

## “This Is Unheard Of”

### Competitors stand together to force answers from City Hall

by: Jennifer Layman  
Jenn@ovbusiness.com

Three construction companies, RGT Clouthier Construction, H and H Construction and Do-All Construction, want to know why a \$630,000 project was not put to tender by the City of Pembroke. They have asked the City for an explanation, but they haven't received one, forcing them to go through the lengthy process of filing a request through the Freedom of Information Act. By the time they get an answer, the \$630,000 will have been spent and the project will have been completed. So why bother?

The answer might surprise you.

#### The Background

In 2009, the City of Pembroke applied for and received funding through Building Canada, a fund where the federal, provincial and municipal governments each pay one-third of a project



cost. The City's application included two projects with a total cost of just over \$3 million. The City received two-thirds of that cost in grant money from the fund: the City would contribute just over \$1 million to the projects and the remaining \$2 million would be paid by the other government partners. One of the projects was the reconstruction of Alexander Street.

The City put out the tender for the reconstruction of Alexander Street in July or August 2010. The complete tender documents were over 100 pages in length, specifying every action to be

taken, the material to be used and the rules by which the successful bidder must abide. RGT Clouthier Construction, H and H Construction, Do-All Construction and Eastway Contracting all submitted bids.

When the tender closed on August 17, 2010, the winning bidder was Eastway at \$939,958. Having been unsuccessful, RGT Clouthier, H and H and Do-All never gave the project a second thought. That's the thing with tenders: you win some and you lose some.

In November 2010, Alexander Street re-opened for public use, having been closed

for the reconstruction.

#### When Things Changed

In early 2011, discussion was had about changing the entrance to the new Algonquin College campus from Alexander Street to Frank Nighbor Street. The College recommended the entrance be moved, and was seeking approval from CP rail for level crossing. An article in The Daily Observer quoted Doug Sitland, the City's Operations Manager, as estimating the project to be about \$1 million. RGT Clouthier, H and H and Do-All were looking forward to bidding on the new project.

They would never get the chance.

On August 11, 2011, the Observer reported that Council had “approved the tender for the project...which would engage Eastway Contracting for \$630,187.80 plus HST.”

But there never was a tender. Eastway Contracting was simply given the job.

*Continued on Page 4*



Fall 2011 Edition

# 101 Things to do in the Valley

# \$25

plus HST

30-40 words plus  
website, email/phone

**Details on Page 5**

Publishing: September 7  
Deadline: September 2

## Ottawa Valley BUSINESS

Ottawa Valley Business (OVB) is a monthly publication covering business news and events throughout Renfrew, Lanark and Pontiac counties, as well as within the surrounding areas. OVB is published by Forward Thinking.

### WHO READS US:

OVB is delivered twice a month via email to more than 3,000 businesses, government and organizations.

### HOW TO SUBSCRIBE:

To receive OVB by email each month, contact us at: [admin@ovbusiness.com](mailto:admin@ovbusiness.com). There is no charge to receive the publication.

### ADVERTISING

Various advertising options are available in OVB. Volume discounts and discounts to members of the Chamber of Commerce are available. Please inquire about advertising opportunities.

### CONTENT & SUBMISSIONS:

News, article suggestions and letters to the editor are welcomed and encouraged. Content will be edited to fit the space available. We welcome press releases and news from our local business community to be published free of charge. There is also no charge for posting business events on the events calendar.

### CONTACT US:

Ottawa Valley Business is part of the Forward Thinking Marketing Group. You can contact us as follows:

Publisher: Jennifer Layman  
E: [admin@ovbusiness.com](mailto:admin@ovbusiness.com)  
P: 613-732-7774

### Mailing Address:

Forward Thinking  
2113 Petawawa Boulevard,  
Pembroke, Ontario K8A 7G8

You can also find us on Facebook.

# What Affects Employees, Affects Their Employers

## Local agency can offer help to businesses

Ontario is the first province to extend workplace violence protections to domestic violence. This is largely a response to the November 2005 murder of nurse Lori DuPont by her ex-boyfriend, a doctor at the hospital where she worked. Senior hospital administrators knew about the ex-boyfriend's unstable behaviour and that he had threatened DuPont. But on the day she was murdered, the nurse and doctor were scheduled to work together.

