

TOWN OF COLLINGWOOD JUDICIAL INQUIRY

Before:

Associate Chief Justice Frank Marrocco

Held at:

Collingwood Town Hall Council Chambers 97 Hurontario Street Collingwood, Ontario

April 15th, 2019



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                 APPEARANCES
2
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4 John Mather
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5
                          ) Counsel
6
7 Michael Watson ) Alectra Utilities
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10 (No Counsel)
                         ) For Paul Bonwick
11
12 George Marron ) For Sandra Cooper
13
14 (No Counsel) ) For Timothy Fryer
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16 Frederick Chenoweth ) For Edwin Houghton
17
18 William McDowell ) For Town of Collingwood
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                       )
20
               )For Collus PowerStream
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1 --- Upon commencing at 10:00 a.m.

- 3 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: I just
- 4 wanted to say a few words about the -- the origins of
- 5 the Inquiry, to start with. The Inquiry occurs
- 6 because of Town Council resolution in February 2018.
- 7 The mandate is to look into the 50 percent share sale
- 8 of Collus Utility Services Corporation, the
- 9 PowerStream, and the application of the funds from the
- 10 sale.
- 11 The Inquiry is being conducted, or is
- 12 circumscribed, by the terms of reference, which
- 13 Council passed. Part 1 focuses on the events leading
- 14 to the sale. Part 2 focuses on the allocation of the
- 15 proceeds from the sale, and Part 3 considers broader
- 16 policy and good governance issues.
- 17 We wanted to reduce the need to call
- 18 witnesses to prove facts, and so part of our process
- 19 involved the production of a foundation document.
- 20 There will be two (2) such documents, one (1) dealing
- 21 with the sale, and one (1) dealing with the
- 22 application of funds.
- 23 The foundation document was produced
- 24 from documents in our database. We have received an
- 25 overwhelming number of documents from all of the

- 1 participants, and from those documents we produced a
- 2 foundation document which sets out some of the
- 3 information contained in those documents, which we
- 4 thought people should be aware of.
- 5 The document will be modified by the
- 6 evidence of the witnesses. The statements in the
- 7 document have not been tested for the truth of their
- 8 contents. They may be tested, challenged, and
- 9 supplemented through the oral evidence, which we're
- 10 going to hear over the next little while.
- 11 The public hearing is an investigation.
- 12 It's not a civil or criminal trial. I think I've said
- 13 that about five (5) times, and I'll probably say it
- 14 many more times before this is over. Inquiry counsel
- 15 assist the Commissioner. They're not partisan or
- 16 adverse. Their responsibility is to act in a public
- 17 interest. They will lead the examination of
- 18 witnesses.
- 19 But unlike a -- a trial, they cannot
- 20 accept the statements of the witnesses they call at
- 21 face value. It falls to commission counsel to examine
- 22 the witnesses with particular thoroughness. They must
- 23 investigate, test, and verify what the witnesses say.
- 24 Without that thoroughness, we won't be able to get the
- 25 answers that the town has asked us to get in

- 1 connection with these transactions.
- 2 There are participants -- persons who
- 3 have participatory rights. They have a direct and
- 4 substantial interest in the proceedings. They are
- 5 obligated to assist the inquiry with carrying out its
- 6 mandate. That the reason why they've been given
- 7 participatory rights, because their participation will
- 8 be of assistance to the inquiry in carrying out its
- 9 mandate.
- 10 After Inquiry counsel have examined the
- 11 witness, counsel for the participants will have the
- 12 opportunity to cross-examine -- or examine, depending
- 13 on how they approach it -- the same witnesses.
- 14 Counsel for the witness, if the witness has counsel,
- 15 will be the last person to question the witness on
- 16 cross-examination, and the only other examination of
- 17 the witness will be reexamination by commission
- 18 counsel.
- The findings of the Commissioner, my
- 20 findings, relate to the investigation we're
- 21 conducting. I make findings of fact, and I will --
- 22 and have the opportunity to express my opinion about
- 23 some of what I hear or read.
- 24 The procedure we follow isn't the
- 25 typical procedure that you follow in a trial. We're

- 1 not bound by the evidentiary procedures that you would
- 2 see in a courtroom. We have more flexibility than
- 3 that. I cannot establish criminal or civil liability.
- 4 Trials -- criminal and civil trials do exactly that.
- 5 A trial is a narrow and retrospective
- 6 exercise which examines specific events in the past.
- 7 They don't -- trials don't seek to explain why
- 8 something occurred, except for the purposes of
- 9 determining guilt or liability. By contrast, the
- 10 public Inquiry is a public investigation carried out
- 11 in the public eye, according to the Inquiry's rules of
- 12 conduct. It's unusual for investigations to be
- 13 carried out in the public eye. Most times
- 14 investigations are carried out with a minimum of
- 15 publicity, but this is a peculiar type of
- 16 investigation.
- 17 A public inquiry can affect public
- 18 opinion, but it cannot have penal or civil
- 19 consequences. I can make findings of misconduct.
- 20 Misconduct is improper or unprofessional behaviour, or
- 21 bad management. Witnesses about whom I might make a
- 22 negative finding will be privately advised of that
- 23 fact so that they can conduct themselves accordingly.
- 24 Any consequences that flow from the
- 25 findings of the Inquiry are the responsibility of

- 1 others, not the Commission. Once we report, we are
- 2 finished. The public inquiries are less formal than
- 3 trials. I have a wide range of investigative powers.
- 4 There are some governing principles:
- 5 Thoroughness, which means a number of things, but it
- 6 means determining the proper boundaries of the
- 7 investigation. The Inquiry has to balance the need
- 8 for thoroughness with the need to get the job done.
- 9 No important stone must be left unturned, but the
- 10 emphasis is on the word important.
- 11 Proportionality, which requires us to
- 12 be engaged in developing the mandate. We develop the
- 13 mandate at an early stage. We don't wait for the
- 14 calling of witnesses. We've been interviewing since
- 15 basically the Commission was set up. Some people have
- 16 been interviewed more than once. An Inquiry cannot
- 17 resemble a lengthy multiparty examination for
- 18 discovery in which questions of limited relevance are
- 19 patiently tolerated.
- 20 Fairness is a principle that has to
- 21 govern the conduct of the Inquiry, and that requires
- 22 us to keep an open mind until all of the evidence is
- 23 in. It also means that there should be no surprises
- 24 during the course of the Inquiry. It's not a question
- 25 of anyone getting ambushed by something that they

- 1 weren't expecting, but they are public. However,
- 2 certain kinds of information can sometimes not be
- 3 discussed in public, and in those rare and exceptional
- 4 circumstances, we will sit in camera.
- 5 Finally, as the participants have been
- 6 given the opportunity to make an opening written
- 7 statement, those written statements will be posted on
- 8 the website, and I would urge people interested in the
- 9 Inquiry take the time to read each of the witnesses'
- 10 opening statements.
- 11 So with those introductory remarks, I
- 12 think I'll turn my counsel. Ms. McGrann...?
- 13 MS. KATE MCGRANN: Good morning.
- 14 We'll be starting today with the foundation document.
- 15 You've heard that we received an overwhelming number
- 16 of documents. More specifically, the Inquiry has
- 17 received over four hundred and forty-four thousand
- 18 (440,000) documents. A foundation document was
- 19 created from the information that we received, and the
- 20 participants had the opportunity to provide
- 21 suggestions, comments, and corrections to a draft that
- 22 they received on a confidential basis.
- 23 During the hearing, the foundation
- 24 document will be used as a reference and a guide for
- 25 the witnesses and the evidence that they're here to

- 1 give. At this point, I will ask that foundation
- 2 document 1 be made Exhibit 1.
- THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: So
- 4 ordered.

5

6 --- EXHIBIT NO 1: Foundation document 1

- 8 MS. KATE MCGRANN: And I will turn to
- 9 my colleague, John Mather, to call our first witness.
- 10 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Before
- 11 we do that, is there anything that -- is there anyone
- 12 that wants to say something -- say something before we
- 13 get started? But I -- I do want to get started, so if
- 14 you've got something to say, say it with your hand,
- 15 Mr. Watson.
- 16 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: There. Right
- 17 here. Okay. There we go. All right. Your Honour,
- 18 Michael Watson, for Alectra, formally PowerStream.
- 19 You will be aware of the fact that
- 20 there was a preliminary matter that we have been
- 21 intending to deal with this morning. I'm pleased to
- 22 say that it has been resolved over the past twenty-
- 23 four (24) hours, so we need not deal with it.
- 24 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Thank
- 25 you very much, Mr. Watson, that's very helpful. Mr. -

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1 - Mr. McDowell...?
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- 2 MR. WILLIAM MCDOWELL: Yes,
- 3 Commissioner. Just one (1) brief point, I guess, for
- 4 clarification. I know that it -- it's at least in one
- 5 (1) version of the schedule, the Commission was
- 6 sitting on Easter Monday. I -- I know that in my
- 7 household, and in a number of others, that's a day
- 8 that we've observed, and so I just ask for some
- 9 direction on that.
- 10 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Well,
- 11 actually, Mr. McDowell I -- I confess I was somewhat
- 12 surprised when I realized we had scheduled ourselves
- 13 to sit on -- on Easter Monday. It -- I'm quite
- 14 content to respect the fact that some people celebrate
- 15 that day, and we won't sit that day. Mather...?
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: Thank you. The
- 17 first witness will be Sara Jane Almas.

18

19 SARA JANE ALMAS, Sworn

- 21 EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Good morning, Ms.
- 23 Almas.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Good morning.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: What's your current

- 1 position with the town of Collingwood?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I am currently the
- 3 clerk of the municipality.
- 4 MR. JOHN MATHER: And how long have
- 5 you been the Town Clerk?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: I was hired in 2004,
- 7 and became the clerk in 2007.
- 8 MR. JOHN MATHER: Thank you. And for
- 9 the benefit of the Inquiry, could you just provide an
- 10 overview of your roles and responsibilities as a
- 11 clerk?
- 12 MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly. At that
- 13 time?
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: Certainly, I would
- 15 start with -- and at that time, I think we're talking
- $16\,$ mostly about the 2010 to 2012 time period. So, yes,
- 17 at that time.
- 18 MS. SARA ALMAS: Perfect. As a clerk,
- 19 I was responsible for all the statutory obligations of
- 20 a municipal clerk for the municipality, including the
- 21 record and recording of all Council meetings, standing
- 22 committee of the whole, I guess, at the time, Council
- 23 planning and development meetings.
- I am responsible for vital statistics,
- 25 lottery licensing, business licensing. My portfolio

- 1 includes -- I -- I am responsible for bylaw
- 2 enforcement, parking control, crossing guards. I am
- 3 resp -- I was responsible for the entire
- 4 communications at that point. We didn't have a
- 5 communications office for that, so that included any
- 6 sort of public notices, including any sort of media
- 7 release.
- I was responsible for, obviously,
- 9 records management, responsible for freedom of
- 10 information, and protection of privacy legislation. I
- 11 was responsible for -- at that period of time, for --
- 12 for one (1) year between 2012 and 2013, I was a member
- 13 of the executive management team that was established
- 14 by the CAO at the time. And I believe that's the most
- 15 significant pieces of my portfolio, but --
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: I can see you're --
- 17 MS. SARA ALMAS: -- it's rather large.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: -- responsible for a
- 19 lot of things, yes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, I was.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: Has your
- 22 responsibilities changed in any significant way from
- 23 then to today?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: Absolutely. We have
- 25 a purchasing officer in place. We have a

- 1 communications officer in place. We have a records
- 2 and FOI coordinator in place. We have had a
- 3 realignment of my entire portfolio, so I am no longer
- 4 responsible for bylaw enforcement, animal control,
- 5 parking program or parking enforcement. I am no
- 6 longer responsible for land administration matters,
- 7 including encroachments and agreements. That was
- 8 something that was in my portfolio before. As I said,
- 9 with a communications officer in place, that
- 10 significantly lessened that piece of -- of my duties.
- 11 I would say that -- that was -- are the most
- 12 significant changes.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Thank you.
- 14 Going back to the time period of 2010 to 2012, how
- 15 frequently were Town Council meetings held?
- 16 MS. SARA ALMAS: So back in that time
- 17 period, we were -- we had Council meetings actually --
- 18 I believe it was the first, second, and fourth Monday
- 19 of the month, and the third Mondays was Council
- 20 meetings dedicated to planning and development
- 21 matters.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And how was
- 23 the agenda determined for a Council meeting at that
- 24 time?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: The agenda

- 1 preparation is reviewed with the department heads. At
- 2 the time, all staff reports were vetted through our
- 3 department head team. The correspondence was
- 4 collected that would go on the correspondence or
- 5 consent agenda.
- The information was vetted at
- 7 department heads, then there was meetings held -- a
- 8 meeting held with the mayor and the CAO prior to it
- 9 being released, confirming all the information that
- 10 was collected was pref -- noted on the agenda, or if
- 11 anything needed to be rearranged to a subsequent
- 12 agenda, that conversation was held. And then my staff
- 13 prepared a package and finalized the agenda material,
- 14 and distributed it generally on Thursday evenings
- 15 before Council on the following Monday.
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So just so I
- 17 understand, that's the way a package would be
- 18 prepared, with agenda and supporting materials? Is
- 19 that fair?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: And it was your
- 22 office, then, that distributed it?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, it was.
- 24 MR. JOHN MATHER: Was there any other
- 25 way to get material before Council other than going

- 1 through your office?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: If Council themselves
- 3 made a request for a staff report, that -- that then
- 4 became material that -- or a notice of motion became
- 5 material that would be added to a future agenda.
- 6 Information such as PowerPoints, or any
- 7 sort of presentation that would have been for any sort
- 8 of deputation, or another staff department, at that
- 9 time would either bring the material with them for
- 10 that Council meeting, or it was provided. Now, the --
- 11 the system is it's provided to the clerk's department
- 12 by twelve noon on Fridays, and then a separate
- 13 information package is provided to members of Council
- 14 of all additional materials that would -- would go to
- 15 a council.
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: And -- so I just
- 17 want to break that down a bit. So it sounds to me
- 18 like what you're saying was it -- currently at this
- 19 time, if a -- a member of a -- a head of a staff
- 20 department wants to bring materials to -- before the
- 21 Council, at this time they go through your office, but
- 22 in 2010/2012, were they able to do that without going
- 23 through your office?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: So if -- if it was a
- 25 -- a change to the agenda, we would either issue the

- 1 agenda as amended, or we would issue an addendum to
- 2 the agenda to provide the subsequent information.
- 3 However, any sort of presentation material that they
- 4 would provide that was supplemental to the item that
- 5 was on the agenda didn't necessarily come to the
- 6 clerk's office first.
- 7 MR. JOHN MATHER: It was possible
- 8 there would be material before Council, that had --
- 9 that hadn't been seen by the -- your office?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: At the time, did you
- 12 ever have any concerns about staff members or anyone
- 13 providing tho -- those sorts of materials without
- 14 going through your office?
- 15 MS. SARA ALMAS: Because the -- the
- 16 presentation certainly didn't form what the -- the
- 17 recommendation was, because the recommendation was
- 18 generally in the -- the form of the staff report, and
- 19 the presentations were generally supplemental to that,
- 20 one (1) thing that was concerning, and obviously, why
- 21 we have changed is that if any of that material
- 22 bypassed the clerk's department, we didn't have copies
- 23 for official record, and I would have to make a note
- 24 saying that I did not have a copy to request that
- 25 information to ensure that the -- the file remains

- 1 complete.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: How frequently would
- 3 there be materials that didn't go through your office
- 4 that you would have to track down after the fact?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Not -- not very
- 6 often. It was always generally from a specific
- 7 department.
- 8 MR. JOHN MATHER: And at that time
- 9 again in 2010 to 2012, was direction given to these
- 10 departments to file it before the office -- sorry,
- 11 file it through your office first?
- 12 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I don't
- 13 recollect.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: And I think you said
- 15 that there was generally a specific department where
- 16 this occurred. What department was that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Departments under Ed
- 18 Houghton's portfolio.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: The one (1) -- and -
- 20 and what was Mr. Houghton's portfolio in 2010 to
- 21 2012?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: So he was responsible
- 23 for the public works and engineering department. He
- 24 was the president/CEO of Collus, and he was
- 25 responsible for water/wastewater.

