

## OPINION LETTERS

### Letters to the editor, Nov. 15, 2017

Wednesday, November 15, 2017 7:57:39 EST AM



#### **Council doesn't seem to want to hear from us**

Re: Are Cobourg taxpayers really apathetic, Nov. 9

Ken Strauss is on the right track, suggesting that council appears uninterested in conversing with taxpayers.

The problem however isn't just these particular politicians. The system within which they operate was designed to restrict taxpayer participation.

Representative democracy is only democratic insofar as it allows us to vote for our next oppressor. Then the doors to the castle are slammed shut, the bridges drawn, and we're back out in the cold.

At least, that's how it used to be when votes still counted for something (admittedly not much). Today, with Cobourg being one of the few municipalities in Canada to hold elections entirely electronically, there isn't even a semblance of a real election taking place.

Casting votes securely and accurately, storing votes securely, tabulating and publishing them accurately is all done electronically by a private firm with proprietary software, safe from the prying eyes of the public. No more paper trails to audit. No more recounts. Just the word of a private corporation.

It's no wonder council feel invincible. Immune from taxpayer input on all but the most trivial levels, with e-voting they have now dispensed with elections altogether.

The divine right of council indeed.

*Michael Hoepfner, Cobourg*

**Stronger front needed to stand up for our rights**

Re: Are Cobourg taxpayers really apathetic, Nov. 9

I believe Mr. Strauss has it right - that many Cobourg residents are apathetic - in this case with regard to issues with our council. What is needed is a strong front to stand up for our rights.

Mayor Brocanier not only refuses to allow citizens to have a voice, does not answer e-mails and apparently was rude to a woman wishing to discuss her concerns. This is inexcusable!

Cobourg citizens pay their taxes, elect their council and pay their salaries! I believe this

entitles them to have a voice in town affairs.

I think Mr. Strauss has the answer - in the next election we should make sure we vote for people who are open to giving us an audience with regard to this town's future.

*Marie Cooper, Cobourg*

---