Violence in the workplace decreases productivity and increases health care costs and absenteeism. It interferes with an individual's capacity to accurately, safely and securely perform their duties at work. It has an adverse and disruptive

effect on employee morale, and affects the financial strength and success of a company as a whole.

### Did You Know...

- \* 54% of domestic violence victims miss three or more days of work a month.
- \* In Canada, almost 20% of all incidents of violent victimization, including physical assaults, sexual assault and robbery, occurred while the victim was at work.
- \* Less than 50% of Canadian workplaces have policies to manage this risk.

Bernadette McCann House can offer support to businesses in addressing the issue of domestic violence, and how it affects the workplace. We are available to:

1) Present an education

workshop for management and human resources on the issue of domestic violence and how it affects the workplace.

2) Provide program consultation to your staff.  
3) Provide educational materials and pamphlets.  
4) Assist your management to address this workplace issue and develop a support network for your staff.

If you are interested in having an information session regarding this issue, or would like more information, please contact the Public Education Coordinator at 613-732-7776.

*This article was submitted by the Bernadette McCann House for Women Inc.*

Would you use  
passenger service  
for business?  
We want to hear  
from you!



When you can fly, everything is possible.

The Pembroke & Area Airport invites you to complete a short survey on passenger air service. Please visit [www.ovbusiness.com](http://www.ovbusiness.com) and click on the link at the top of the page, or ask us for the link, or a PDF copy of the survey and we will send it to you.

### What About Personal Use?

If you would use passenger service for personal use, please email us at: [info@flycyta.ca](mailto:info@flycyta.ca) and let us know so we can record your interest.

For information on the survey or questions, or any additional inquiries about air travel or the airport, contact us at: [info@flycyta.ca](mailto:info@flycyta.ca) or 613-687-5300.

what you'll find

OnLine

ovbusiness.com

Visit [www.ovbusiness.com](http://www.ovbusiness.com) for further details on the following information:

#### TENDERS

Building Condition Assessment

---

Design & Contract Administration Services

---

Various Requests for Proposal from the County of Renfrew

---

Roofing, Lighting and Heating Work

---

Winter Sand

*Tenders are free to post for all municipalities. Send it to: [admin@ovbusiness.com](mailto:admin@ovbusiness.com)*

#### BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Promote your business in our business directory for one year for only \$99 plus HST. Directory listings average around 1,400 views a year.

#### COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

List your commercial items online or within OVB.

#### ADS AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE

Ask us about promoting your business online at [www.ovbusiness.com](http://www.ovbusiness.com). Multiple options available.

#### UPCOMING PUBLICATION

101 Things to do in the Valley: Fall 2011 Edition is now accepting listings. The first 101 listings make the publication. \$25 plus HST.



## events calendar

#### September 3-4

Heritage-Fest at Madonna House Pioneer Museum and St. Raphael's Handicraft Center. Wool carding, butter churning, spinning, weaving, candlemaking, pottery, homemade ice cream and more! 1pm-4pm. Gift Shops and Bookshop will be open. 2887 Dafoe Road, Highway 517 in Combermere. For more information: 613-756-3713.

#### September 7

101 Things to do in the Valley Fall 2011 Edition publishes. The first 101 listings are printed. Cost is \$25 plus HST. For info: 613-732-7774 or [admin@ovbusiness.com](mailto:admin@ovbusiness.com).

#### September 10-11

Rural Ramble. Adventure and Exploration theme. Free to attend. Call 800-757-6580 or [www.facebook.com/ruralramble](http://www.facebook.com/ruralramble)

#### September 15

Payroll Information Seminar for New Employers. Canada Revenue Agency will review payroll requirements for

deducting, remitting, and reporting amounts for the CPP, EI and income tax. 9:30am - 12:00pm. Free. Lanark-North Leeds Enterprise Centre. Phone: 613-283-7002 ext. 108 or [cjames@LNLEC.ca](mailto:cjames@LNLEC.ca)

#### September 16-18

Fall Showcase in Petawawa. Registering exhibitors now. Email Doug Stoneman at: [stonemaninpetawawa@live.ca](mailto:stonemaninpetawawa@live.ca)

#### September 17-18

Rural Ramble. Agriculture and Food theme. Free to attend. For info, call 800-757-6580 or [www.facebook.com/ruralramble](http://www.facebook.com/ruralramble)