1 MR. JOHN MATHER: Right. And so when

- 2 you discuss that, today, now, all materials need to go
- 3 through your office first, that was the change that
- 4 you say is responsive to the issue you were -- you had
- 5 in 2010/2012?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: I would say that we
- 7 made that change -- I -- I would say that was probably
- 8 one of the preempters, yes, for the change.
- 9 MR. JOHN MATHER: And so at the
- 10 outset, I think you said one (1) of your
- 11 responsibilities was the record and recording of
- 12 Council meetings. Is -- did I have that correct?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So I take it,
- 15 then, that you were the person who took Council
- 16 minutes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. How did you
- 19 go about taking Council minutes? What was your
- 20 practice?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: So generally, my
- 22 deputy clerk would take the agenda and prepare it in a
- 23 template for minutes. During the meetings, I would
- 24 record in draft the -- the meeting. Following the
- 25 meeting, my deputy would actually review the minutes,

- 1 put in the appropriate resolution numbers, and do any
- 2 tidying up of the minutes that need to be done, and
- 3 then save them in a final form.
- 4 MR. JOHN MATHER: And how did you
- 5 decide what to include in minutes in terms of the
- 6 discussion that was going on or the decisions that
- 7 were being made, and how did you decide what not to
- 8 include in the minutes?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: So generally, in my
- 10 draft version, I include more discussion and more
- 11 commentary. However, the official record minutes of -
- 12 of a municipality or of a council, in accordance
- 13 with the Municipal Act, are without note and without
- 14 comment.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: And what do you mean
- 16 by "without note and without comment" for someone who
- 17 maybe isn't familiar with the Act?
- 18 MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly. It means
- 19 that I cannot put in individual's -- individual
- 20 comments, member's opinions, whatnot. Basically, I
- 21 record only the direction, and resolution, and bylaws
- 22 that -- that are a result of the meeting.
- 23 MR. JOHN MATHER: And in terms of
- 24 directions, resolutions, and bylaws, in the 2010 to
- 25 2012 time period, how were those decisions made? What

- 1 was the process for coming to those decisions?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Sorry, the decisions
- 3 on?
- 4 MR. JOHN MATHER: How did Council make
- 5 decisions on the time? How did they vote? I just
- 6 want an understanding of that process.
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly. So for
- 8 the most part, it was done based on a staff report.
- 9 So a staff report would be before them. It would have
- 10 a recommendation in there. It would provide the
- 11 background, and the analysis, financial impact on what
- 12 the decision was going to be made. That was the basis
- 13 for the Council deliberation before they actually
- 14 voted on a matter.
- In the case of certain staff reports,
- 16 they required a bylaw. So a bylaw would be appended
- 17 to the staff report. And the other way that accounts
- 18 can make decisions if they did their own notice of
- 19 motion and they voted on -- on a motion independent of
- 20 a staff report.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: And how were votes
- 22 taken?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: They were generally -
- 24 the mayor put the question to the table, and the
- 25 vote was called. If a member requested it be a

- 1 recorded vote, the process for recorded votes were the
- 2 clerk would ask those in favour to stand and then be
- 3 seated; all the supposed to stand and be seated, and
- 4 it was actually acknowledged and recorded in the
- 5 minutes.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: And if it's not a
- 7 recorded vote, how was it determined what the
- 8 consensus was?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: The Chair or the
- 10 mayor would -- would call the motion as either being
- 11 carried or defeated.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And how did
- 13 the Chair or the mayor determine whether it was
- 14 carried or defeated?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: By majority vote.
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: By people saying yes
- 17 or no, or --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Sorry, they would
- 19 raise their hand.
- 20 MR. JOHN MATHER: They would raise
- 21 their hand. And then I take it these decisions would
- 22 be reflected in the minutes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 24 MR. JOHN MATHER: And so is it fair to
- 25 say that where Council makes a decision -- again in

- 1 2010 to 2012, where Council made a decision, that that
- 2 decision should then be reflected in the minutes?
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: All decisions of the
- 4 Council were recorded in the minutes.
- 5 MR. JOHN MATHER: Going now to today,
- 6 has there been -- you -- you've -- you've talked about
- 7 the process for what you would include in the minutes,
- 8 and the process for decision-making and votes. Has
- 9 there been any significant changes from 2010/2012 to
- 10 today?
- 11 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, there's been
- 12 changes. Currently, we record all substantive
- 13 motions. We record and maintain a database for each
- 14 Council and standing committee meetings of attendance
- 15 and voting records. However, any formal request for a
- 16 recorded vote at the meeting is only what's included
- 17 in the actual set of minutes.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: So -- and I just
- 19 want to make sure I understand that. So the minutes -
- 20 the minutes may not reflect a recorded vote if it's
- 21 not called for, but you now have a record --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: -- in any event?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 25 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And that

- 1 wasn't the case in 2012?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: So if it wasn't a
- 4 recorded vote, there would be no record of who voted,
- 5 or who was in favour, or not in favour?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: It was the
- 7 individual's responsibility to -- to know how they
- 8 voted in the matter. Various recordings -- at the
- 9 time, Rogers did record the majority of the Council
- 10 meetings, so there was the ability also for the public
- 11 to review recording practices -- or voting practices
- 12 based on -- on reviewing the -- the Rogers televised
- 13 version of the -- the meeting.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. What does it
- 15 mean when a session of Council was held in camera?
- 16 MS. SARA ALMAS: It means that Council
- 17 moves into a closed or confidential session. There is
- 18 only a specific set of exemptions that allow a
- 19 municipal -- a municipality to actually go in -- in
- 20 camera to have confidential discussions. There is no
- 21 decision that can be made in camera. The only thing
- 22 that can be provided is a -- a matter of procedure, or
- 23 providing instruction or direction to staff or agent
- 24 on behalf of the municipality.
- 25 MR. JOHN MATHER: So no decisions can

- 1 be made, but you said directions or instruction and
- 2 procedure. Could you just give a general example to
- 3 help illustrate what the difference is between a
- 4 decision and an instruction or procedure?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly. So an
- 6 example of a procedure matter that can be voted on in
- 7 camera would be the receiving of the minutes from the
- 8 previous meeting. So -- or if there is a vote that's
- 9 needed to -- if somebody calls a question of personal
- 10 privilege, and there needs to be a vote, or a decision
- 11 made on -- on something like that matter, that can be
- 12 held in camera, but there could be no -- no direction
- 13 or no decision to advance any material business of the
- 14 municipality, basically, that can happen in camera.
- 15 Instruction would be if they would like
- 16 the CAO to investigate something further on their
- 17 behalf and report back to them, something along that
- 18 line.
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: So if something
- 20 that's discussed in camera needs to be decided upon,
- 21 how does that process follow?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly. So that -
- 23 that happens frequently, if there is information
- 24 that has solicitor/client privilege that we have
- 25 communications in camera for, that we have that

- 1 conversation, and then Council must rise from in
- 2 camera, come out, back to the table, put a motion to
- 3 the floor, have discussion or debate, and then decide
- 4 on the matter publicly, and then it forms within the
- 5 official records of the -- the municipality.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. You said there
- 7 was only a -- a -- to paraphrase, a certain set of
- 8 items that could be discussed in camera were -- were
- 9 allowed to be discussed in camera. Where is that set
- 10 out? Where can you find what can and can't be
- 11 discussed in camera?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Section 239 of the
- 13 Municipal Act.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: So it's in the Act?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah.
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: Was your process
- 17 again in 2010 to 2012 for taking minutes different
- 18 when Council was in camera as opposed to when it was a
- 19 public session?
- 20 MS. SARA ALMAS: No. I followed the
- 21 same -- same practice. I would generally take more
- 22 detailed notes to ensure that I -- I recalled the --
- 23 the situation. The minutes, though, I quess, one (1)
- 24 practice that was different is generally, I -- I would
- 25 modify my own in camera minutes, because I'm only

- 1 aware of -- of what had happened. My deputy clerk, on
- 2 occasion, when she did the public minutes, you know,
- 3 would have to -- you know, may have to look at the
- 4 video again on -- on occasion. But for the most part,
- 5 they were done pretty similar, and I maintained a
- 6 draft file, and a final version.
- 7 MR. JOHN MATHER: And I think you said
- 8 you would maybe make them more detailed, I think, as
- 9 opposed to a public session. Why would you make an
- 10 effort to make them more detailed?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Actually, I don't
- 12 think there -- I -- I would disagree with that
- 13 statement, sorry.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: And I'm not --
- 15 MS. SARA ALMAS: If I -- if I said
- 16 that, I didn't --
- MR. JOHN MATHER: No, no, no, and I'm
- 18 not -- I'm certainly not trying to put words in your
- 19 mouth.
- 20 MS. SARA ALMAS: If anything, they're
- 21 -- it's -- it's less.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: It's less detailed.
- 23 Okay. So we know decisions can't be made in camera,
- 24 but instructions like -- or directions can be done, or
- 25 procedural matters. How would those be reflected in

- 1 the in camera minutes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: In the form of a -- a
- 3 resolution, or a motion.
- 4 MR. JOHN MATHER: So it was -- it
- 5 would -- and -- and then would that then be reflected
- 6 in the same way as the -- as the public minutes?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: So you can vote on
- 8 providing instruction or direction in camera, so it's
- 9 the same. You -- you'd have a mover and secondary.
- 10 You'd have the body of the motion, and it would be
- 11 carried or defeated.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Right. So if I
- 13 looked at in camera minutes, I could determine --
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: If there was a
- 15 decision made.
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: If there was a
- 17 decision made?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: Has anything changed
- 20 in terms of the process for in camera meetings, the
- 21 minutes taken, how decisions are recorded since 2010
- 22 and 2012?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe the only
- 24 change is currently, Council has requested a recording
- 25 of in camera minutes until the Inquiry is completed to

- 1 determine if that's something that should be
- 2 undertaken permanently.
- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: And do you know when
- 4 that decision was made?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Fairly recently.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: And is it an audio
- 7 recording or a video recording?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: It's an audio
- 9 recording.
- 10 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So when I --
- 11 I'm going to ask that document TOC38001 be pulled up.
- 12 And if you could scroll to the bottom of the page?
- So, Ms. Almas, what's on the screen is
- 14 an email from Rick Lloyd, dated January 17th, 2011, to
- 15 you. It's my understanding that Mr. Lloyd was the
- 16 deputy mayor at the time. Is that correct?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Do you recall
- 19 receiving Mr. Lloyd's email at this time?
- 20 MS. SARA ALMAS: I didn't recollect it
- 21 until it was brought to my attention.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And -- and in
- 23 the context of this Inquiry?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: And when it was

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31
   brought to your attention, did that refresh your
   memory about this email?
 3
                  MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Just at this
   point, I would like to mark this email as an exhibit.
                  THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: So
 6
   ordered.
   --- EXHIBIT NO. 2:
                              Email dated January 17,
10
                                2011 from Rick Lloyd to
11
                                Sara Almas
12
   CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
13
14
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: So in the email, Mr.
15
  Lloyd writes that his brother is considering again
   bidding -- sorry, I'll just quote it:
17
                      "My brother is considering again the
18
                     bidding on town work, but was
19
                     worried about putting me into a
                     conflict."
20
```

21 And then he goes on:

22 "I'm not involved in his business,

23 and I told him that I will not have

24 a conflict (pecuniary interest), as

2.5 I'm not involved in his business,

```
and the Conflict of Interest Act
 1
 2
                      clearly states that I must declare
 3
                      an interest if it's -- if it's -- is
                      spouse, sons, or daughters, and
 5
                      parents. I'm sending this to you
 6
                      only to ask if this is your
                      understanding as well, and I do
                      realize that I -- that you cannot
 9
                      give advice on this matter."
10
                   In your time as clerk in this time
11
   period, 2010 to 2012, again, was it common for the
12
    deputy mayor or other members of Council to seek your
13
    input on conflicts of interest?
14
                   MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly within this
15
   -- this time period, and still to this day. I -- I
   provide the conflict of interest orientation training
    to our committees, and for Council orientation, it's
17
18
   done through the lawyers.
19
                   But quite frequently, I would be asked
    a question, and they knew my answer was always, I
20
    can't provide legal advice or give you a legal
21
22
   opinion. However, in my response to this, as you can
23
    see, it would be -- generally what I would do is I'm
24
   not addressing his specific conflict that he
25
   identifies in here, but note that he was correct in
```

- 1 his understanding that the Municipal Conflict of
- 2 Interest Act does not pertain to siblings.
- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: So if we could
- 4 scroll up, I think we can then see there -- so was
- 5 this -- we have an -- response from you on the same
- 6 day. Is this -- is this what you're referring to?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes. And the
- 8 statement basically that's -- that's drilled into all
- 9 clerks through our Association of Municipal Clerks and
- 10 Treasurers of Ontario is -- and Council was -- is
- 11 fully aware, and any -- any people that I do advise is
- 12 that they need to satisfy themselves. So that's --
- 13 that's the common statement that we've always used.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: So I -- so I
- 15 understand, what you're saying is you would provide
- 16 information, but you would tell them that they needed
- 17 to go and -- and satisfy yourself?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Sorry,
- 20 themselves. Other -- in this time period, would
- 21 members of Council receive any -- and I think you've
- 22 already referred to it, but I'd like to know -- more
- 23 generally receive any training about how to identify
- 24 and -- and assess potential conflicts of interest?
- 25 MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly. So in

- 1 2010, when we did our comprehensive orientation
- 2 process, we actually had our solicitors in from Aird
- 3 Berlis to do specific training. So if they had
- 4 examples, they could speak to them directly, because
- 5 as -- as you are -- are probably aware, one (1) of the
- 6 significant changes put into place through Bill 68 has
- 7 been the requirement of having an integrity
- 8 commissioner.
- 9 So now -- now, members of Council and -
- 10 and the boards have access -- and the public to an
- 11 integrity commissioner that can provide
- 12 interpretation. Otherwise, Council had to seek their
- 13 own and pay out of pocket their own costs associated
- 14 with getting a legal response.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: So -- so at that
- 16 time, if -- if a member of Council wanted a legal
- 17 opinion, just to make sure I understand you correctly,
- 18 they would have to go and to speak to their own
- 19 lawyer?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: In this response to
- 22 Mr. Lloyd, you referenced the Municipal Conflict of
- 23 Interest Act, and that it identifies that a member is
- 24 not deemed to be in conflict if it's the interest,
- 25 direct or indirect, of a sibling. Again, putting

- 1 yourself in the time period, other than the Municipal
- 2 Conflict of Interest Act, were there any other laws or
- 3 policies that you were aware of that provided guidance
- 4 or information on what -- or what -- what was or was
- 5 not a conflict of interest?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: I'm aware -- you
- 7 know, obviously, there's other conflicts -- conflict
- 8 of interest requirements that are out there, but I am
- 9 not an expert in those, and I only speak to the
- 10 Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.
- 11 MR. JOHN MATHER: Other than this
- 12 email exchange that we've seen between you and Mr.
- 13 Lloyd, do you recall having any further conversations
- 14 with him about this -- this issue he potentially
- 15 identified with his brother?
- 16 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, I do not
- 17 recollect --
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay.
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: -- any further
- 20 conversations.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: Did you have any
- 22 knowledge about what Mr. Lloyd's brother may or may
- 23 not be considering doing in relation to the town?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No idea.
- 25 MR. JOHN MATHER: So if we could

- 1 scroll up in the email chain, we see Mr. Lloyd
- 2 responds and thanks you. And then, on January 27th,
- 3 2011, the document shows that Mr. Bul -- Mr. Lloyd
- 4 forwarded this email to Paul Bonwick.
- 5 Were you aware that Mr. Lloyd had
- 6 forwarded your email to Mr. Bonwick?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: I was not until I
- 8 received the Inquiry documents.
- 9 MR. JOHN MATHER: But at the time, you
- 10 did not know?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Did Mr. Lloyd give
- 13 you any indication that he would be forwarding your
- 14 response on to Mr. Bonwick?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No, he did not.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Did you have any
- 17 awareness that Mr. Bonwick would be relying -- or
- 18 using your communications with Mr. Lloyd in ongoing
- 19 discussions with PowerStream?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No, I did not.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: And at this point in
- 22 time -- and by this point in time, January 2011, did
- 23 you know anything about Mr. Bonwick -- potential
- 24 relationship, or working relationship with
- 25 PowerStream?

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37
                  MS. SARA ALMAS: I had no idea.
 1
 2
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: So the next thing
   I'd like to turn to is page 76 of foundation document
 3
   1.
 5
 6
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: And paragraph 192,
 9
   specifically.
10
11
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
12
13
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: So, Ms. Almas, this
14
   is -- this is paragraph 192, in Section -- in chapter
15
   3.4 of foundation document 1. And the paragraph
   describes Mr. Bonwick contacting you around June 2nd,
17
   2011, and to -- to ask you for a meeting. And then it
18
   indicates that you agreed to meet with him on that
19 day.
20
                  Do you have any recollection of this
21 meeting?
22
                  MS. SARA ALMAS: I do.
23
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: What do you recall
24 about it?
2.5
                  MS. SARA ALMAS: I recall getting the
```

