

August 26, 2019

Common Council
City of Saint John
8th Floor City Hall
15 Market Square
Saint John, NB
E2L 1E8

Re: Policy for use of events calendar

I am shocked and appalled by the notion that any member of city council can arbitrarily decide that a public event in the City of Saint John is “unacceptable” and, therefore, should not be listed on the community events calendar at www.saintjohn.ca.

Councillor Hickey has every right to ask during a regular meeting of Common Council for a policy for governing the events calendar. However, he has no right to expect that policy to include restrictions on any individual or group, solely because he disagrees with the event or what they otherwise stand for or believe in. Censorship of this nature is abhorrent in a free society and a clear violation of the right to free expression enjoyed by all Canadians.

For the record, I am pro-choice. I also believe strongly that Mr. Hickey and others had every right to protest the showing of this movie. However, that does not give this councillor or this council the right to take away the rights of others. That is called totalitarianism, not democracy.

Should council and/or staff develop a policy on the use of the events calendar, it must include a provision that any and all individuals and/or groups in society are free to post their notices without exception. In other words, it must adhere to basic human rights and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Failing this, the calendar must be permanently removed from the city's website.

Yours sincerely;

Douglas James