#### September 24-25

Rural Ramble. History and Heritage theme. Free to attend. For info, call 800-757-6580 or [www.facebook.com/ruralramble](http://www.facebook.com/ruralramble)

#### October 1-2

Rural Ramble. Arts & Culture theme. Free to attend. For info, call 800-757-6580 or [www.facebook.com/ruralramble](http://www.facebook.com/ruralramble)

#### October 17

Bank of Canada presentation on the new Canadian currency to be released in the Fall of 2011. Part of the Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce Small Business Week events. 6:00pm. Hosted by the Algonquin East Branch in Barry's Bay. Location and costs forthcoming. For info: 613-732-1492 or [manager@uovchamber.com](mailto:manager@uovchamber.com).

#### October 18

Bank of Canada presentation on the new Canadian currency to be released in the Fall of 2011. Part of the Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce Small Business Week events. 7:30am.

Location to be in the Pembroke/Petawawa area. \$8 for Members and \$15 guests. For info: 613-732-1492 or [manager@uovchamber.com](mailto:manager@uovchamber.com).

#### October 21

Upper Ottawa Valley Chamber of Commerce Small Business Week Tradeshow. Best Western Pembroke Inn. 10:00am-3:00pm. Members of the Chamber exhibit for free! For details, or to join the Chamber: 613-732-1492 or [manager@uovchamber.com](mailto:manager@uovchamber.com).

#### A Note About Submissions to the Events Calendar:

Submissions to the Events Calendar are free and are geared towards business events. You are welcome to submit non-business events to this calendar, but they will be edited if space does not permit room for them to be published. For \$25, you are welcome to submit business and non-business events to 101 Things to do in the Valley, published three times each year.

## October 9-15, 2011 is Fire Prevention Week.

We offer morning or afternoon fire extinguisher training courses for your employees. Certificates included. Enjoy a safe work environment. Book with us today

**Layman**  
**FIRE AND SAFETY**

[joel@laymanfireandsafety.com](mailto:joel@laymanfireandsafety.com)

Ph: 613-687-2896 | Mobile: 613-732-5320

# Contractors and The City (continued)

## Continued From Page 1

Almost immediately, RGT Clouthier, H and H and Do-All met with Mayor Ed Jacyno and CAO Terry Lapierre, wanting to know how this had happened. They left that meeting feeling as though they never received an answer. That led them to file a Freedom of Information request to obtain any documents from the City that might help explain that decision.

### The Position of the City

While requests have been made to obtain the City's position, Ottawa Valley Business has not been successful in that regard. However, the City did speak previously to The Daily

Observer about the issue and said that they feel the Frank Nighbor Street extension to permit the new entrance of Algonquin College is the same project as the reconstruction of Alexander Street; it's just not part of Alexander Street. "It's the same project, just a different location," CAO Terry Lapierre told the Observer.

The Observer further quotes Lapierre as saying that the original contract for Alexander Street did provide for an entrance to Algonquin College. Lapierre says the change in the location of the entrance was approved by Building Canada and Algonquin College and is supported by their solicitor. As to the Contractors' claims,

Lapierre said "it is unfortunate that these contractors see things another way."

### The Position of the Contractors

The Contractors have three main points in their position.

First, while the City says the entrance to the College was part of the Alexander Street reconstruction tender, it certainly wasn't at Frank Nighbor Street. Tender documents are very specific as to what the work entails, and none of the original documents, they say, contain this Frank Nighbor Street entrance information.

Second, while there are provisions to make changes within the tendering process after it has been awarded, nothing supports a change of this magnitude: over \$630,000 and an increase of over 65% of the original contract.

Finally, the contractors are concerned that the integrity of the tendering process is not being upheld. If the City is able to award contracts of more than \$630,000 at their choosing, they will never be able to ensure they are getting the best value for the taxpayers' dollars.

### Who's Right and Who's Wrong?

It would seem the logical place to start in this situation is with the original tender. Ottawa Valley Business asked the City for a copy of the tender and they were not willing to provide it. RGT Clouthier Construction did provide a copy, and having read it, there is no reference to the entrance to the College via Frank Nighbor Street.