- 1 -- the email from Mr. Bonwick in the morning. We had
- 2 agreed to get together later that morning. And I -- I
- 3 didn't know the basis for -- for the request, and what
- 4 -- what he was going to talk about -- I believe he
- 5 indicated it was about a proposal, and he wanted to
- 6 have a conversation with myself.
- 7 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And when you
- 8 received this email from Mr. Bonwick, or this request
- 9 for a meeting, what did you know about him at the
- 10 time?
- 11 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I knew Mr.
- 12 Bonwick was a former MP. I knew he was the mayor's
- 13 brother. I knew of his company, Commen -- Compenso
- 14 Communications.
- I didn't have any sort of personal
- 16 relationship or acquaintance with Mr. Bonwick, and
- 17 that's it.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: What did you know
- 19 about Compenso at the time?
- 20 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I knew that they
- 21 were a -- a PR communication type of company. I
- 22 wasn't aware of their -- their full portfolio of what
- 23 they did.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: And was this the
- 25 first time that Mr. Bonwick had emailed you for a

- 1 meeting to discuss something that his company was
- 2 doing?
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: I can't say for
- 4 certain, but I don't -- I don't recollect another time
- 5 prior, or -- or subsequent.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Were you
- 7 surprised that Mr. Bonwick was reaching out to you at
- 8 this point?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: Not particularly. I
- 10 -- I get requests for meetings all the time. I'm --
- 11 we have a very busy office here, and I have a very
- 12 large portfolio, so it's not unusual to meet with a
- 13 lot of people.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And so I
- 15 believe you -- you agreed to meet with him, and you've
- 16 -- you've walked us through how that came about. What
- 17 you recall that the meeting itself? What was the
- 18 discussion there?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly. So at --
- 20 at that time, he advised me that he had put in a
- 21 proposal with PowerStream, and he explained who
- 22 PowerStream was, and indicated that this proposal was
- 23 to work in -- as noted in here. He's saying that
- 24 PowerStream was basically an LDC, and he was going to
- 25 be -- his proposal was to work with PowerStream to do

- 1 work with the CHEC companies, which is an LCD
- 2 cooperative, basically, in the region, and Collingwood
- 3 was a member.
- 4 He was going to be providing PR
- 5 activities and community outreach. However, he had
- 6 confirmed with me that Brian Bentz, the CEO of
- 7 PowerStream, had indicated a concern with potential
- 8 conflict if they're doing any work with Collingwood,
- 9 since he was the mayor's brother, and he just wanted
- 10 to -- he wanted to seek my opinion.
- 11 So during the conversation, I said, I
- 12 cannot give you legal advice. You need to satisfy
- 13 yourself. He had asked if I would prepare, then, a
- 14 general email to provide to Mr. Bentz, and I said no,
- 15 I wasn't really comfortable with that.
- 16 He provided the suggestion about -- if
- 17 he sent an email and copied me, would that be
- 18 appropriate if -- if it relayed what we talked about,
- 19 and I said, As long as you said that I'm not giving
- 20 you legal advice, certainly. And basically, that was
- 21 our conversation.
- 22 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay, so when I'm --
- 23 I'm going to ask you a few questions about that, but I
- 24 -- I noticed I think you were looking at paragraph
- 25 193, which sets out a transcript of some notes that

- 1 you took of that meeting. So I'm going to ask that
- 2 that document got called up on the screen. It says CG
- 3 -- CJI9206.

4

5 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 7 MR. JOHN MATHER: So Ms. Almas, in
- 8 foundation document 1, we see a transcript of a
- 9 written -- written notes that you took at this
- 10 meeting. Is what -- what you see on the screen now --
- 11 or though -- is that a copy of those notes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That is.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And I note,
- 14 if we scroll up a bit, the date of the notes is June
- 15 1st, 2011. Do you see that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 17 MR. JOHN MATHER: Is that date
- 18 correct?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: That is incorrect.
- 20 And actually, if you look at my notes, I regularly, on
- 21 the 1st of the month, do errors, but I actually
- 22 started to write May to begin with. But yes, it was
- 23 June 2nd, the date of the meeting.
- 24 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And at this
- 25 point in the meeting, you mentioned that Mr. Bonwick

- 1 was -- had -- had -- was going to -- could -- was
- 2 considering working for PowerStream. What did you
- 3 know about PowerStream at that point?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I really didn't
- 5 know too much about PowerStream.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: Had you heard of
- 7 them before?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe I -- I
- 9 would have.
- 10 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And I believe
- 11 one of the notes, or one of the things you -- you --
- 12 you mentioned is, there's a -- there's a line there
- 13 that says "PR activities/community outreach." Do
- 14 you see that there?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: And I just want to
- 17 make sure I -- I have this correctly, that is a note
- 18 reflecting what Mr. Bonwick told you about what he was
- 19 going to be doing for PowerStream?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: And beyond PR
- 22 activities/community outreach, what else did he tell
- 23 you about what he was going to do for PowerStream?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: Nothing further that
- 25 I recollect.

1 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So I would

- 2 like to pull up document --
- THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Before
- 4 you leave that, on your note where it says, "Paul to
- 5 send email," there's a question mark. Is there a
- 6 reason for that, do you remember?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: No. I actually -- I
- 8 regularly do arrows and question mark something. I
- 9 think that was -- I believe that that was my intention
- 10 to question, to make sure that we had a conversation
- 11 about he was going to send it, it wasn't to be me, and
- 12 our conversation about -- our conversation about me
- 13 not providing legal advice.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: And we'll -- we will
- 15 be coming back to these notes in a second. I just
- 16 want to pull up another document, so CJI9206.
- 17 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: I
- 18 thought this was 9206.
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: Oh, my apologies.
- 20 Sorry, ALE192.

21

22 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 24 So if we could just quickly scan
- 25 through the document so Ms. Almas can just see what

- 1 the document looks like. We'll get to specific parts.
- 2 And scroll down to the bottom.

3

4 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 6 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
- 7 MR. JOHN MATHER: So, Ms. Almas, do you
- 8 recognize this document?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: I have never seen
- 10 this document before the inquiry showed it to me.
- 11 MR. JOHN MATHER: Right. So it's our
- 12 understanding that this is Mr. Bonwick's retainer with
- 13 PowerStream. And if we go up to the top of the
- 14 document, you see it's dated June 7th, 2011, and I
- 15 appreciate, Ms. Almas, that you did not see this
- 16 document, you weren't aware of this document at the
- 17 time.
- 18 But if we could scroll down to where it
- 19 says "Scope of Work" and it says "CCI," which I
- 20 believe is Compenso Communications, "and Bonwick
- 21 shall," and then it sets out in bullet point form
- 22 various activities or scopes of work.
- 23 And have you reviewed these bullet
- 24 points, Ms. Almas?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I have, yes.

