTA. As observed in the media, the numbers are much higher in that region.

While we continue to learn and better prepare ourselves for another possible outbreak, we can leave nothing to chance. Our local medical officer Dr. Nesathurai and the public health team continue to work under extreme conditions to provide the general public with expert leadership and those of us around Council with the knowledge required to make the informed decisions that need to be made.

As we move forward, the social pressures will not dissipate and along with that the financial pressures on both Haldimand and Norfolk will grow. It is imperative that we continue to lobby our local MPP and the Province to work with us to help find financial solutions so that the tax base is not subject to these new COVID expectations that come with large costs.

Programs such as the bunkhouse inspections on farms are a direct cost that should not be covered by the general tax levy. All inspections should have a fee that is 100% cost recovery and either the private entity pays for it or the Fed/Prov government can support it inside of a funding envelope. Ultimately the cost will land on the end user but why should people of Haldimand-Norfolk shoulder the burden of these costs? We would not ask any other private business to support another and I will not support it on this occasion.

Thanksgiving is upon us and I have been asked by many what are the clear rules to follow. Enjoy your family dinner with your immediate family whom you have established your circle with. I would advise that if you have family from outside of the community and are either travelling to or from, that you apply some commonsense to your plans. The weather is looking to be positive so being outside may be the best plans for the day.

### **CALEDONIA PROTEST**

As we approach the court date scheduled on Oct 9th regarding the injunctions from Haldimand County and Foxgate Developments, I am encouraged by the information and affidavits being presented to protect the interests of both Haldimand and Foxgate. I am confident that the Judge will uphold the



injunctions permanently and further, that those involved will ultimately be arrested and face the appropriate charges.

While the OPP continue to follow the policy that deals with critical incidents with indigenous peoples, we see the very flawed results that follow said policy as per the comments stated by Justice Sydney Linden: “the policy raises important political, financial and operational questions about the sustainability of this approach, whether it is a best practice or not. The framework should be subject to independent, third-party evaluation noting that the reaction Ontarians to the policing at Caledonia demonstrate the need for transparent and publicly accessible policies and with explanations for police decision-making.”

This has not happened to date.

We do not agree with many of the steps the OPP have taken to date but we fully expect that the OPP will continue to charge those that attend the site in contravention of the injunction. Regardless of who you are, local or not, musician or politician, you are breaking the court order which is law. Like it or not, no one gets to choose which court orders are to be followed or not. We expect over time that each and every one of those individuals named or to be named will be arrested. Everyone charged will have their day in court.

We have seen many peaceful protests in Ottawa. We have seen many peaceful parades across the country. What is not peaceful is what is happening here in Caledonia.

It is not a peaceful protest when the threat of violence exists behind all decisions or direction the OPP make. When roads are closed because the OPP are doing their job and enforcing arrests, it is not peaceful. When someone uses their car as weapon to hurt an officer trying to arrest them, forcing him to protect himself, is not peaceful. Destroying a police vehicle with rocks and debris is not peaceful. Today a CBC report speaks to the failures of our past Federal governments and while I do agree with much of the content there are some specific points that many people do not understand. The current issue is not the Feds, it is not the Province, it is not the Municipality.

The real issue is that Six Nations has not been able to identify a framework that the broader community can get behind and support. Everyone keeps saying that the Feds need to get to the table. Well who would that be with? If you ask members on Six Nations that question, you would get several different answers. So how can anything move forward without that first to be resolved.

Until that occurs, a meaningful dialogue on settling a dispute, not a land claim, but a dispute between our Nations can only happen. Standing in defiance of the Court order only causes more anger in the communities. Knowing that the only solution between our Nations is one of financial reward and not third party property such as McKenzie Meadows, preventing this development from moving forward only fosters more animosity and does not serve the greater good of Six Nations nor Haldimand.



If there is truly a desire to see the Feds back at a table this is not the process that will bring that success. Over the years we have had good working relationships with the Elected Council and we have tremendous respect for the work they do. That does not diminish the Confederacy, or to suggest one over the other. I know I speak for many that, once advised and supported from Six Nations, we would welcome moving forward with whichever framework that they chose for representation.

I have been asked by some to denounce our position on this illegal protest. I will not do so as I have a duty to represent the interests of Haldimand County and Council, the interests of the developers, and the interests of the new home buyers. I fully understand that does not capture everyone's interests and I fully accept that; as I speak for Council and stand behind its decisions.

Stay Safe,

Mayor Ken Hewitt