

March 22, 2022

As I write this on March 22 we are again in a completely different phase of the Coronavirus pandemic. Vaccine passports, capacity limits, and most mask mandates, have been lifted. Some of you will be very happy about this, some will be nervous, some a mix. Let's all be respectful of each others' choices. Southwestern Public Health has made it clear that masking is no longer required, but recommended under certain circumstances. If someone chooses not to wear a mask and you think they should, that is your right, but they may also following the latest Public Health advice. Likewise, if someone chooses to wear a mask and you think they shouldn't, that is your right, but they may also be following the latest Public Health advice.

Respect each others' choices. Respect each other. We are a community. We have always had differences of opinion and we always will. How we treat each other when we have differences is important. When in large groups indoors I will be masking assuming there may be someone there who is vulnerable.

I hate trimming trees and branches at the side of the road. When we bought our home property one of the main appeals was all the trees on the property, the woodlot next door, and Wildwood forest across the road. But it's not my road. It's the Township's road, and that means it belongs to everyone. That means passenger cars like mine, and huge combines like my neighbours. So branches have to be trimmed to make it passable, and so that snow removal and ditching equipment can maintain it. Without that the road would deteriorate and be less safe. So the beautiful trees across the road from my house are trimmed. Sometimes we can not like a thing and still do it because it's the responsible thing to do.

The Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) Trustees voted to keep the current Trustee distribution! Some Trustees at the TVDSB wanted to reduce the number of County Trustees and increase the number of London Trustees. If this happened it would have reduced the voice of County and rural issues and truly been a "London" Board in all but name. Oxford County passed a resolution supporting equitable representation that balances the rural interests within the geography of Thames Valley. Thanks to all of you who wrote, emailed, called, and tweeted about this! Several Trustees mentioned the media and social media coverage. YOU made this happen!

However Trustees killed the Rural Education Task Force. The TVDSB asked Oxford County to appoint a representative (me) to the TVDSB Rural Education Task Force (RETF) to help better understand the opportunities and challenges of rural schools. They asked us for this input, and we worked hard for two years to consult with hundreds of residents and develop a draft report. Then, at the last minute, Board Senior Administration cancelled the RETF meetings and told staff to stop working on it. They refused to give an extension to complete the work that was not finished BECAUSE senior administration withdrew support for it AGAINST board direction. This is a failure of governance. They do not want to hear rural voices.



Mayor's Blog

This is the ongoing story of rural communities in the TVDSB wanting to be heard and understood, and the TVDSB not wanting to listen, attempting to silence the rural voice, saying “we’d rather not talk about this”.

I’m very proud of the work of the Zorra Local School Committee in developing our School Retention Plan, and of both Zorra and Oxford Council’s for endorsing that plan and continuing to advocate with the TVDSB and Ministry of Education on your behalf.

I asked for a delegation to the TVDSB for the March 22 Board meeting to speak to the issues of the Rural Education Task Force and the Trustee distribution. It was turned down for that date. I got a delegation for April 26. After the Board has decided on both issues.

As always, please feel free to contact me on any issue:

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