- 1 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Did Mr.
- 2 Bonwick say -- at your meeting, do you recall, did he
- 3 say this is the sort of work he'd be doing for
- 4 PowerStream?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: I had no idea that it
- 6 had anything to do -- and obviously he probably
- 7 wouldn't have shared with me either because we hadn't
- 8 even had conversations about selling the LDC, so I had
- 9 no idea that it was for opportunities to actually
- 10 purchase the company or merge with a company or a
- 11 strategic partnership with a company.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Right. So that says
- 13 -- the first bullet point that says, "Identify
- 14 potential opportunities for the purchase, merger,
- 15 other business combinations of LDCs," he didn't talk
- 16 about that in terms of what he'd be doing?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: And then at your
- 19 meeting on June 2nd, did he talk about providing,
- 20 sorry, preparing detailed briefings, identifying key
- 21 decision-makers related to a particular opportunity?
- 22 MS. SARA ALMAS: I don't recollect.
- 23 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Did he say
- 24 anything about assisting in the preparation of any
- 25 proposals that PowerStream intends to submit?

```
I don't know for
 1
                  MS. SARA ALMAS:
   sure, but I wouldn't be taking proposals in the
   context of an acquisition or merger. It was more of a
 3
   communications, a PR, or working with a cooperative
 5
   together.
 6
                  MR. JOHN MATHER:
                                     Right. And so if we
   could scroll down to "Methodology and Deliverables."
   And so this says, "While executing this retainer, CCI
   and Bonwick shall undertake the following," and it
   sets out various activities that he'd be doing.
10
11
                  Looking at this now, did Mr. Bonwick
   describe these activities to you as what he would be
13
   doing for PowerStream? And if you need a moment to
14
   read, please take it.
15
16
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
17
18
                  MS. SARA ALMAS:
                                     Sorry. In reviewing
19
   it, in a general context some of this information I
   believe Mr. Bonwick shared with me, but again it
   wasn't in the context of -- of acquiring the Collus
21
   Utility Services Corporation.
22
23
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: So what -- what did
24 he share with you?
2.5
                  MS. SARA ALMAS: So -- so basically,
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- 1 like the key components that I actually wrote in my
- 2 notes were about the PR activities and that sort of
- 3 community outreach and -- and knowing that his company
- 4 did communications because we had a conversation about
- 5 what Ian Chadwick's role, who was a councillor at the
- 6 time, generally was with this organization. I don't
- 7 think it was specific with the proposal he was talking
- 8 about. It was just -- I believe it was a side kind of
- 9 conversation that we had, so it was more in -- in that
- 10 frame --
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay.
- 12 MS. SARA ALMAS: -- conversation. So
- 13 I wouldn't say that this -- I'm sure that he shared
- 14 some of this, but it was -- I didn't take it in the
- 15 correct context because I wasn't aware.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: If we could scroll
- 17 down a little further, just where it says "Issue
- 18 monitoring," and it says in the first sentence that
- 19 CCI -- so:
- 20 "Compenso is in constant contact
- 21 with municipal government leaders
- 22 and as such is able to monitor and
- report any changes or opportunities
- 24 that may arise as your early warning
- 25 system. Our intelligence gathering

48 will help prepare you to respond to 1 2 any potential critical challenges 3 brought forward regarding this approach." 5 In June -- on June 2nd, 2011, were you aware that Mr. Bonwick was in constant contact with municipal government leaders? 7 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: I didn't know then. 9 MR. JOHN MATHER: Understood. So the question was at that time, okay. And did he tell you 10 11 that he was planning on being in constant contact with 12 municipal government leaders? 13 MS. SARA ALMAS: I can't recollect 14 specifically that conversation. 15 MR. JOHN MATHER: And did he give you an indication that Compenso was going to be acting as, 17 and I appreciate these are not your words, but an 18 early warning system? 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: No. 20 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So I'd like 21 to mark this as an exhibit. 22 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Yes. 23 24 --- EXHIBIT NO. 3: ALE0000192 2.5

- 1 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And then if
- 2 we could go back to the document we had up, which was
- 3 see CJI9206.

4

5 (BRIEF PAUSE)

6

- 7 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Ms. Almas, we've
- 9 brought your notes back up on the screen, and while I
- 10 -- while it's on my mind, I'd like to mark this as an
- 11 exhibit as well.
- 12 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Yes.

13

14 --- EXHIBIT NO. 4: CJI0009206

- 16 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
- MR. JOHN MATHER: So you mentioned
- 18 Ian Chadwick in your earlier answer. And Mr. Chadwick
- 19 was a councillor at the time, is that correct?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: And we see here
- 22 there's a note that says, "Ian's role, Media Relations
- 23 Training." You've touched on it a bit, but I just
- 24 want to make sure we have a -- a complete answer.
- 25 What do you recall Mr. Bonwick telling you about what

- 1 Mr. Chadwick would be doing?
- 2 MS. SARA ALMAS: I don't -- I don't
- 3 recollect that -- that Ian's role was specifically
- 4 talked about in the context of his proposal. I
- 5 believe, because it was at that time that we knew that
- 6 Ian was doing some work and there was some questions
- 7 the odd time that would happen between staff and the
- 8 public about on Ian's role with Compenso, so I sought
- 9 -- I believe that I sought the opportunity at this
- 10 time just to have a, you know, conversation about what
- 11 Ian actually did for the company.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: So at this point in
- 13 time you were -- you were aware that the -- that the -
- 14 the public -- it was publicly known that Mr.
- 15 Chadwick was working for Compenso. Do I have that
- 16 correct?
- 17 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I believe so.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And why did
- 19 you believe so?
- 20 MS. SARA ALMAS: I know that at a
- 21 certain time that his -- his name was on the public
- 22 website, and it would have been from staff or the
- 23 public that would've contacted me to let me know.
- 24 MR. JOHN MATHER: I'm sorry, what do
- 25 you mean by the public website?

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: The public would have
- 2 let ... not public website.
- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay.
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Sorry, the -- the
- 5 Compenso website had -- had information on it.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So, and --
- 7 and again I just want to make sure I understand
- 8 clearly. At this point you -- you don't -- maybe I'll
- 9 put it this way, you don't recall whether Mr. Bonwick
- 10 said whether Mr. Chadwick was working in relation with
- 11 PowerStream?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So the next
- 14 document I'd like to be pulled up is ALE175.

15

16 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 18 MR. FREDERICK CHENOWETH: Before we
- 19 move to that exhibit, are these exhibits to have
- 20 exhibit numbers or do I take it that we're just going
- 21 to refer to them by their ALE number?
- THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: How do
- 23 you want to do that?
- 24 MS. KATE MCGRANN: I think for ease of
- 25 reference we'll continue to refer to them by the

- 1 document ID that you've been heard called out so far
- 2 this morning.
- THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: If
- 4 that becomes a problem, let me know and we'll just
- 5 change the way we're --
- 6 MR. WILLIAM MCDOWELL: Just one second
- 7 on that point. It -- it's possible I think just to --
- 8 to mark them with -- on the database with a code, so
- 9 it's the same number but it has a checkmark or
- 10 something that indicates that it's been made an
- 11 exhibit.
- 12 MS. KATE MCGRANN: We'll look into
- 13 that and come back to you. Thanks.
- 14
- 15 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: So, Ms. Almas, on
- 17 the screen we have an email dated June 2nd, 2011.
- 18 It's from Mr. Bonwick to Brian Bentz, John Glicksman,
- 19 copied to yourself.
- As a preliminary question, did you know
- 21 who Mr. Bentz was prior to meeting Mr. Bonwick?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I don't believe so.
- 23 I don't believe that I -- I would have known him until
- 24 the meeting that I had with -- with Paul.
- 25 MR. JOHN MATHER: And I think you said

- 1 earlier that Mr. Bonwick suggested that Mr. Bentz had
- 2 had some potential concerns, and again I'm not trying
- 3 to put words in your mouth so please correct me if I'm
- 4 wrong, but had some potential concerns and wanted Mr.
- 5 Bonwick to speak to the Town.
- Do you remember what Mr. Bonwick said
- 7 about Mr. Bentz's concerns during the meeting?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: Sorry, just -- just
- 9 to clarify, I don't recoll -- I don't recollect that
- 10 he said -- told Mr. Bonwick to contact the Town to get
- 11 clarity.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I think -- I think he
- 14 was told that he needs to provide PowerStream with
- 15 confirmation that there wouldn't be any sort of
- 16 conflict, so he reached out --
- 17 MR. JOHN MATHER: Right.
- 18 MS. SARA ALMAS: -- obviously to me.
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: Right, and thank
- 20 you. Thank you for clarifying.
- 21 Do you remember anything else about
- 22 what Mr. Bonwick said about PowerStream or Mr. Bentz'
- 23 concerns?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: They just didn't want
- 25 any potential opportunities that came in the future to

- 1 be impacted by a conflict with -- with his sister.
- 2 MR. JOHN MATHER: Who was the mayor at
- 3 the time?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Mayor Cooper, yes.
- 5 MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you -- do you
- 6 remember at the time receiving this email?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: I do.
- 8 MR. JOHN MATHER: And what was your
- 9 reaction to receiving this email?
- 10 MS. SARA ALMAS: I remember being
- 11 disappointed. Obviously he put the word "opinion" in
- 12 brackets, because we had the conversation that I don't
- 13 provide legal advice or opinion. He noted in there,
- 14 Provincial Conflict of Interest Act, and I -- I
- 15 addressed the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, but
- 16 generally I wasn't -- I wasn't -- I wasn't overly
- 17 surprised. Those were the two (2) things I was
- 18 frustrated about, but generally I thought it was -- it
- 19 was a pretty accurate description of what -- what we
- 20 had a conversation about.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So the two
- 22 (2) things you were frustrated about was the word
- 23 "opinion" in brackets and the Provincial Conflict of
- 24 Interest Act. Can you just expand on why you were
- 25 concerned about the word "opinion"?

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: Because it -- it gave
- 2 more of a -- a legal framework to it in my -- I
- 3 personally believe that it made it look like it was
- 4 more of a legal interpretation I was providing by
- 5 putting the word "opinion" in there.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: Right. And you had
- 7 expressed to Mr. Bonwick that you weren't providing a
- 8 legal opinion.
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 10 MR. JOHN MATHER: And what concerned
- 11 you about the use of the term "Provincial Conflict of
- 12 Interest Act"?
- 13 MS. SARA ALMAS: Because I didn't
- 14 speak to anything except for the Municipal Conflict of
- 15 Interest Act.
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: Did anything else
- 17 concern you about this email?
- 18 MS. SARA ALMAS: No. In hindsight it
- 19 -- it seemed okay because I was -- basically what he
- 20 had described as his services were. He didn't detail
- 21 what -- what the services were in the response, but I
- 22 took his services different than Mr. Bentz and John
- 23 Glicksman would've taken his services.
- 24 MR. JOHN MATHER: And you -- you've
- 25 explained to us how you -- you understood his

- 1 services, so --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah.
- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: -- based on what Mr.
- 4 Bonwick had described what services would be, was this
- 5 a fair characterization for him to write that you had
- 6 -- that you were, quote,
- 7 "Quite clear that there was no
- 8 conflict of interest based on my
- 9 company's relationship with
- 10 PowerStream"?
- 11 MS. SARA ALMAS: And again I addressed
- 12 it as the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, it was
- 13 not applicable to siblings.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: So sorry, and so --
- 15 so --
- 16 MS. SARA ALMAS: So generally, that's
- 17 correct.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Based on what you --
- 19 you knew the time.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: Now, having seen Mr.
- 22 Bonwick's retainer with PowerStream, do you think that
- 23 was a fair characterization?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Why not?

- MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I -- I --
- 2 actually I -- my response regarding the Municipal
- 3 Conflict of Interest Act is -- is clear, because the
- 4 Municipal Conflict of Interest Act is specific and it
- 5 doesn't include siblings, so I -- I think that's okay.
- 6 Do I think that if I knew the full extent of what the
- 7 services were, I may have responded differently? I'm
- 8 not so sure.
- 9 I think the biggest thing that I'm
- 10 frustrated that I didn't do, and as -- as you can see
- 11 later on I actually bring this to the attention of our
- 12 CAO at the time, because it was concerning me a little
- 13 bit, is I wish that I had responded just -- just be
- 14 clear this is not a legal opinion or an interpretation
- 15 or legal advice.
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: So in retrospect you
- 17 wish you would have responded and identified that it
- 18 wasn't a legal opinion or legal advice. Is there
- 19 anything else you would've said in retrospect?
- 20 MS. SARA ALMAS: I think I -- I would
- 21 have made it clear too in the response that, you know,
- 22 if that's what you're looking for, you need to go and
- 23 satisfy yourself, you know, same as what I would tell
- 24 a member of council.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: At this point in

- 1 time wasn't unusual for someone who wasn't a member of
- 2 council to be coming to you asking questions about the
- 3 Municipal Conflict of Interest Act?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, that was -- that
- 5 would be rare.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: Can you think of
- 7 another occasion on when it occurred?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I cannot offhand. If
- 9 a member of the public was concerned that another
- 10 member -- that a member of council had -- had
- 11 contravened the Act, I may get an inquiry, but again
- 12 very rare.
- 13 MR. JOHN MATHER: I would like to mark
- 14 this document as an exhibit.
- 15 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Yes.

16

17 --- EXHIBIT NO. 5: ALE0000175

18

- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: So the next document
- 20 I'd like to pull up is TOC49090.

21

22 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 24 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
- MR. JOHN MATHER: So if we scroll

- 1 down, we can see that it's the email we were just
- 2 looking at from Mr. Bonwick to Mr. Bentz and Mr.
- 3 Glicksman, and you then forwarded it on. If we scroll
- 4 to the top to Ms. Wingrove, Kim Wingrove -- and she
- 5 was the CAO at the time, is that correct?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 7 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Is this what
- 8 you were referring to when you said that you forwarded
- 9 on the email to Ms. Wingrove?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: What did Ms.
- 12 Wingrove say about the email?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I recollect we -
- 14 we had a brief conversation, and I said, you know, I
- 15 did have this conversation with Mr. Bonwick and I
- 16 wanted to bring this to your attention.
- 17 And I remember saying, you know, like
- 18 technically he's not saying that I'm giving legal
- 19 advice, and I remember having a conversation, is this,
- 20 you know, one of the battles that we should engage in
- 21 or not engage in, and we -- it was collectively after
- 22 the conversation determined that it would remain
- 23 unanswered.
- 24 MR. JOHN MATHER: What you mean by is
- 25 this one of the battles we should engage in or not

- 1 engage in?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Like, I think, like -
- 3 like having -- actually I don't -- I don't even know
- 4 how to -- like, is this -- is this -- does this
- 5 warrant a response basically I think was -- was
- 6 basically our conversation, and then we decided that,
- 7 you know -- you know, rather than engaging in -- in
- 8 the situation, sometimes it's -- it's best just to
- 9 leave things alone, and I believe that was the context
- 10 of our conversation and hence the hindsight that I
- 11 wish I had just responded.
- 12 MR. JOHN MATHER: Understood,
- 13 understood. Other than forwarding this email to Ms.
- 14 Wingrove and having the conversation you've described,
- 15 did you take any other steps after receiving this
- 16 email?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: Did you have any
- 19 further conversations with Ms. Wingrove about Mr.
- 20 Bonwick?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: Not that I recollect.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Did you ever have
- 23 any further conversations with Mr. Bonwick about his
- 24 work for PowerStream?
- 25 MS. SARA ALMAS: Not that I recollect.

- 1 MR. JOHN MATHER: And as the process
- 2 towards the RFP for the sale of Collus, the sale of
- 3 Collus and the transaction progressed, you know, from
- 4 this date, June 2011 into July 2012, are you -- are
- 5 you -- were you aware of Mr. Bonwick's work for
- 6 PowerStream ever coming up in conversation or being
- 7 brought to your attention again?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: I don't recollect it
- 9 coming to my attention again.
- 10 MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you recall
- 11 whether you ever thought about Mr. Bonwick's work for
- 12 PowerStream as the Collus sale was being carried
- 13 through?
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I -- I'm
- 15 sure that I did but I don't recollect at what point.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So it sounds
- 17 like you -- you don't recollect where but you think
- 18 you maybe did. Do you remember what you thought? Did
- 19 you have a concern? Do never what the recollection
- 20 was?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: You know, piecing
- 22 together, like, once I became aware that the sale was
- 23 happening and soon as I heard that one of the
- 24 participants was -- was PowerStream, you know, would
- 25 have been that kind of trigger that, hmm --

1 MR. JOHN MATHER: You said would have

- 2 been the trigger. Do -- do you remem -- and I just
- 3 want --
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: No.
- 5 MR. JOHN MATHER: That's fine.
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: It's so long ago. I
- 7 apologize.
- 8 MR. JOHN MATHER: No, no. And
- 9 understood. It's -- it's a -- it's a while. And I
- 10 take it then -- do you recall ever speaking to anyone
- 11 about Mr. Bonwick and PowerStream later in the
- 12 process, for instance after it was announced they were
- 13 a bidder?
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, because I had the
- 15 whole conversation with the CAO and the CAO was
- 16 involved throughout the -- the pro -- process on the
- 17 task team, so she was aware and if she felt that that
- 18 was an issue that came up, I expected that she would
- 19 have made a statement.
- 20 MR. JOHN MATHER: Understood. So the
- 21 next document I would like to pull up is CJI10492.
- 22
- 23 (BRIEF PAUSE)
- 24
- MR. JOHN MATHER: So we're scrolling

- 1 through the document, and if we go to the top of the
- 2 page -- so it's my understanding that this is another
- 3 copy of a page from your notebook. Is that correct?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 5 MR. JOHN MATHER: And the date on the
- 6 top of the note is May 18th, 2011, and if we scroll
- 7 down, there is a note that says "Collus valuation,
- 8 financial report, in camera, council rep, arrow
- 9 motion."
- 10 Do you recall the circumstances of you
- 11 making this note on or around May 18th?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: So certainly the next
- 13 the next -- the next council meeting, I believe it was
- 14 the -- the public presentation of Collus presenting a
- 15 business plan, and so I would have been given
- 16 information to say, you know, when you're preparing
- 17 your agenda, you know, this is the -- the information.
- 18 I did note in camera on here.
- 19 In reviewing actually the -- the next
- 20 set of minutes, there was no in camera, because quite
- 21 regularly I'd be asked to have something to go in
- 22 camera and I would have to say whether it met the test
- 23 of being in camera or not, and I could see that this
- 24 could have been one (1) of those instances.
- 25 MR. JOHN MATHER: Of whether or not it

- 1 would be in camera or not?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: So I might have been
- 3 told by, and most likely it would have been Ed
- 4 Houghton saying that on the next agenda we need these
- 5 items to go forward, including an in camera, and then
- 6 I would have to make the decision whether it's an in
- 7 camera or not, because I -- I don't believe that there
- 8 was an in camera actually on that meeting.
- 9 MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you recall Mr.
- 10 Houghton or anyone else specifically mentioning that
- 11 there had been a valuation of Collus at this point?
- 12 MS. SARA ALMAS: No. Just it was
- 13 provided me in this context, together with their
- 14 business plan, but it didn't trigger a sale to me.
- 15 MR. JOHN MATHER: And -- and I
- 16 appreciate that. I'm just wondering if, you know,
- 17 looking at this note today but then going back to
- 18 2011, May 2011, if you recall anyone telling you that
- 19 there had been a valuation of Collus or there was a
- 20 contemplation of a valuation of Collus, so there was
- 21 someone determining what its -- what its value would
- 22 be?
- 23 MS. SARA ALMAS: I wasn't involved
- 24 with the Collus board at all, and so I would write
- 25 down face value the information that was given and I

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1 wasn't aware what they were doing.
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- MR. JOHN MATHER: And I think -- I
- 3 just want to make sure I have this correct, that you
- 4 don't recall who gave you whatever information that
- 5 led to this note?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct. And I
- 7 didn't -- I didn't note it here and I can't remember--
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Can't remember.
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: -- eight (8) years
- 10 ago.
- 11 MR. JOHN MATHER: I would like to mark
- 12 this document as an exhibit.
- 13 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Yes.

14

15 --- EXHIBIT NO. 6: CJI0010492

16

- 17 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: The next document
- 19 I'd like to pull up is CJI9217.

20

21 (BRIEF PAUSE)

22

- MR. JOHN MATHER: And then after that
- 24 I'd also like to pull up 9218.

1 (BRIEF PAUSE)

2

- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: So we'll come back
- 4 to it, Ms. Wingrove, (sic) but this is documents
- 5 CJI9217, so if we could just scroll.

6

7 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 9 MR. JOHN MATHER: Actually, no, we --
- 10 we'll stay here for now. Do you recognize this
- 11 document?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 13 MR. JOHN MATHER: What is it?
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: It was the mayor's
- 15 speaking notes.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: The mayor's speaking
- 17 notes from when?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe it's
- 19 December the 5th.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Is there something
- 21 you want to see? Do you want to go to the top of the
- 22 document?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: The very top of the
- 24 page, I -- I've noted to keep with the December 5th in
- 25 camera package and that it was confidential.

- 1 MR. JOHN MATHER: So these are the
- 2 mayor's speaking notes from December 5th from a
- 3 council meeting?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: From the in camera
- 5 council meeting, correct.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: And how do you know
- 7 these are the mayor's notes?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: Because -- let's just
- 9 go back to the bottom. Number one (1), I was present
- 10 at the meeting, so I observed her speaking, and this
- 11 is -- these are her notes.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: I'm sorry, I just --
- 13 I -- I just want to make sure, like, why do you
- 14 believe these to be her notes? Did you see her write
- 15 them, for instance?
- 16 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes. I generally sit
- 17 beside the mayor at -- at all meetings, and they
- 18 regularly -- the mayor will regularly write notes on
- 19 her information, notes for herself to remember
- 20 whenever she is speaking, and then after all in camera
- 21 meetings are finished, I gather all of the materials
- 22 from in camera because obviously all the materials are
- 23 confidential, and I would have collected her material
- 24 and this was with it.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Yeah. And so do you

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68
1 recognize this as her handwriting?
2
                  MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
3
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: So I'd like to mark
  this as an exhibit.
5
                  THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Yes.
6
  --- EXHIBIT NO. 7: CJI0009217
9
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: And then I will pull
10 up CGI9218.
11
12
                         (BRIEF PAUSE)
13
14 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
15
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: So this is a -- a
16 different document. Do you recognize it?
17
                  MS. SARA ALMAS: It -- it -- it
18 appears to be more notes from the mayor.
19
                 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And can we
20 scroll down?
21
22
                         (BRIEF PAUSE)
23
24
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you have any --
25 do you -- do you have any reason to believe that these
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- 1 notes are from the same meeting as the notes we just
- 2 looked at?
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe that they
- 4 are the same -- same meeting.
- 5 MR. JOHN MATHER: And why do you
- 6 believe that?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Because I believe on
- 8 December the 5th was whenever council instructed staff
- 9 to pursue negotiations with the number one (1)
- 10 proponent and report back to council.
- 11 MR. JOHN MATHER: This is the -- the
- 12 December 5th in camera meeting where a decision was --
- 13 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe so. I
- 14 would have to look at my notes but I believe on
- 15 December 5th that's what happened.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Yeah. I'd like to
- 17 mark this as an exhibit.
- 18 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Yes.

19

20 --- EXHIBIT NO. 8: CJI0009218

21

22 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- MR. JOHN MATHER: Ms. Almas, in 2010
- 25 to 2012, were you ever involved in any procurement or

- 1 RFPs for the Town of Collingwood?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Generally within --
- 3 within the bylaw, I believe it was 2006, the clerk had
- 4 some responsibilities within the bylaw. It was -- the
- 5 bylaw was actually finalized by an external lawyer at
- 6 Aird & Berlis through our Treasury Department and
- 7 responsibility for purchasing was either through the
- 8 buyer or purchasing manager or department head and --
- 9 and on the prescribed forms that were provided by the
- 10 Treasurer, I believe.
- 11 MR. JOHN MATHER: That was in 2010 to
- 12 2012?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: So at that point in
- 15 time did you have any role in Town RFPs or
- 16 procurement?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- so that -- I was
- 18 responsible for opening, so at that time all RFPs that
- 19 the Town of Collingwood issued, it was the clerk's
- 20 requirement to be present and to open those and then
- 21 work with either the department head or the buyer
- 22 regarding any sort of official process that, you know,
- 23 that might need to be completed.
- 24 MR. JOHN MATHER: What do you mean you
- 25 were responsible for opening? What -- what did that

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1 involve?
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- MS. SARA ALMAS: So generally --
- 3 generally all the RFPs or tenders that were provided
- 4 were actually opened in a public forum.
- 5 MR. JOHN MATHER: And by opened do you
- 6 mean what was submitted was --
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right. So it was --
- 8 it was publicly known who bid on a project, and -- but
- 9 the -- if there was a two (2) envelope system, the
- 10 price envelope wouldn't be provided but at least it
- 11 would be known who -- who was bidding.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: And can you just
- 13 explain, again for someone who might not be familiar
- 14 with procurement, what a two (2) envelope system is?
- 15 MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly. So
- 16 basically we ask that proposals be submitted, one (1)
- 17 including background information, the proposal, the
- 18 details, any sort of experience, any sort of reference
- 19 material that they have to support their bid, with the
- 20 second envelope being retained with only the price on
- 21 what they're -- they're bidding, the -- the dollar
- 22 amount. So basically you would evaluate the criteria
- 23 and then only the top ring bidders, I generally would
- 24 be able -- you'd open their -- the second envelope.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: So a proponent would

- 1 submit two (2) envelopes. One (1) would contain what
- 2 was essentially non-financial criteria. Is that a
- 3 fair characterization?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 5 MR. JOHN MATHER: And then one (1)
- 6 envelope would contain the financial criteria?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 8 MR. JOHN MATHER: And I think I
- 9 understood from your answer, the non-financial
- 10 criteria would typically be opened publicly?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 12 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And -- and
- 13 then from there the top bidders, the financial
- 14 envelope would be opened?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: So I should clarify
- 16 that. That's our process since we implemented our new
- 17 purchasing bylaw in 2014 or '15, but before that, I
- 18 can't recollect if -- if all the prices were opened in
- 19 2010 to '12 or whether it was just the top ring
- 20 bidders, because now it's just the top ring bidders,
- 21 would you get the second one (1).
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Fair enough, so not
- 23 -- not certain in two thousand --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah.
- 25 MR. JOHN MATHER: -- ten, 2012,

- 1 whether all of the financial envelope would be opened
- 2 or not.
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 4 MR. JOHN MATHER: But would -- the
- 5 ones that would be opened, would they be opened
- 6 publicly?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Generally.
- 8 MR. JOHN MATHER: Generally, okay.
- 9 And in 2010 to 2012 were most procurements two (2)
- 10 envelope procurements; were some?
- 11 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I believe that
- 12 anything significant was generally done with the two
- 13 (2) envelope system, but I have -- I'd have to go
- 14 through my records.
- 15 MR. JOHN MATHER: That's -- that's
- 16 your recollection, that more significant matters would
- 17 -- would go --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: -- would generally
- 20 go two (2) envelopes? Is that -- is that fair?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. In terms of
- 23 the weighting of the value of the non-financial
- 24 submission versus the financial submission, was -- and
- 25 again 2010 to 2012, was there any policy or guideline

- 1 on how those two (2) components of a bid should be
- 2 weighted?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No, there wasn't a
- 4 guideline and I -- I -- I'm aware that when they did,
- 5 depending on the significance and depending what the
- 6 project was and the proposal was for, whether it was
- 7 for a professional service or -- or something else,
- 8 but it -- it wasn't consistent. It wasn't -- whether
- 9 it was 60/40 or 70/30. It varied depending on the
- 10 project.
- 11 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So I want to
- 12 move to a bit of a different topic area at this point,
- 13 and just to put everyone and yourself in a point in
- 14 time, I want to ask some questions about the process
- 15 of negot -- of the signing of the Transaction
- 16 documents.
- 17 And by that I mean we can see in the
- 18 Foundation Document that on January 23rd, 2012,
- 19 Council decided to proceed with the negotiations with
- 20 PowerStream to finalize a sale of 50 percent of Collus
- 21 that followed the December 5th meeting, 2011, we spoke
- 22 to earlier where they instructed staff -- or sorry,
- 23 instructed -- you'll correct me if I'm misstating
- 24 this, but instructed staff to continue negotiations.
- 25 So I want to talk about that process of finalizing the

- 1 Transaction documents.
- Were you involved in that process?
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: No.
- 4 MR. JOHN MATHER: It's my
- 5 understanding that you signed the Transaction
- 6 documents.
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 8 MR. JOHN MATHER: Is that correct?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- 10 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay.
- 11 MS. SARA ALMAS: I'm a signatory for
- 12 the Corporation.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: And it's also my
- 14 understanding that in order to have those Transaction
- 15 documents signed, a bylaw needed to be passed. Is
- 16 that fair?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Were you
- 19 involved in drafting that bylaw?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Ironically I wasn't
- 21 on this one (1).
- MR. JOHN MATHER: And why do you say
- 23 ironically you were not?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: Because I recall
- 25 receiving the bylaw actually from Leo Longo, a draft

- 1 bylaw that was circulated to, I believe, my -- myself
- 2 and the CAO and -- and Ed Houghton at the time, but
- 3 generally the clerk's department prepares 95 percent
- 4 of all the bylaws that -- that we do, unless it's some
- 5 sort of complex nature that -- that we would have
- 6 done. I know in the remaining sale transaction, we
- 7 had solicitor involvement as well, but it also
- 8 included more provisions in there because we had to
- 9 deal with buy-sell requirements, so basically if -- if
- 10 I had prepared the bylaw, it would have been more
- 11 simplified in its nature.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay, and so maybe
- 13 to assist in understanding that a bit further, we'll
- 14 pull up page 196 of the Foundation Document.

15

16 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: And, Your Honour, I
- 19 -- at this point I don't know what your views on a
- 20 morning break. I'm happy to continue but I just --
- 21 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: 11:30.
- 22 MR. JOHN MATHER: 11:30?
- THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: 11:30,
- 24 if that's okay with everybody, for fifteen (15)
- 25 minutes.

- 2 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: All right, thank
- 4 you. So Ms. Almas, if we could draw your attention to
- 5 paragraph 492, there's a description of -- on January
- 6 17th, 2012, Leo Longo of Aird & Berlis sent Ed
- 7 Houghton a draft bylaw authorizing Collingwood to
- 8 enter the Share Purchase Agreement and the Unanimous
- 9 Shareholders Agreement with PowerStream. And I just
- 10 want to ask you a few questions to help understand
- 11 what's going on in these -- these coming paragraphs.
- 12 So the Share Purchase Agreement and the
- 13 Unanimous Shareholders Agreement, it's our
- 14 understanding that those are the -- the primary
- 15 documents that effected the sale of Collus. Is that
- 16 your understanding?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And who was
- 19 Leo Longo?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Leo Longo the Town's
- 21 municipal solicitor.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: And he works for
- 23 Aird & Berlis?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 25 MR. JOHN MATHER: And so was this what

- 1 you were referring to when you said that Mr. Longo
- 2 drafted the bylaw authorizing Collingwood to enter the
- 3 -- the two (2) agreements?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 5 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And so is it
- 6 fair to say, based on what you've said, you would --
- 7 you at the time would have expected to be responsible
- 8 for drafting the bylaw?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: Generally I would for
- 10 -- for items of a similar nature.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Did anyone have any
- 12 discussions with you about why Mr. Longo would be
- 13 drafting this bylaw?
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: No. However, I knew
- 15 that Aird & Berlis, you know, had been working very
- 16 intimately on this file, so I know that generally that
- 17 when bylaws come forward and my responsibility with
- 18 them is really to ensure they're technical in nature
- 19 and that they're enforceable, so obviously coming from
- 20 the -- the lawyer, I didn't have any concern because
- 21 basically it's -- it's the author of whoever needs the
- 22 bylaw, it's -- it's however they -- they want that
- 23 information to be contained.
- 24 MR. JOHN MATHER: Understood. So
- 25 unusual that Mr. Longo was drafting it but you weren't

