

Residents of Belcarra January 12, 2021

I am writing this in reply to a January 11, 2021 document written by Mayoral candidate Mr. Jamie Ross posted to the Village of Belcarra website under the heading Candidate Information. Candidate Bulletin Board.

In that document Mr. Ross makes many statements which are untruthful. This deceitful behaviour by Mr. Ross is one of the reasons that influenced me to put my name forward as a candidate for Mayor. Fairy tale accusations and incorrect assumptions warrant a reply.

Mr. Ross and I have different styles of leadership.

In the document Mr. Ross states:

“Dr Cole suggested at our all-candidates meeting that he was being advised by our former Mayor”

Mr. Ross, exactly which former Mayor were you referring to, Ms. Barrett, Mr. Drew, or Mr. Belenkie? As we move forward and work together, clear and concise communication will be essential.

For the record I am not being advised by any former Mayor. This election is about Mr. Ross and myself. I did speak with Mr. Belenkie to learn more about the role and duties of the position of Mayor. I feel that is a prudent action to take before agreeing to apply for any job or to make any major decision. Information and consultation is very important. If consultation is the type of action that Mr. Ross avoids he should not be Mayor.

If you remember, Mr. Ross, I ran against Mr. Belenkie in the last election as you did yourself. I also spoke with Mr. Belenkie prior to that election. Was that the wrong thing to do? Just so you know and to clear up any misconceptions that you have, I have spoken to Mr. Belenkie exactly twice since 2018. How many times have you spoken with Ralph Drew before this election, and/or before the last election? Probably on a daily basis. I don't have a “hidden agenda” as Mr. Ross infers. That may seem unusual for a seasoned Belcarra politician such as Mr. Ross. I am open, honest, understanding, and direct.

Action is also important and yes, I do have high expectations. I have always had high expectations and standards for everything I am involved in. If Mr. Ross is satisfied with the present situation in the Village that's not fine with me. I would like it to change for the better. And I will try to do that by working with people from many different backgrounds, having democratic consensus, and moving forward. As I have always done. It's the process that is important.

So while Mr. Ross says that he finds one of my statements “troubling”; I find the campaign plans and history of actions by Mr. Ross to be both concerning and disappointing.

Concerning:

1. Mr. Ross stated that if elected Mayor he will be hiring Ralph Drew as a consultant for the Village. Consultants are expensive. While that would be the choice of Mr. Ross, I am opposed to paying significant sums to consultants without strict parameters on what questions are being asked and what the cost will be. There will be no “open-ended” consultation arrangements if I am elected.

2. I find it concerning that Mr. Ross plans to appoint village residents to committees so “that the committees will work better” rather than invite interested volunteers. Mr. Ross addressed that topic during the Zoom All Candidates Meeting. During that meeting Mr. Ross clearly stated that if committees came to conclusions that didn’t parallel Mr. Ross’s views, Mr. Ross would oppose the committee’s recommendations. Does this reflect the “My Way or The Highway” philosophy of Mr. Ross?.

3. Mr. Ross and his supporters are planning on sending out a flyer with negative information and untruths on the evening prior to the election day of Jan 23rd. The purpose being to influence Villagers on the day of the vote and not leave any time for the statements to be refuted. The Villagers should ignore that. Please contact me directly for clarification with any questions on any material that is sent out.

4. Looking through the Village Council Minutes there does not seem to be a recorded instance in over 25 years where Mr. Ross publicly and on record disagreed with the Mayor. If elected I would encourage council members to have independent thinking.

Disappointing:

1. I find it disappointing that Mr. Ross has previously refused to meet with 73 residents as part of an All Candidates Meeting during the 2018 election. No individual in the Village should be ignored like Mr. Ross did for no reason on this occasion..

2. Mr. Ross mentioned in the Zoom meeting that he was canvassing to meet residents one-on-one. As a physician who works closely with Covid patients in a Cardiac Surgery Intensive Care Unit (where there is currently an outbreak) I wouldn’t advise canvassing door-to-door. Covid transmission is very innocuous. If you are thinking of the residents’ well-being and health, like I do, it is safer to have Zoom meetings rather than face-to-face.

3. I found it disappointing at the Zoom meeting that Mr. Ross said that he was willing to accept 31% of residents voting “yes” in a referendum for a proposed water system and would do that again in the future. Mr. Ross referred to “The Charter” as giving him authority to assume that anyone who does not vote will be considered a “yes” vote for any proposal. As a result Mr. Ross voted against the wishes of the majority of the residents of

Belcarra. This resulted in the downward financial spiral of the Village that we have to deal with today. Do you really want a Mayor who votes against the wishes of the majority of the residents of Belcarra? Or do you want a mayor who respects the wishes of the residents??

4. Facts. It was partially through the efforts of Mr. Ross during the 10 year period (2006-2016) that Belcarra almost reached the status of the WORST financially managed municipality in British Columbia (It became the 147th worst out of the 152 municipalities in BC). Mr. Ross was on council during that entire time period; own it, it's a fact, and let's move on and try to improve things together. In medicine if we have a serious mistake, we learn from it, we don't deny it, and we work together to do a better job next time.

To the residents of Belcarra: What is your vision for Belcarra? What type and style of leadership would you prefer? A "from the ground up" approach with Committees that are listened to and a Council with members who have independent thought while respecting the wishes of the residents?

Or something else? Top down undemocratic actions from a leader whose philosophy is "My Way or The Highway" and refuses to respect the wishes of his electors.

**On January 23, 2021, make your choice. And please vote for Colm Cole.
A Leader. For Change.**

Colm Cole