

CSL councillors getting their own portfolios

By MARTIN C. BARRY The Chronicle

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In a move signaling a departure from the way things were done in pre-merger Côte St. Luc city council, Mayor Anthony Housefather has decided to assign portfolios to each of the eight new city councillors.

As long as anyone can remember, the responsibilities of CSL city councillors have usually been for the districts they represented, with some additional duties serving on one or more municipal committees.

However, with comprehensive portfolios assigned all the councillors from now on, it will be their job to deal with those issues, establish related committees and make recommendations to city council.

Residents will be able to bring issues to councillors handling specific portfolios, while also contacting the mayor or their district councillor.

"As someone who served as a member of a council for 11 years, I strongly believe in giving members of council responsibility for dossiers in which they develop an expertise," said Housefather.

"I believe this format was a long time in coming. Finally, residents will know whom to approach, not only on matters related to their district, but also on a certain dossier. This all lends itself to a stronger and more active council which becomes accountable to the public."

Housefather will personally oversee human resources, collective agreements, legal issues, relationships with other cities and government entities, and will be the city's representative on the agglomeration council.

Traffic and Seniors Issues have been given to District 1 councillor Sam Goldbloom. He will focus on traffic calming, road network improvements and working with Hampstead and CDN/NDG on completing the synchronization of Fleet Road's traffic lights.

Communications, Corporate Identity and Inter Community Relations have been handed to District 2 councillor Mike Cohen. A public relations specialist, he has the potentially delicate responsibility for toponymy, which could involve the renaming of certain CSL parks.

Finance and Environmental Issues are being handled by District 3 councillor Dida Berku. She will be working on the budget, pension and audit committees, recycling and waste management. Berku has special responsibility for the Cavendish extension and the Meadowbrook Golf course.

Library and Culture have been assigned to District 4 councillor Steven Erdelyi.

His responsibilities include joint programs and special events such as Canada Day.

Town Planning and Railway issues are the responsibility of District 5 councillor Allan J. Levine. Among other things, he will handle matters concerning the renewal of the city centre and Cavendish Mall.

Public Safety is in the hands of District 6 councillor Glenn J. Nashen. His portfolio includes Emergency Medical Services, Fire Prevention, Public Security, Emergency Preparedness and the updating of the City's Emergency Measures Plan.

Public Works and Engineering is the responsibility of District 7 councillor Mitchell Brownstein. His mandate will include getting vital services back to pre-merger levels. He will also play an active role negotiating new collective agreements.

Recreation has been given to District 8 councillor Ruth Kovac. She is responsible for all sports and recreation programs (not including library and culture) and parks.