```
concerned with the process at the time?
                   MS. SARA ALMAS:
 2
                                     No.
 3
                   MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So if we can
   scroll down to paragraph 493.
 5
 6
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
                   MR. JOHN MATHER: And so I don't
   propose to take you to the whole bylaw, so I'm just
   going to ask you questions that are set out in the
10
11
   document. So this paragraph says the bylaw drafted by
   Mr. Longo included the following clauses, and there's
13
   two (2) clauses there. The first is,
14
                      "That the mayor and clerk be
15
                      authorized to execute the Share
16
                      Purchase Agreement and Shareholders
17
                      Agreement with PowerStream
18
                      respecting the purchases of shares
19
                      of the Collingwood Utility Services
20
                      Corp. once those agreements are in a
                      form and content to the satisfaction
21
22
                      of the Town's solicitor."
23
                   Do you have any -- looking at that now,
24
   do you have any concerns about that clause, any
25
   thoughts about the clause?
```

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: No.
- 2 MR. JOHN MATHER: Is that something
- 3 you would have included had you drafted the bylaw?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: We generally
- 5 wouldn't, you know, indicate actually within the bylaw
- 6 to the satisfaction of the Town's solicitors because
- 7 Town staff, you know, take the advice of their
- 8 solicitors before we signed an agreement anyways, so
- 9 it was common practice, you know, whether it was
- 10 included in -- within the -- the specifity of the
- 11 bylaw or not.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: So just to make sure
- 13 I understand, it wasn't your practice to include
- 14 satisfaction of the Town's solicitor, instead it would
- 15 be the satisfaction of the staff member under the
- 16 understanding that that staff member would be taking
- 17 advice from the solicitor?
- 18 MS. SARA ALMAS: No. Basically would
- 19 say that the mayor and clerk be authorized to execute
- 20 whatever documents are necessary to effect the
- 21 decision of council, in a very broad sense.
- 22 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And -- and
- 23 --
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: We wouldn't say to
- 25 the satisfaction of anyone.

```
MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Oh, so it
 1
   wouldn't say to the satisfaction of anyone?
 3
                  MS. SARA ALMAS:
                                    No.
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: But --
 5
                  MS. SARA ALMAS: But --
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: -- on the
 6
   understanding that staff was going to be seeking legal
   advice?
 9
                  MS. SARA ALMAS: Absolutely.
10
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: Thank you.
                                                  That
11
   helps clarify.
12
                  And then the second portion of the
13
   bylaw that's reflected here says,
14
                      "That appropriate Town staff and the
15
                      Town solicitor report back to
16
                      council as required, as the
17
                      conditions precedent to closing this
18
                      transaction are addressed, and in
19
                      any event prior to the final closing
20
                      of the share purchase Transaction."
21
                  Did you have, at the time or today, any
   views on this portion of the bylaw?
22
23
                  MS. SARA ALMAS: No, I didn't -- I
24 didn't have any concerns when I -- I first read it.
   With doing that, you know, obviously -- it's not
```

- 1 something that we would normally do prior to closing.
- 2 An analogy would be if I am authorized
- 3 to execute agreements on behalf of a corporation for a
- 4 purchase and sale, I don't then go back, sign the
- 5 agreement, and report back to Council to say I did
- 6 what you told me to do before it closes. So I -- I
- 7 did think that it was a little odd. For example,
- 8 council in our last transaction was provided with a
- 9 breakdown after the closing had happened because we
- 10 had been provided other direction to undertake before
- 11 -- before -- for the closing, so then we reported
- 12 back, you know, the outcome of the closing.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: So what you're
- 14 identifying as odd or unusual is -- is the requirement
- 15 that before closing --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: M-hm.
- 17 MR. JOHN MATHER: -- the staff or
- 18 solicitor report back to council.
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right. If there was
- 20 something that was significantly changed from what I
- 21 believe the intent that council approved and provided
- 22 the authorization on, then absolutely council --
- 23 report -- go back to council, but not just for the
- 24 fact of going back to counsel.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay, understood.