That being said, the City has a Procurement Policy and Procedures Manual that explains how they follow their Procurement Bylaw. Unfortunately, Ottawa Valley Business was not able to get an explanation from the City

on the Bylaw. From our own reading of the bylaw, there is a section called Sole Source Purchases, which allows the City to negotiate a price for work without going to tender. There are only certain situations in which the City can do this. One of these situations is if "work is required at another location and a contractor has already been secured through a tender process, with established unit prices and it is considered to be beneficial and cost effective to extend the unit prices for the work to be completed on a similar job." Sole source purchase is only permitted with written justification to be reviewed by the Purchasing Manager, Department Head and CAO.

If this is the section they are relying upon, the written justification has not been provided by the City. Further, the City would have to prove it was beneficial and cost effective to further extend the work, a challenge for a project that costs \$630,000.

The City says that Building Canada and Algonquin College accepted their decision to use Eastway to build the entrance to the College off Frank Nighbor Street. The problem is that Building Canada and Algonquin College really have no standing in this process.

### Unanswered Questions

The City maintains that the decision to move the College entrance to Frank Nighbor Street does not impact the taxpayers because they are using Building Canada funds, and the College is paying any additional expense. But, the City did not own the land for the Frank Nighbor Street extension at the time of issuing the Alexander Street reconstruction tender.

*Continued on Page 5*

Canada



**Are you a small business owner?  
Are you having difficulty financing  
a business loan from your bank?**

Call us today to discuss how you may qualify for one of our many loan programs with interest rates starting at 0%.

**Speak with Mike Thompson.**



Community Futures  
Development Corporation  
Renfrew County

Phone: 613-735-3951 ext.223 | 888-225-8331  
www.rccfdc.org | 2 International Drive, Pembroke

# Contractors and The City (continued)

## *Continued from Page 4*

The City had to purchase the land after having accepted a tender bid. How much did that land cost and, who paid for it?

The City says their solicitor is in agreement that Council made a proper decision. If that is the case, why would the City not tell the Contractors exactly the reason why their decision is appropriate? If awarding a \$630,000 contract without tendering is supported legally, tell the Contractors why and how. Why is the City forcing the Contractors to pursue a Freedom of Information request to obtain the this information?

### **Why Tendering Matters**

Municipalities operate from the money they collect from their taxpayers. The tendering process is one way to ensure that the municipality is being responsible with taxpayer dollars. It also ensures nobody is above the system - it is fair to all.

The City's own Procurement Policy and Procedures Manual stands on that same principle:

"To promote and maintain the integrity of the purchasing process and protect Council, staff and vendors involved in the process, by providing clear direction and accountabilities." The Contractors, want the same thing.

"The reason we (RGT Clouthier, H and H Construction and Do-All) are so upset is because this is just unheard of," says Dustin Hoffman of H and H Construction. "You have to uphold the integrity of the tendering process; you don't just decide to pick the contractor you want. This is public money, taxpayer money. There is a responsibility how you spend it. We have to make sure this never happens again."

### **The Next Steps**

Hoffman says that when he, Dean Clouthier (RGT Clouthier Construction) and Sherwood Neiman (Do-All Construction) met to discuss this, they talked at length about any kind of backlash they might receive if they pursued the questioning of the

City's decision any further. They were concerned about how they would be portrayed in the media, and whether the College would see them as trouble makers and perhaps not wish to use their services for the new campus. They were also concerned that the media might portray them as just being mad that they were not the winning bidder. But these are three competitors - three companies who bid against each other all the time. For them to take a stance together is pretty rare; and to risk any backlash or public perception of all of their companies, well, it has to be worth something for them to do that.

"We have nothing against the City," says Hoffman, "but we cannot honestly understand why they did this. The City cannot say 100% that they got the best bang for their buck because they don't know that. They didn't get out to tender. The City tenders everything. Why not this?"

It is a question that remains unanswered, and when the

side with the answers isn't talking, it makes you wonder why. Why is the City's position not public knowledge? They clearly believe it is legally supported. Why not tell it? Why force a Freedom of Information request to get an answer?

The Contractors say they will see this through to an answer no matter how long it takes. In the end, they will gain nothing financially from it. The \$630,000 contract will likely be completed by the time the Freedom of Information request yields the answers from City Hall. They are spending their own money to make sure the City spends the taxpayers' money in the best way possible and they will risk whatever backlash comes with it.