```
I'll have some more questions but I think it's 11:30,
 2
   so --
 3
                   THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Just
   before we break, number three (3), can you help me
   with -- what's that supposed to mean though, that --
 6
                      "That the appropriate Town staff and
                      the Town solicitor report back to
                      Council as required, as the
 9
                      conditions precedent to closing the
10
                      transaction are addressed, and in
11
                      any event prior to final closing."
12
                   Condition precedent to closing the
   transaction, so if they don't do it, can't close.
13
14
                   MS. SARA ALMAS: I didn't recollect
15
   that that was a condition precedent, but again I
   wasn't familiar with the documents nor with the
16
17
   preparation of this.
18
                   THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO:
                                                    Thank
19
  you.
20
                   We'll break for fifteen (15) minutes.
21
   --- Upon recessing at 11:31 a.m.
22
23
   --- Upon resuming at 11:51 a.m.
24
2.5
                   THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO:
                                                    I just
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want to clarify, we will be marking the exhibits with
   numbers and the documents that have been tendered so
   far, we'll produce a list so you have the numbers for
 3
   them.
 5
 6
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
                  MR. FREDERICK CHENOWETH: I just --
   with respect to that, Your Honour, I -- I thought my -
   - I thought My Friend, Mr. McDowell's comments were
10
11
   useful and that he suggested that it may also be
   possible to mark -- I take it he meant the Foundation
13
   Document, with -- with a note that certain links were
14
   made exhibits. If that's possible, that might be of
15
  assistance as well.
16
                   THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: I'll
   think about that, Mr. Chenoweth.
17
18
19 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
20
                   MR. JOHN MATHER: So if we could pull
   back up the Foundation Document where we were, page
21
22
   196.
23
24
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
2.5
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MR. JOHN MATHER: So paragraph 492, I
 1
   believe, was around where we were.
 3
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
 5
 6
                   MR. JOHN MATHER: So Ms. -- 493,
    sorry. So Ms. Almas, just to reorient -- reorient
 7
   ourselves, we were discussing these two (2) provisions
   of the bylaw that Mr. Longo drafted. If we could go
10
   down to the next paragraph.
11
12
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
13
14
                   MR. JOHN MATHER: And so this is
15
   paragraph 494 and we see that on January 18th, 2012,
   Dennis Nolan, who was the Executive Vice-President,
   Corporate Services, and Secretary at PowerStream, sent
17
18
   Mr. Houghton a revised version of the draft bylaw that
19
   Mr. Longo had prepared.
20
                   In this time period, Ms. Almas, would
   you have expected that the counter-party to a
21
22
   transaction would have had the opportunity to revise a
23
   bylaw that had been prepared for the Town?
24
                   MS. SARA ALMAS:
                                     Absolutely not.
2.5
                   MR. JOHN MATHER: Why not?
```

Because this is the 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: Town's -- the Town's bylaw and it's how the Town wants it to be in the form and approval for Town Council's 3 interests. It wasn't for PowerStream's interest. 5 MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you recall any discussion within the Town about -- let me put it 7 another way -- were you -- as far as you were aware, did anyone know that PowerStream had made a revision of the bylaw drafted by Mr. Longo? 10 MS. SARA ALMAS: No. I was surprised 11 to see that it had been to PowerStream. 12 MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you remember any 13 conversations along those lines? 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: No. 15 MR. JOHN MATHER: I want to look at the summary of changes in this paragraph in terms of what Ms. -- the changes Mr. Nolan made to the bylaw, 17 18 starting with subparagraph (b) here which says that, 19 "Mr. Nolan replaced the requirement 20 that the Share Purchase Agreement and the Unanimous Shareholders 21 22 Agreement be in a form and contents 23 to the satisfaction of the Town 24 solicitor, with a requirement that 2.5 the agreements be in form and

- 1 content to the satisfaction of the
- 2 mayor."
- Reviewing that today, do you have any
- 4 concerns with that proposed change?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly knowing
- 6 that at the time the mayor was involved with both the
- 7 Town and the task force that was undertaking the
- 8 review and negotiation with -- with PowerStream, I
- 9 understand that she would have a little bit more
- 10 intimate knowledge, but regardless I -- as I -- I knew
- 11 Mayor Cooper, I know that the mayor would be relying
- 12 upon legal and staff advice for executing such a
- 13 document, so I wasn't terribly concerned.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: And when you say
- 15 wasn't terribly concerned, did you -- do you recall
- 16 reviewing, and now you may have answered this and I
- 17 apologize, but do you -- do you recall reviewing these
- 18 draft bylaws at the time or is this sitting here
- 19 today?
- 20 MS. SARA ALMAS: I recall receiving
- 21 the final version that came in that evening, and again
- 22 it came in on a Thursday evening, once we had gone
- 23 home from work with that final version from Mr.
- 24 Houghton, but again the bylaw, I am sure that the
- 25 technical components of the bylaw are there, but it

- 1 was -- it -- it's basically a CAO report, prepared by
- 2 staff report, and like I said earlier, it's the
- 3 Business Unit's requirement, what they believe should
- 4 be in the bylaw that -- that formed the bylaw.
- 5 MR. JOHN MATHER: And we can go to it
- 6 if we need to, but I think the final version of the
- 7 bylaw essentially has this change, which is it's in
- 8 the form and content to the satisfaction of the mayor.
- 9 So I understand that you saw that at the time and you
- 10 were comfortable with it. Is that fair?
- 11 MS. SARA ALMAS: Because I knew that
- 12 she'd be rely -- relying on the advice --
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Right.
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: -- of our solicitors
- 15 and staff.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Yeah, which you
- 17 explained, so thank you.
- 18 So moving to Item (c), subparagraph
- 19 (c), it said,
- 20 "Remove the requirement of that --
- 21 requirement that Town staff and the
- 22 solicitor report back to council
- 23 before the closing of the
- 24 Transaction."
- Do you see that?

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 2 MR. JOHN MATHER: You have any
- 3 concerns with this proposed change?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: No. I think we
- 5 touched upon it a little bit earlier.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: The reasons we
- 7 discussed, that it -- in fact it wasn't -- it was
- 8 unusual to have a report back. Is that fair?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right. Unless there
- 10 was some sort of significant change from what council
- 11 had -- had authorized.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Then with
- 13 subparagraph (d) it says,
- "Added a clause authorizing the
- mayor and town clerk to execute any
- documents related to the
- 17 Transaction."
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you recall at the
- 19 time whether this suggestion caused you any concern?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No, it didn't.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: And why not?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That's generally in -
- 23 in significant transactions, there could be other
- 24 documents that are required to effect the decision of
- 25 the Council and to ensure that we have the appropriate

- 1 authority, the Council authority through bylaw to
- 2 execute them. There's generally a statement like
- 3 this, I think within the bylaw.
- 4 MR. JOHN MATHER: Thank you. So as we
- 5 talked about, you -- you actually sign the documents
- 6 themselves. Do you recall when the Transaction
- 7 documents were signed?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: They were signed
- 9 early March of 2012.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: And --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Well, there's two (2)
- 12 sets of signing documents. There was those documents
- 13 and the signing at close.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay, and when was
- 15 the close, do you remember?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe it was on
- 17 July 31st.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: So there was signing
- 19 in March 2012 and a signing on July 31st, 20012?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you remember what
- 22 happened in between those two (2) signings, the March
- 23 signing and the July signing?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: So once the
- 25 Transaction agreements were prepared, I believe the

- 1 requirement was that it's sent to the OEB and then OEB
- 2 has to approve it before that can be finalized, and I
- 3 believe that was what -- what occurred in between.
- 4 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So there was
- 5 an initial signing and then the OEB approval process
- 6 and then a final signing?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 8 MR. JOHN MATHER: Is that fair
- 9 characterization?
- 10 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe that's
- 11 true.
- 12 MR. JOHN MATHER: That's to the best
- 13 of your recollection.
- 14 Starting with the March signing, would
- 15 you have read the -- and when I say the Transaction
- 16 documents I mean the Share Purchase Agreement and
- 17 Unanimous Shareholders Agreement and any related
- 18 documents.
- 19 Would you have read those prior to
- 20 signing them?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, I did not.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: How did you know
- 23 what was in those documents?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: So we actually
- 25 received an email from our Town solicitor, Leo Longo.

- 1 It included a memory -- sorry, a memorandum that
- 2 summarized what the documents were to be executed, and
- 3 he advised that he would be available to answer any
- 4 questions. So we were scheduled via teleconference
- 5 with both Leo Longo, the CAO, the mayor, and Ed
- 6 Houghton, and we reviewed the various agreements. So
- 7 as I said before, we would not execute any sort of
- 8 documents without a solicitor review. That is what
- 9 happened on -- on those dates, you know, whether it
- 10 was included in the bylaw or not.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: So -- so my question
- 12 was about the March date. So there was a call with
- 13 yourself, Mr. Longo, I believe you said the CAO, Mr.
- 14 Houghton. Did I miss anyone?
- 15 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe -- I
- 16 believe it was just the four (4) of us.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: The four (4) of us.
- 18 Do you remember anything specifically about that call?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes. T think in
- 20 reviewing some of the agreements, the CAO had some
- 21 concerns and wanted to have them addressed, so we
- 22 decided to have the call with Leo, and Ed participated
- 23 in that call and we discussed -- we have reviewed some
- 24 of the issues. There was questions. Ed tried to, you
- 25 know, explain why things were done a certain way. I

- 1 recall the discussion at some points where it was a
- 2 little -- was a little heated.
- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: What do you mean by
- 4 "heated"?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Because the CAO was
- 6 asking some targeted questions and so Leo would say,
- 7 you know, because he wasn't, you know, familiar --
- 8 sorry, familiar with the details of some of the more
- 9 electricity sector-related information versus the
- 10 municipal components of it, so when he was speaking to
- 11 it, was speaking generally, and I remember Ed trying
- 12 to explain or justify the reason why things were done
- 13 the way they were.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: I'm going to go
- 15 through some of this, but I want to pick up on
- 16 something you just said, that Mr. Longo indicated that
- 17 he wasn't familiar with certain details, I believe
- 18 with respect to the energy sector.
- 19 Do you remember what those details
- 20 were?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Not -- not
- 22 specifically.
- 23 MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you remember
- 24 having any concern that Mr. Longo was expressing that
- 25 he didn't follow for -- or was having difficulty with

- 1 some details of the Transaction documents?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: And that's what Ed
- 3 was trying to explain to him.
- 4 MR. JOHN MATHER: And from the best of
- 5 your recollection, did it appear that Mr. Longo was
- 6 satisfied with Mr. Houghton's explanation?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe during --
- 8 either during that conversation or following that
- 9 conversation, everybody was in agreement that the --
- 10 the documents were in a form that were satisfactory,
- 11 met what -- what council has requested --
- 12 MR. JOHN MATHER: And -- and can I --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: -- and --
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Oh, sorry.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: -- and hence why they
- 16 were signed.
- 17 MR. JOHN MATHER: And just to put --
- 18 make sure we're clear on the point in time, this is
- 19 the conversation before the March signing of the
- 20 documents. Is --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: -- that correct?
- 23 Okay. And you mentioned that Ms. Wingrove had some
- 24 concerns or issues she wanted to raise. Do you
- 25 remember what those were?

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: I don't recall
- 2 what they specifically were about.
- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you have -- did
- 4 you have any discussions -- so following that call,
- 5 did you have any further conversations about what had
- 6 been discussed on that call, the disagreements or
- 7 issues that had been raised?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I'm sure that we did.
- 9 I had a pretty open professional relationship with the
- 10 CAO and I'm sure we would have went back to her
- 11 office, because they were in the same area, discussing
- 12 the -- the content of -- of the call, but I don't know
- 13 specifics.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you have a
- 15 specific recollection of speaking with her or is that
- 16 just something you think you would have done?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah, it's something
- 18 that would be normal.
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: So again March -- in
- 20 the March signing, when you did sign the documents did
- 21 you feel comfortable with what had been explained to
- 22 you by Mr. Longo and Mr. Houghton?
- 23 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, yes. I was
- 24 comfortable -- the documents came forward from Ron
- 25 Clark, the energy sector lawyers, from Aird & Berlis

- 1 firm, provided to our solicitor, so they -- they
- 2 weren't even sent to me directly, and so they were --
- 3 were provided and reviewed to us by our Town
- 4 solicitor, and I recall I was comfortable following
- 5 our conversation with executing them.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: Sorry -- what was
- 7 your understanding of Ron Clark's role?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: So Mr. Ron Clark was
- 9 working primarily directly with -- with Ed Houghton
- 10 and Collus at the time, doing the detailed elect --
- 11 the -- you know, the electric industry -- industry
- 12 work that was required and obviously the -- the
- 13 recapitalization requirements and all that between I
- 14 think Ron Clark and Corrine Kennedy at the time.
- 15 MR. JOHN MATHER: And Ms. Clark and
- 16 Ms. -- sorry, Mr. Clark and Ms. Kennedy are both at
- 17 Aird & Berlis as well, correct?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: And so did you
- 20 understand Ms. -- Mr. Clark and Ms. Kennedy and Mr.
- 21 Longo to be representing the same people?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That's a very grey
- 23 area.
- 24 MR. JOHN MATHER: So what was your
- 25 understanding at the time, appreciating that you've

- 1 said it was grey?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: So we did have Mr.
- 3 Longo -- provided advice throughout the process. Was
- 4 he retained specifically to be looking at these --
- 5 these agreements? Not that I'm aware of.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: Who did you
- 7 understand Mr. Longo's client to be?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: So Mr. Longo was the
- 9 Town's lawyer.
- 10 MR. JOHN MATHER: But he was repre --
- 11 and I don't mean to put words in your mouth, but I
- 12 take it from that he was representing the interests of
- 13 the Town.
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: There's -- there's
- 15 some confusion there, and --
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: And what was the
- 17 source -- what -- can you explain that confusion?
- 18 MS. SARA ALMAS: It's just because
- 19 now I have a lot of detail in my mind from what
- 20 transpired afterwards, and I am fully aware of
- 21 conversations where Mr. Longo had indicated that he
- 22 feels that he was not representing the Town, but at
- 23 that time did I feel that he was fully not
- 24 representing the Town. I think -- and there's
- 25 documents that evidence it, showing that he -- he was

- 1 suggesting some advice that was -- that was not taken.
- 2 MR. JOHN MATHER: And it's in the
- 3 Foundation Document and we can pull it up, but do you
- 4 recall -- and the document discusses some issues that
- 5 Mr. Longo raised -- do you recall those discussions at
- 6 the time or do -- do you -- or did you only learn
- 7 about them or recall them after reviewing the
- 8 Foundation Document?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I knew at the
- 10 time because I knew -- I knew that the CAO wanted to
- 11 have a side conversation with Mr. Longo. I'm not
- 12 exactly sure what that was about, but I think it was
- 13 in relation to how these emails were occurring.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: So if we could go to
- 15 page 190 of the Foundation Document.

16

17 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- MR. JOHN MATHER: Paragraph 480 --
- 20 479 gives context to paragraph 480. So -- and we can
- 21 scroll through this, Ms. Almas, but this is a section
- 22 of the Foundation Document that discusses
- 23 conversations going on between, amongst others, Mayor
- 24 Cooper, Mr. Longo, Ron Clark, and in this section Mr.
- 25 Longo raises some questions about whether or not the

- 1 Town has received independent advice about the
- 2 Transaction. I'm summarizing.
- 3
 I -- looking at the document, it does
- 4 not appear that you were -- and -- and if we scroll
- 5 through, we can see who was on these emails and
- 6 conversations. It does not appear that you were on
- 7 these email chains. Does that -- is that -- is that
- 8 your recollection?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: That -- that's
- 10 correct. I believe that Leo was consulted by Ron
- 11 Clark and Corrine Kennedy only on specific items. He
- 12 didn't have an overall representation of the work.
- 13 MR. JOHN MATHER: Right. And so what
- 14 I want to, and I appreciate you've seen a -- a whole
- 15 bunch of material since that time, so I just want to
- 16 have an understanding of what you knew at the time in
- 17 terms of any issues or concerns that Mr. Longo was
- 18 raising about the Town's interests or whether they
- 19 needed independent advice.
- 20 Do you recall anything at the time?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, but that is the
- 22 reason why we had the call with him before signing the
- 23 Transaction documents, so yes, he provided us the
- 24 Transaction documents and he reviewed the Transaction
- 25 documents with us. I felt by -- from this January

1 time frame to that March time frame, he got associated

- 2 with -- with the agreements.
- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: Did you ever have
- 4 conversations with Mr. Clark or Ms. Kennedy about the
- 5 Transaction documents?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: They might be -- they
- 7 were asking for various documents here and there
- 8 throughout the preparation of the information that I
- 9 provided but that was it.
- 10 MR. JOHN MATHER: So do you -- do you
- 11 recall them giving you any advice or explaining
- 12 anything to you about the documents?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Who did you
- 15 understand them to be representing?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Collus.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Collus.
- 18 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Sorry.
- 19 Sorry, who did you understand to be representing
- 20 Collus?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: Ron -- Ron Clark and
- 22 Corrine Kennedy.
- THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Thank
- 24 you.
- 2.5

- 1 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
- 2 MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you recall if you
- 3 have any concerns about lawyers from the same law firm
- 4 representing Collus and the Town?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: I didn't. You know,
- 6 the -- the Town was 100 percent owner of the Collus
- 7 company and it was the Town, so I -- I didn't have any
- 8 significant thought about that.
- 9 MR. JOHN MATHER: Were you aware of
- 10 any discussions that other people were having about
- 11 Aird & Berlis representing both Collus and the Town?
- 12 MS. SARA ALMAS: Not that I recollect.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: So going back a bit,
- 14 we talked about the process before signing the March -
- 15 the signing in March 2012 and the call you had with
- 16 Mr. Longo and others.
- Was a similar process followed before
- 18 the closing in July 2012?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes. I recall being
- 20 summoned to the Collus boardroom and all the
- 21 information was prepared and laid out all around the
- 22 table, and each document was there, provided in full,
- 23 and reiterated what -- what they were, the content of
- 24 the document.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: When you say

- 1 reiterated what they were, who -- who reiterated that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I can't -- I
- 3 can't recollect. Like, I -- I recall Ed Houghton and
- 4 Pam Hogg being present, and I believe that there's
- 5 others present but I can't --
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: And I think with the
- 7 March documents you discuss receiving an email from
- 8 Mr. Longo setting out what was in the documents and
- 9 having a conversation with Mr. Longo about what was in
- 10 the documents.
- 11 Do you have -- did you receive a
- 12 similar email or have similar conversations before the
- 13 July 2012 signing?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I can't
- 15 recollect.
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: So if we could open
- 17 up documents ARB513.
- 18
- 19 (BRIEF PAUSE)
- 20
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: So apologies to keep
- 22 travelling you through various points in time, but
- 23 this is an email -- sorry, could we just scroll up to
- 24 the top -- from Mr. Longo to John Brown, who I
- 25 understood was at this point in time -- I'm not sure

- 1 if April or July 2015 -- in any event, at that point
- 2 Mr. Brown was the CAO. Is that correct?
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 4 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So this is an
- 5 email from Mr. Longo to Mr. Brown. and it looks like
- 6 it's an email relating to the closing of the
- 7 Transaction which we've been discussing, and in the
- 8 third paragraph Mr. Longo writes,
- 9 "In our discussion last week with
- 10 Sara, she advised that the import of
- 11 signing the July 31st, 2012, letter
- 12 was never discussed with her. She
- 13 believed that the Town in signing
- 14 the letter simply waived compliance
- with 4.35 of the Purchase Agreement
- but was not amending the SSA."
- Do you know what is being referred to
- 18 here?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, yes. So there
- 20 was a side letter. There is a requirement in the
- 21 Purchase and Sale Agreement that when the transaction
- 22 closed, the Shared Service Agreement would be in
- 23 place, and the negotiations for the shared services
- 24 had not been completed by that time.
- 25 So basically I was advised that this

- 1 document was waiving that compliance but it was an
- 2 undertaking to ensure that the review of the
- 3 agreements and the information contained within that -
- 4 that -- that letter or that letter agreement, would
- 5 be undertaken, I believe it was within six (6) months
- 6 or something along that line.
- 7 MR. JOHN MATHER: And we're going to
- 8 pull up a copy of the letter which may assist you, but
- 9 while that's happening, I just want to be clear, what
- 10 did you understand that letter to mean in -- in July
- 11 2012?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: It wasn't confirming
- 13 any sort of agreement to provide a certain level of
- 14 service or not, that that was still to be negotiated.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: And who explained to
- 16 you what that letter meant in July 2012?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Whoever was present
- 18 at that meeting when we did the --
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: Do you recall who it
- 20 was though?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And so --
- 23 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe that there
- 24 were solicitors there. I'm pretty -- I'm pretty sure.
- 25 I'd have to confirm but I believe there was a number

- 1 of people present in the room when we were doing the
- 2 execution of the document.
- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: And then this email
- 4 in 2015, it looks as though you've learned something
- 5 new that has made you say, well that's not what I
- 6 understood it to be at the time. What did you learn?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: So this all came
- 8 about during Mr. John Brown's review of shared
- 9 services and the work -- and the relationship between
- 10 Collus PowerStream and -- and the Town, and we were
- 11 looking at continuing the shared services or preparing
- 12 a new agreement and then all of a sudden this -- this
- 13 letter came up and there was quite a conversation
- 14 about whether it had a binding nature or not on -- on
- 15 the various components that were within it.
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: One (1) second. So
- 17 -- and I'd like to mark this document as an exhibit.
- 18 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Yes.
- 19 THE REGISTRAR: Exhibit 9, Your
- 20 Honour.

21

22 --- EXHIBIT NO. 9: ARB0000513

23

24 (BRIEF PAUSE)