You don't see that very often, so maybe we should all take a closer look.

*Note: Ottawa Valley Business will continue to follow this situation, and seek input from all parties to the issue.*



UPPER OTTAWA VALLEY  
*Chamber of Commerce*

**Small Business Week Tradeshow**  
**Friday, October 21 {10am-3pm}**  
**Best Western Pembroke Inn**

Chamber members can exhibit for free.

Purchase your membership today and be an exhibitor.

Reserve tables in advance as there may be a limited number.

For information, contact the Chamber at:

613-732-1492 or [manager@uovchamber.com](mailto:manager@uovchamber.com)

# Business News Around The Valley

## Arnprior Mayor Leads Delegation

Arnprior Mayor David Reid led a delegation on the issue of policing costs for municipalities at the Association of Municipalities

of Ontario conference. The annual conference allows municipalities the opportunity to express their concerns to provincial government. Reid presented a document entitled "Costs of Ontario Provincial

Police Services to Ontario Municipalities" to the Community, Safety & Correctional Services Minister and to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The document notes the increasing

costs of policing (OPP increases of 62% in the past five years) makes sustainable municipal planning impossible. There also seems to be some varying costs paid by different municipalities for the same service and the number of officers needed in certain areas.

## Hockey King Chairs Campaign

Sheldon Keefe, owner and general manager of the Pembroke Lumber Kings has a new title: 2011 United Way honorary campaign chair. Keefe said it was not a difficult decision to decide to assume the post.

## Lawsuit Begins For Quarry

A lawsuit brought by nine residents living near the Braeside quarry is now being heard. The residents are complaining of odours and noise from the quarry operated by The Miller Group. They are represented by Linda McCaffry of Ecojustice.

## NRTC Gives to College

NRTC Communications marked its 100th anniversary with a \$10,000 donation to Algonquin College. The donation is matched by the Ontario Trust for Student Support, established by the province to encourage donations by businesses. The NRTC endowment fund will pay an annual \$800 bursary for students in technology.

## MP Presents Funds

The Killaloe Health Centre received \$16,385 through the Enabling Accessibility Fund Program. The funds are going towards retrofitting existing washroom facilities to enhance accessibility. The application deadline for the Fall small project component of the Enabling Accessibility Fund is September 23rd, 2011. For more information on the Fund contact the MP's office or visit [www.cherylgallant.com](http://www.cherylgallant.com).

*Continued on Page 7*



Fall 2011 Edition

## 101 Things to do in the Valley

Kick off the season with your listing in 101 Things to do in the Valley - Fall 2011 Edition. This popular publication is circulated throughout Renfrew, Lanark and Pontiac Counties, to more than 3,000 subscribers of Ottawa Valley Business. In addition, key businesses, organizations, and municipalities, post this publication on their respective websites.

101 Things to do in the Valley is easy to read, easy to access and easy to forward. People are always looking for ideas of what to do from September to January, so here's a great list!

**\$25**  
plus HST

30-40 word listing plus website, email and phone

Publishing: September 7

Deadline: September 2

The first 101 listings are published.  
Email your listing to: [admin@ovbusiness.com](mailto:admin@ovbusiness.com)

# Business News Around The Valley

## New Surgeon at PRH

The Pembroke Regional Hospital has welcomed Dr. Colleen Haney to their staff. Haney, a general surgeon, replaces Dr. Zaihan Rashid who left at the end of June. Dr. Haney is a graduate of the University of Ottawa and worked at the Pembroke Regional Hospital during her residency. Her husband is stationed at CFB Petawawa.

## Algonquin College President To Retire

Robert Gillett, President of Algonquin College, officially announced his retirement date of December 31, 2012. Gillett has over 40 years experience in education in Ontario, including the past 15 years as President of Algonquin College.

## New Owner of M&M

Stephen Dodd is the new owner of M&M Meat Shops in Arnprior. They are having a Re-Grand Opening on Saturday, September 10 and will be hosting a charity BBQ for Partners in Caring for Arnprior and District Memorial Hospital. Stephen

invites everyone to come visit the store at 345 White Lake Road in Arnprior.

## Tender Awarded

Tender PW-2011-01, the tender for Landfill Re grind was awarded to Nad-Core Environmental Shredding in the amount of \$13,000 plus tax. The tender was issued by the Township of Horton.

## Hunt Leaves RCCFDC

Keanan Hunt, the Community Development Officer for the past several years with Renfrew County Community Futures Development Corporation is moving to the Labour Market Group of Renfrew and Lanark Counties.

## MP Initiates Forestry Discussion

MP Cheryl Gallant recently invited local forestry leaders to discuss key trade and manufacturing issues with the Honourable Ed Fast, Minister of International Trade, at the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade on Friday August 19. The meeting was to discuss the looming protectionist measures and the underpricing of lumber on the part of the American lumber industry. Presentations were made by several members of the forestry business from around Renfrew County.



## Stats on 9/11

**50,000**

Number working in the World Trade Centre on the average day prior to 9/11

**140,000**

Average number of daily visitors to the World Trade Center prior to 9/11

**20**

Distance in miles from which the burning towers were visible

**69**

Number of days underground fires at the World Trade Centre continued to burn

**230**

Number of days workers searched for bodies

**0**

Number of survivors rescued from Ground Zero

**1,300**

Number of orphans created by 9/11 attacks

**422,000**

Estimated number of New Yorkers living with PTSD as a result of 9/11

**200**

Number of countries in which the telethon "America's Tribute to Heroes" was shown on September 21

**\$150M**

Amount raised by the telethon

**\$9.5 Billion**

Amount of Federal Aid New York received within 2 months

**\$21 Billion**

Estimated cost of attacks to US based solely on property losses and insurance costs

Source: The Observer (UK)



### Pleau Electrical

1573827 Ontario Incorporated

Automatic Generator Systems

### GENERAC<sup>®</sup>

### GENERATORS

Sales • Installations • Service • Natural Gas • Propane • Diesel  
Home, Commercial, Industrial RV & Portable Applications  
Solar Power Sales & Installations • Propane Tank Exchange  
Pontiac Ice Sales • Culligan Refill Station

[www.pleauelectric.ca](http://www.pleauelectric.ca)

**613.732.9098**

**208 Morrison Road, Pembroke, ON**





Ph: 613-247-1664

info@carefor.ca

www.carefor.ca

## Tour Now. Stay Later.

Guest House is a short-stay option for people with early to mid dementia. You can stay for a few hours or a few months. Each guest has their own bedroom and ensuite bathroom for privacy and easy living. Common areas are spacious and varied, and there are opportunities for group and individual activities. Tours are free. Contact us today to see how Guest House can be a positive healthcare option.

# Notice:

**We are not the job board that is being advertised on the radio.**

The website being promoted on the radio is Ottawa Valley Job Shop. It is part of a US-based conglomerate called Regional Help Wanted.



## OVJobs.ca

**We are OVJobs.ca  
(Ottawa Valley Jobs)**

We are marketed to job seekers.  
We are based in the Ottawa Valley.  
We have 70,000+ hits per month.

**There is a difference.**

  
**ovjobs.ca**  
Proud to promote  
our local employers.  
  
Ph: 613-732-7774 | [employers@ovjobs.ca](mailto:employers@ovjobs.ca)

## Chamber President Questions Town

Kevin Bossy, president of the Renfrew & Area Chamber of Commerce is publicly advocating for a local business.

“As the President of the Renfrew and Area Chamber of Commerce, I was extremely disappointed to see such a good corporate citizen as Ottawa Valley Solar Inc. lose the recent tender for the Solar FIT program in the Town of Renfrew,” he writes “and [to see that contract] awarded to a company from Ottawa.”

Bossy goes on to write that Ottawa Valley Solar is a local company that pays significant property taxes and utilities and employs over 100 people who also contribute to the community. Bossy further mentions their philanthropic contribution.

“My concern is that Ottawa Valley Solar was the company that originally brought the idea of the Solar FIT program to the Town of Renfrew via the

Industrial Commission,” writes Bossy. “They worked with the town giving them information for this tender. When the bids were analyzed it appears little consideration was given to [Ottawa Valley Solar] and the overall benefit that can be had from nurturing our local businesses - as long as it represents value for the tax payers of Renfrew.”