```
106
 1
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: So we'll pull up
 2 Document CPS6970.
 3
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
 5
 6
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: And once we get it
   up, page 167.
 9
10
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
11
12
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: No, the document
13 itself.
14
15
                         (BRIEF PAUSE)
16
17 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
18
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: So if you're
19 comfortable, Ms. Almas, it might take a second for
   this document to load given its size. Are you okay if
21
   I ask you some other questions?
22
                  MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly.
23
                  MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Going back to
24 when we were discussing Mr. Longo's role and Mr. Clark
25 and Ms. Shuttle (phonetic) -- sorry, Ms. Kennedy's
```

- 1 role, I'll start with Mr. Longo.
- 2 Who was providing him instructions from
- 3 the Town?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I don't -- I
- 5 don't know who was providing instructions to him at
- 6 the time, so the staff report was prepared by the CAO.
- 7 I don't know whether it was Ed Houghton, whether it
- 8 was Kim Wingrove.
- 9 The general practice, and that's
- 10 something that we have changed now and put into place,
- 11 you know, a guideline that a politician doesn't have
- 12 direct access to municipal lawyers, they'd all have to
- 13 go through the CAO, so at that time, because I'm aware
- 14 of the conversations that -- would have had directly
- 15 with Leo versus having administration involved, so I -
- 16 I can't confirm at the time who it would have been.
- 17 MR. JOHN MATHER: And maybe I'll put
- 18 it a bit of a different way. If Leo had a question
- 19 and needed it answered in terms of what would you like
- 20 to do about any given issue, who would he ask and who
- 21 would give him the answer?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: It would generally be
- 23 the CAO. If it's something more procedural --
- 24 depending on who it was dealt with, but generally the
- 25 CAO would always be copied, if not being directed to

- 1 her for direction.
- 2 MR. JOHN MATHER: And was that true
- 3 during the process of signing the Transaction
- 4 documents?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes. Kim was
- 6 involved in that whole conversation during the
- 7 execution of those documents in March.
- 8 MR. JOHN MATHER: And do you know who
- 9 was instructing Mr. Clark and Ms. Kennedy?
- 10 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe it was Ed
- 11 Houghton.
- 12 MR. JOHN MATHER: Why do you believe
- 13 that?
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: Because he had the
- 15 reporting information and the knowledge for the
- 16 information that they were looking for, to finalize
- 17 the -- you know, the electricity portion of the -- the
- 18 deal.
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: And did you believe
- 20 Mr. Houghton when he was instructing Mr. Clark and Ms.
- 21 Kennedy -- was he instructing them on behalf of
- 22 Collus, on behalf of the Town, or on behalf of both of
- 23 them?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: Depends what time
- 25 period you're talking about.

- 1 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Well, what
- 2 are the difference in the time periods?
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: Up until April of
- 4 2012, Kim Wingrove was the CAO, and from April until
- 5 the closing transaction, Ed Houghton was the acting
- 6 CAO.
- 7 MR. JOHN MATHER: So once -- so when -
- 8 before when -- before Mr. Houghton became the acting
- 9 CAO, who would have been giving instructions -- who --
- 10 who would he have -- on whose behalf would he have
- 11 been directing the Aird & Berlis lawyers?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I would believe it's
- 13 on behalf of Collus.
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: And then after he
- 15 became acting CAO?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I would say both.
- 17 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Sorry,
- 18 apologies for shifting topics but do -- want to make
- 19 the best use of your time. So if we pulled up
- 20 documents CPS6970, and if we could just scroll up to
- 21 the top.
- 22
- 23 (BRIEF PAUSE)
- 24
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Is this the July

- 1 31st letter that was being discussed in the 2015 email
- 2 from Mr. Longo to Mr. Brown?
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: If you can scroll
- 4 down through it, I believe it is.

5

6 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: That is the -- the
- 9 document.
- 10 MR. JOHN MATHER: That's the document
- 11 that was being referenced in the email we were looking
- 12 at. And just for the benefit -- it starts on page 167
- 13 of this document 6970.
- 14 So if I recall, you were saying that at
- 15 the time you did not understand this to be a form of
- 16 binding contractual commitment. Again, if I'm
- 17 misstating you, please -- please let me know. And
- 18 then there was some concern -- is it fair -- looking
- 19 back in 2015 there was some concern that in fact it
- 20 was.
- 21 And do you remember, was there any
- 22 conclusion drawn that you were aware of about whether
- 23 or not this was binding in 2015?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: We received legal
- 25 advice, and again representatives from PowerStream

- 1 disputed the legal advice we received, so there --
- 2 there was a dispute on how binding this was, and I
- 3 don't -- I don't recall the resolution except for we
- 4 continued to work on a very long time on establishing
- 5 a Shared Services Agreement that never came about and
- 6 we finally terminated any sort of shared services.
- 7 MR. JOHN MATHER: After the signing --
- 8 and again, thank you for that, so I'm going to go back
- 9 to where we were. After the signing in March and then
- 10 the signing in July 2012, was there any reports back
- 11 to council?
- 12 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe that there
- 13 was an email once the OEB approval had happened. I
- 14 believe the acting CAO at the time let council know
- 15 that we were in the final stretch. Other than that,
- 16 nothing formal at a council meeting.
- 17 MR. JOHN MATHER: Thank you. So I'm
- 18 going to move to a different topic now, and if we
- 19 could go to --
- 20 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Just
- 21 before you do that --
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Yeah.
- 23 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: -- to
- 24 your knowledge did Aird & Berlis ever agree that they
- 25 were acting for both Collus and the Town in this

- 1 transaction?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I don't think they've
- 3 ever agreed to that, that they were representing both
- 4 of us.
- 5 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Thank
- 6 you.

7

- 8 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER:
- 9 MR. JOHN MATHER: So if we could go to
- 10 page 230 of the Foundation One Document.

11

12 (BRIEF PAUSE)

13

- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: When we get there,
- 15 Ms. Almas, I'm going to be asking you some questions
- 16 about the termination of the employment of Ms.
- 17 Wingrove.

18

19 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: So we see in this
- 22 paragraph 581, discusses that council moved into a
- 23 closed session to discuss the performance of the
- 24 Town's CAO, who we know to be Ms. Wingrove, and the
- 25 ultimate result of this, as we understand it, is that

- 1 it was decided that Ms. Wingrove's employment would be
- 2 terminated.
- 3 Prior to this April 2nd, 2012, meeting,
- 4 had anyone expressed to you any concerns about Ms.
- 5 Wingrove's job performance?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I was requested
- 7 to add the original item on the December 1st -- or
- 8 sorry, December 5th, 2011, council in camera closed
- 9 meeting agenda, as I had to also relinquish my
- 10 authority to our solicitor at the time to participate
- 11 in a closed section, because you cannot have a closed
- 12 meeting without a clerk present, or any meeting of
- 13 council for that fact without a clerk, so at that time
- 14 I knew that, you know, the conversation was coming up.
- 15 I knew that certain members of council weren't happy
- 16 with the CAO's performance.
- Do I think to the extent that she would
- 18 be terminated? Absolutely not.
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. So I'm going
- 20 to again discuss a few things you raised there. So
- 21 we'll start with, I believe you said that you knew
- 22 that certain members of council had concerns. What
- 23 were those concerns?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: Certain members of
- 25 council had a specific agenda and if the CAO didn't --

- 1 didn't -- didn't want to pursue their agendas, they
- 2 would not be happy with her performance.
- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: Can you give some
- 4 more detail or provide some more context to that?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly we had a
- 6 few issues with -- within the BIA, within the Library
- 7 board and it made a couple councillors not -- not
- 8 happy with how she was handling it. Do I believe that
- 9 those councillors were -- members of Council I should
- 10 say were intimidating, potentially bullying the CAO?
- 11 Yes.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: And which members of
- 13 Council do -- are you referring to?
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: The two (2) in
- 15 particular would be the Deputy Mayor and Councillor
- 16 Chadwick.
- 17 MR. JOHN MATHER: And how did you come
- 18 to believe that they were bullying or intimidating Ms.
- 19 Wingrove?
- 20 MS. SARA ALMAS: Just various actions
- 21 that they had done. I don't -- I don't -- I think my
- 22 colleagues, you know, would equally attest to the
- 23 same.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Can you give --
- 25 provide some examples?

1 MS. SARA ALMAS: So I think -- I -- I

- 2 don't want to speculate, I guess, and I don't -- I
- 3 don't have -- it was just -- they -- they just had a
- 4 different demeanour in how -- how they addressed her,
- 5 and if things weren't done, I guess, verbally. You
- 6 know, their conversations, and watching, you know, the
- 7 --
- 8 MR. JOHN MATHER: And so these were
- 9 things that -- interactions that you would have
- 10 witnessed?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 12 MR. JOHN MATHER: And can you describe
- 13 that demeanour as best you can?
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: Well, I -- I quess
- 15 the best way to -- to address it is if there was
- 16 specific areas of focus that the deputy mayor or the
- 17 Council had, and that -- that wasn't a priority of the
- 18 Corporation or a priority of the CAO, or if she
- 19 disagreed with their approach and advised her that,
- 20 you know, that's not the approach she would take. She
- 21 would recommend doing it this way.
- 22 You could -- they could, you know,
- 23 through their -- their conversation, and their --
- 24 their mannerisms, you know, tell their frustration.
- 25 And...

1 MR. JOHN MATHER: So would they raise

- 2 their voice?
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, they -- they
- 4 would -- they actually didn't really raise their
- 5 voice. They -- they weren't aggressive in that tone.
- 6 They were really kind of, you know, very low-key about
- 7 how they -- they would -- they interacted with staff,
- 8 so they were -- they were cautious. Let's just say
- 9 that.
- 10 MR. JOHN MATHER: Cautious? Yeah, and
- 11 I'm just -- all I want to do is just get an
- 12 understanding. Obviously, you had this impression of,
- 13 I think, bullying and intimidation. I just wanted to
- 14 understand how you saw that manifest, or how you came
- 15 to form that impression.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: M-hm.
- 17 MR. JOHN MATHER: Is there anything
- 18 else?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: Not specifically with
- 20 Kim.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: With other members
- 22 of staff, though?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: There would have
- 24 been, yes.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Any --

- 1 anything more you can explain about what you observed?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I guess -- I guess
- 3 one (1) that I can personally attest to, because it
- 4 happened to me, was we had received authorization to
- 5 proceed with obtaining a communications officer in the
- 6 transition where we didn't have a CAO. By the time I
- 7 ended the EMT, and Councillor Chadwick sent an email
- 8 to our HR manager requesting clarification on why this
- 9 hasn't been done, and what's staff not done about it.
- 10 And so I'd sent him back an email
- 11 personally and said, you know, I'm not sure what
- 12 you're trying to do, you know, if you're trying to
- 13 discipline me. I can tell you that I have been
- 14 working nonstop. I put it -- and I -- I know -- I
- 15 know the -- the email. I -- I worked day, night,
- 16 weekend. I work all the time.
- 17 And we don't have a CAO right now. And
- 18 because I haven't acted on -- on a -- an authorization
- 19 to complete, because if -- obviously, we wanted to
- 20 complete a -- a communications officer, because that'd
- 21 be less work off my portfolio. Because that didn't
- 22 happen, I -- I sent a very strong response back to
- 23 him, and which he responded, I -- I didn't mean -- I
- 24 didn't mean it -- mean to take offence to that way.
- 25 But it's --

- 1 MR. JOHN MATHER: And would you
- 2 describe the way that he communicated with you, was
- 3 that typical of the sort of communication you would
- 4 receive, or other staff members would receive?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: So you mentioned
- 7 that this interaction that you were describing
- 8 happened when there was, I believe, an acting CAO, Mr.
- 9 Houghton. Is that correct?
- 10 MS. SARA ALMAS: I bel -- I believe
- 11 that the time period when this happened was actually
- 12 whenever the CAO had terminated his involvement as the
- 13 acting CAO, and we were in transition before we
- 14 received a new CAO.
- 15 MR. JOHN MATHER: So it was after Mr.
- 16 Houghton had -- had -- was no longer the acting CAO?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah. Correct.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Do you have
- 19 any other specific time period that -- can you put any
- 20 more specificity on the time period?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe it's June,
- 22 July 2013, it would have been.
- 23 MR. JOHN MATHER: Thank you. You
- 24 mentioned the EMT. And that -- what was the EMT?
- 25 MS. SARA ALMAS: So the EMT was

- 1 basically once the CAO -- Ed Houghton was appointed as
- 2 the acting CAO, he didn't relinquish any of oth -- his
- 3 other responsibilities, and basically, I felt it was
- 4 put together to assist him to ensure matters of the
- 5 town were -- continued to be addressed.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. And who was
- 7 on the EMT?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: It was myself,
- 9 Marjory Leonard, the treasurer, and Larry Irwin, the
- 10 operations director and manager of IT, who is actually
- 11 an employee of Collus.
- 12 MR. JOHN MATHER: And how -- who
- 13 selected who would be on the EMT?
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: It -- it was an
- 15 informal selection made by Ed Houghton.
- 16 MR. JOHN MATHER: And was -- do you
- 17 know whose idea it was to have an EMT in the first
- 18 place?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: I'm assuming it was
- 20 his, but I -- I can't -- I can't be certain.
- 21 MR. JOHN MATHER: And what was it like
- 22 to be on the EMT?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: At first, it wasn't
- 24 bad. I always looked for professional development
- 25 opportunities and new challenges. It was -- there was

1 definitely benefits of the EMT. The -- the department

- 2 had met regularly every Tuesday morning, but the focus
- 3 of the EMT was to have, you know a greater, you know,
- 4 concentrated discussion on specific matters that
- 5 wouldn't maybe be applicable to all the other
- 6 departments.
- 7 I work best in a collaborative role,
- 8 and it worked well at the beginning. However, Ed
- 9 never had his office here, so I felt that myself,
- 10 especially, was impacted significantly from being
- 11 involved in this role.
- 12 It quickly got a lot of PR and -- and
- 13 publicity about the EMT, and, you know, I felt a
- 14 little bit of animosity, maybe, from my colleagues, or
- 15 whether they may not have had animosity, I -- I felt
- 16 that, you know, that I was disappointed, because I
- 17 would have preferred to be selected in a fair,
- 18 competitive process. So that -- that was never an
- 19 issue.
- 20 So myself and the treasurer, being at
- 21 the Town Hall, we had to do a majority of the work.
- 22 And finally, it got to a point where it was -- things
- 23 were out of control, and Ed had finally decided he was
- 24 -- he was stepping down. I said that, I'm not being
- 25 part of this.

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1 They wanted to carry on. And I --
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- 2 that's when it ended. We were doing a KPMG review at
- 3 the time, and was put on hold so he could hire at
- 4 least an interim CAO, and that's when John Brown was
- 5 hired, and we had a CAO back.
- 6 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Thanks.
- 7 Thank you for that. So I'm going to take you back now
- 8 to where -- where we started in -- in this area, which
- 9 is the Ms. Wingrove termination, which led to the EMT.
- 10 So one (1) of the things -- so you
- 11 spoke about -- already about the -- what you observed
- 12 in terms of how Ms. Wingrove had been treated by
- 13 certain members of Council. One (1) of the things you
- 14 mentioned was a -- a decision at a December 5th, 2011,
- 15 meeting. Is that correct?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 17 MR. JOHN MATHER: And what was that
- 18 decision?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right. So it -- it
- 20 wasn't a decision that I recollect. Number 1, I
- 21 wasn't at the meetings, so I only seen the minutes
- 22 afterwards, but I think the discussion was -- it was
- 23 based on how do we undertake a performance evaluation
- 24 of the CAO, because there was concerns. And they had
- 25 the interim manager involved as well, at the time.