Bossy concludes by mentioning that the winning bidder's price was “two times higher than the other two bidders” and wonders why the Town chose that option. Bossy says that as president of Chamber, his goal is to support local business and shop locally, and believes this should also be the over-riding philosophy of the Town of Renfrew.

“When we look at the George Jackson episode and now Ottawa Valley Solar, maybe Town Hall doesn't buy into this philosophy,” he says.

### Press Release from Energy Options in Renfrew

Energy Options is now offering FIT Projects for the local market. System sizes can range from 30 – 500 kw and are based upon 20 year contracts from the Ontario Power Authority. As a vital part of this initiative, Energy Options is pleased to be working with CanadianSolar (NASDAQ: CSIQ), one of the world's largest solar panel producers with leading-edge manufacturing of FIT domestic compliant modules in Guelph, Ontario. As a team, it is our objective to provide the same level of quality and professionalism for FIT projects that clients have come to expect from Energy Options.

For more information or to arrange a consultation, contact:

## ENERGY OPTIONS

620 Stewart St. Renfrew. 613 432-0924

[www.energyoptions.biz](http://www.energyoptions.biz)

email: [info@energyoptions.biz](mailto:info@energyoptions.biz)

488532

# To Speak or Not To Speak

Perception is as important as the truth in the public eye



With respect to the lead story in this issue, I don't know whether the Contractors are right or wrong in their position. I have heard their case and it seems reasonable and they have supported their views with relevant documents. I have not heard the case of the City, nor have I been given the opportunity to hear it. But just because the City is not talking, doesn't mean they aren't saying something.

## Public Opinion Happens Every Day

People make judgments all the time based on how they perceive a situation. We simply do not have the time to fully investigate everything for which we form an opinion, so we form opinions based on the what we think of what we know of the situation. Our knowledge stems from what

we see and hear - media reports, advertisements, personal conversations and more. Our opinions then lead to our actions.

The media plays a huge role in presenting information to the public. They are an interesting vehicle to do so because they are not under anyone's control. If a company speaks to the media, they have no control over what the media will say in the story. If that same company buys an ad, they have full control over what is said. If you could simply have a personal conversation with everyone you needed to speak to, then you wouldn't need the media at all. Since that isn't possible, then you have to understand when it is appropriate to engage the media.

## If You Approach Media

If you believe that you are involved in something that should be known on a larger scale, and you want to bring it to the media, you need to be prepared to prove your position. This was the decision the Contractors made - they

went to the media with the situation. They did several things very well. First, there was more than one of them, showing that the issue was beyond that of the private interest of one company. Second, they made themselves and their documents available for examination. Third, they have an excellent circumstance: they are not likely to stop the project, but they are pursuing their position anyway for the greater public good. When a private company argues for the greater public interest, those positions are always strong. As the situation progresses, the key will be to keep the media informed, even if things don't go their way. If they truly are in this for the greater public good, they will be happy if it prevails in the end, regardless of whether it supports their own position.

## If Media Approaches You

When the media comes calling on you for a comment on an issue, and you believe your position is appropriate, you should be as open and

available as possible to discuss it. You do not have to prove the other side wrong, but you do need to show support of your position. The City started to do this. They indicated that they received legal advice and it supported their decision not to go to tender for the contract. But when asked how that decision was supported, they simply stopped talking.

## Perception is Reality

Again, we are talking about public perception. People will form an opinion based on what you say and on what you don't say, so you might as well say what you want people to know. A simple analogy is when a real estate ad doesn't list the price of a house. The perception is that the house is expensive. The agent is better off to list the price and support the value behind it. But, if the house is over-priced, it is hard to support the value.

## Final Thoughts

If you believe your position is a good one, then say so. People have respect for others who stand up for what they believe.



Take a good look at your business.

**forwardthinking**  
MARKETING GROUP



www.fwdthink.net | Phone: 613-732-7774 | jenn@fwdthink.net | 2113 Petawawa Blvd.

Ottawa Valley  
**BUSINESS**

September 7 Issue  
101 Things to do in the  
Valley Fall Edition  
Deadline: September 1

September 13 Issue  
Regular Issue of OVB  
Deadline: September 6

September 27 Issue  
Regular Issue of OVB  
Deadline: September 20

-----  
CONTACTING US  
Phone: 613-732-7774  
admin@ovbusiness.com