```
1
                   MR. JOHN MATHER:
                                     Right.
                                              So the
   question was -- so someone was asking whether there'd
   been a performance evaluation of the CAO?
 3
                  MS. SARA ALMAS: Or maybe there needs
 5
   to be one (1) done.
 6
                   MR. JOHN MATHER: Let me put it this
   way. At that time -- at that period in time, December
 7
   2011, were you aware of a performance evaluation of
   the CAO having been completed or contemplated?
10
                   MS. SARA ALMAS: No. I -- I think
11
   this was -- this was the trigger to members of Council
12
   that weren't with her performance, because we've never
13
   had a performance management program in place for the
14
   CAO following the first CAO when I started in 2004.
15
                   MR. JOHN MATHER: So if we could just
   pull up document CJI9220.
17
18
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
19
20
                   MR. JOHN MATHER: So this is an email
    from you, Ms. Almas, dated Monday, December 5th, 2011,
21
22
   to Ms. Cooper, Ms. Wingrove, Mr. Longo. And it says:
23
                      "Please accept this email as my
24
                      delegation of authority as clerk for
2.5
                      the purposes of recording a portion
```

123 of an in camera meeting scheduled 1 2 for that date with respect to a 3 personal matter pertaining to the CAO performance evaluation process." Does this email relate to what you were 5 talking about in terms of the consideration of there being a performance review? 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct. 8 9 MR. JOHN MATHER: And what does it mean to delegate your authority as a clerk? 10 11 MS. SARA ALMAS: So I -- I had the ability to delegate my authorities in writing to 13 another individual. In -- in particular, matters relating to in camera, I can delegate my authority in 14 15 writing to an individual that -- as long as that individual is not a member of Council. So this is my 16 17 -- my delegation to Leo Longo to act as clerk for that 18 in camera session. 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: Thank you. I'd like to mark this as an exhibit. 20 21 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Yes. 22 23 --- EXHIBIT NO. 10: Email dated December 5, 24 2011 from Sara Almas to 2.5 Ms. Cooper, Ms. Wingrove,

124 1 and Mr. Longo delegating 2 authority. CJ1009220 3 CONTINUED BY MR. JOHN MATHER: MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay, so if we could 5 go back to the foundation document, page 230, where we were. 8 9 (BRIEF PAUSE) 10 11 MR. JOHN MATHER: And just bringing you back in time to the Council meeting where Ms. 13 Wingrove's employment was terminated. 14 Between December 5th, and -- 2011 and April 2nd, 2012, were you aware whether any 15 performance review of the CAO was completed? 17 MS. SARA ALMAS: Not to my knowledge. 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: And I believe --19 again, when we started out -- down this road, you said you weren't necessarily surprised that Ms. Wingrove 21 was terminated for the reasons we've discussed, or 22 maybe -- I don't mean to -- I think were surprised --23 MS. SARA ALMAS: I was surprised. 24 MR. JOHN MATHER: Sorry, that's what I 25 meant.

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah.
- 2 MR. JOHN MATHER: You -- you had seen
- 3 signs that it might be coming, but you were surprised.
- 4 Why were you surprised?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Because we do you
- 6 have a protocol in place for disciplinary action. And
- 7 so there's a number steps that need to be taken. So
- 8 first, the -- the employee needs to be apprised of
- 9 what performance issues that the individual are
- 10 having. There's a -- a process in place.
- So I knew that the meeting happened on
- 12 December 5. I knew things weren't getting better. So
- 13 whenever this happened, I -- I recall the next
- 14 morning, actually, coming into -- to work, and being
- 15 confronted by Ms. Wingrove, and saying to me, Oh my
- 16 gosh, did you know?
- 17 And I'm like, Know what? And she told
- 18 me, and I was shocked.
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: And what would the
- 20 process -- what -- what was -- at that time, what was
- 21 the process for -- for discipline?
- 22 MS. SARA ALMAS: It was a -- it's a
- 23 progressive disciplinary plan that's generally put in
- 24 place together working with -- with the human
- 25 resources manager. I can't detail specifically what

- l it includes, but there -- there is a process normally.
- 2 MR. JOHN MATHER: And had that process
- 3 been -- been carried out with respect to Ms. Wingrove,
- 4 would you have been aware of that process being
- 5 carried out?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: Generally, because if
- 7 -- if Council has to make -- Council makes a decision
- 8 collectively, and so they can't make a decision unless
- 9 they are meeting as a Council in which I would be
- 10 present or have my authority delegated, so I would
- 11 have an idea of what's happening.
- 12 MR. JOHN MATHER: So I take it, then,
- 13 between December 5th and April 2nd, you weren't at any
- 14 Council meetings where decisions relating to Ms.
- 15 Wingrove were -- were made?
- 16 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, not that I
- 17 recollect.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: And -- but in that
- 19 time, was there any Council meetings where you
- 20 delegated your authority that you can recall?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: Just the -- the last
- 22 one in April 2nd as well, yeah.
- 23 MR. JOHN MATHER: So I just want to --
- 24 could we turn at page 70 of the foundation document,
- 25 please.

1 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 3 MR. JOHN MATHER: So I'm taking you to
- 4 a different topic area now. And this is going back,
- 5 if you recall, Ms. Almas, earlier this morning, we
- 6 looked at that note from May 18th, 2011, relating to
- 7 the Collus evaluation. And I believe one (1) of the
- 8 questions you had was you weren't certain whether or
- 9 not there had been an in camera discussion at the next
- 10 Council meeting.
- 11 This -- this paragraph reflects there
- 12 was a Council meeting on May 30th, 2011. Do you know
- 13 if that would have been the next Council meeting
- 14 following May 18th?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, it would have
- 16 been.
- 17 MR. JOHN MATHER: Okay. Thank you.
- 18 So, Ms. Almas, those are my -- what else have you got
- 19 -- questions about what happened and what went on in
- 20 the past. And one (1) of the things that we are going
- 21 to do as -- as part of the inquiry process is ask
- 22 witnesses like yourself both to look backwards and
- 23 look forwards about things they would have done
- 24 differently now that they have the benefit of time and
- 25 information that's been disclosed.

- 1 So you've already spoken today about
- 2 how you would have handled the email you received from
- 3 Mr. Bonwick to PowerStream differently. Looking back
- 4 on the subject matter of the inquiry, is there
- 5 anything else you would have done differently?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly, and we've
- 7 implemented -- we've implemented a lot of changes
- 8 since 2011 and -- and '12 time period. One (1) quite
- 9 clearly, I think I mentioned earlier with respect to
- 10 the changes with Bill 68 is having an integrity
- 11 commissioner that addresses conflict of interest.
- 12 I think -- still think that there is an
- 13 error in that -- that provincial piece of legislation,
- 14 because there's such greater common law that's
- 15 applicable to conflict of interest matters beside the
- 16 Municipal Conflict of Interest Act. I think one (1)
- 17 of the significant is, for example, how we -- so we
- 18 made changes to our code of conduct.
- 19 So in our code of conduct, we make
- 20 reference to any member that has a private or personal
- 21 interest that is in -- related to a sib -- a sibling,
- 22 a friend, an associate. There's a -- a broad
- 23 definition there that they are to disclose it.
- 24 However, if they remain biased, or the perception of
- 25 their bias still occurs, they are actually instructed

- 1 through our integrity commissioner as well to leave
- 2 the Council chambers, similar to what is expected
- 3 through Municipal Conflict of Interest act conflict.
- 4 The error -- the error in the
- 5 legislation, though, is that I have to record them as
- 6 being absent from the meeting during that vote,
- 7 because I can't -- I can't say that they have a
- 8 conflict under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act
- 9 where they're prohibited from voting, and we require
- 10 that all members of Council are required to vote
- 11 unless prohibited by law.
- So we've done changes there. We've
- 13 done -- we've implemented a new comprehensive
- 14 procurement policy. We've hired a -- a purchasing
- 15 manager. We've hired a communications officer. We've
- 16 made the code of conduct changes. We allow for -- I -
- 17 I have -- I had such a -- a list in my head of
- 18 everything that's changed.
- 19 One (1) of the significant changes,
- 20 too, is the whole realignment of the clerk's office
- 21 responsibilities. Our CAO has put in place and
- 22 Council has approved a realignment to include an
- 23 accountability officer within the clerk's department,
- 24 and having that procurement piece being an oversight
- 25 piece rather than a finance piece.

- 1 My portfolio is very focussed now,
- 2 which I think is -- is apparent, that the -- the
- 3 clerk's department having a -- a significant statutory
- 4 obligation to Council and community needs to have that
- 5 -- that stronger focus. So I think that's great.
- In hindsight, yes, I would have
- 7 responded back to Mr. Bonwick's email. I would have
- 8 put that -- that in. We are -- as part of this
- 9 realignment, we actually have a staff report ready to
- 10 go to recommend the implementation of a lobbyist
- 11 registry within the town of Collingwood. Because
- 12 under the -- the accountability officer will be
- 13 responsible for managing a lobbyist portfolio and
- 14 registry system. And I don't know -- I don't know.
- 15 I'm sure there's -- there's going to be a million
- 16 things that I think about afterwards that I forgot,
- 17 so.
- 18 MR. JOHN MATHER: Of course, of
- 19 course. And at this point in time, is there nothing
- 20 else you would like to say to the inquiry, or any
- 21 other suggestions or comments you would like to make?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: The only -- the only
- 23 thing that -- that I will add is when the documents
- 24 came out, and knowing the amount of conversations that
- 25 happened behind the scenes that I had no idea had

- 1 happened, shocked and disgusted me.
- 2 MR. JOHN MATHER: So Inquiry counsel
- 3 has no further questions at this time. Thank you, Ms.
- 4 Almas.
- 5 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: And I
- 6 think we did circulate an order on how we would go
- 7 about this. Mr. McDowell, I guess the Town is next.
- 8 Any questions?
- 9 MR. WILLIAM MCDOWELL: Sorry, it's our
- 10 witness, so we would go last in the batting order, I
- 11 think. And it'll be Mr. Breedon, rather than I.
- 12 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: All
- 13 right. Mr. Breedon...?
- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Your Honour, if I
- 15 -- if I may, I -- the party -- counsel for the parties
- 16 and the parties have had some discussion about this.
- 17 And I believe that the rules of procedure provide that
- 18 the cross-examination -- the order of cross-
- 19 examination is to be determined by consensus or
- 20 agreement among those cross-examiners, in the absence
- 21 of which, it's to be determined by the inquiry.
- 22 We've had some discussions about that
- 23 in order sort of to share the burden, if I may. And I
- 24 believe that Mr. Bonwick is prepared to go first, and
- 25 that other counsel have agreed that we would go

1 second, if I have that -- the rules of procedure

- 2 correctly.
- THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Well,
- 4 all right. Mr. Bonwick...?

- 6 CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. PAUL BONWICK:
- 7 MR. PAUL BONWICK: Thank you, Your
- 8 Honour.
- 9 Now, Ms. Almas, I'm very respectful of
- 10 the fact that this matter took place eight (8) years
- 11 ago, and it's certainly a challenge for all of us, I'm
- 12 sure. Justice is going to hear that on a -- on a
- 13 regular basis.
- 14 I've commented in several locations
- 15 that had there been a need for the inquiry, it
- 16 certainly would have been easier for some of us to
- 17 have dealt with it a year or two (2) after the fact
- 18 versus -- versus eight (8) years after the fact. So
- 19 please know that I am sympathetic to some of the
- 20 questions I'm going to ask in your ability to -- to
- 21 reflect on them.
- To touch on a couple of different
- 23 points, firstly, when you and I met to discuss the
- 24 conflict of interest, would you say that the meeting
- 25 was professional, friendly, collegial?

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1 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah. Absolutely.
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- MR. PAUL BONWICK: And so -- and I'll
- 3 take this opportunity to say I -- I did not mean to
- 4 mischaracterize in any manner of speaking our
- 5 conversation. When you say Municipal Act which is
- 6 controlled by the Province, I automatically know the
- 7 Province, but you're quite correct in terms of the
- 8 exact wording is the Municipal Act.
- 9 That being said, I understood you quite
- 10 clearly during that meeting, certainly upon
- 11 reflection, that you were not in a position to give me
- 12 any legal advice relating to conflict. And so I
- 13 suspect based on my memory eight (8) years ago, that's
- 14 exactly why I would have said opinion versus legal
- 15 opinion.
- 16 And so what I was trying to do was
- 17 share with not only Kim, but others, that based on our
- 18 conversation, which I deemed to be collegial,
- 19 cooperative, informative, from my perspective, that
- 20 this was my interpretation based on the fact that we
- 21 did have that sort of positive collegial environment
- 22 taking place.
- 23 I'm surprised to hear after the fact
- 24 that all of a sudden, I didn't really agree with the
- 25 content of it, because I certainly wouldn't have, in

- 1 any manner of speaking, dissuaded you from saying,
- 2 it's the Municipal Act or, I'm not allowed to give
- 3 legal opinions. I certainly would have encouraged you
- 4 to -- to do so. So I'm -- I'm kind of confused about
- 5 after the fact, I had some reservations, concerns
- 6 about it, but I didn't tell anybody.
- 7 And so from my perspective, that causes
- 8 me some concern, because when I --
- 9 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Mr.
- 10 Bonwick, can I just ask you to --
- MR. PAUL BONWICK: Yeah.
- 12 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: --
- 13 hold on there for a second. Mr. Mather...?
- 14 MR. JOHN MATHER: Yes, Your Honour.
- 15 Inquiry counsel's concerned that the form of the
- 16 question appears to be more --
- 17 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: I -- I
- 18 --
- 19 MR. JOHN MATHER: -- giving of
- 20 evidence.
- 21 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: -- I
- 22 appreciate that. Yeah, I appreciate that.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: We just wanted to
- 24 raise that --
- 25 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: But

- 1 Mr. -- Mr. Bonwick's representing himself, so --
- MR. JOHN MATHER: Understood.
- THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: --
- 4 there's a certain amount of leeway. Go ahead, Mr.
- 5 Bonwick. Carry on.

- 7 CONTINUED BY MR. PAUL BONWICK:
- 8 MR. PAUL BONWICK: Thank you. So just
- 9 from my perspective, Ms. Almas, it was -- to hear
- 10 after the fact that there was some concern over that -
- 11 that gives me pause to reflect, and say, you know,
- 12 there -- there was opportunity, because based on that
- 13 email, I predicated my actions without anybody
- 14 challenging the email, whether it be the -- Ms.
- 15 Wingrove, or yourself, or others, for that matter.
- 16 I'm curious -- a -- a question --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Can -- can I just --
- MR. PAUL BONWICK: Yeah, please.
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: Can -- can I make a
- 20 statement, if I think that what he's said is not what
- 21 I said?
- 22 MR. PAUL BONWICK: I don't -- this is
- 23 my -- this is my first rodeo. I'm not sure how this
- 24 all works.
- 25 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Well,

- 1 I -- I take it the witness doesn't agree with the way
- 2 you characterized her testimony. That's what she
- 3 said. I understood what you said.
- 4 But typically, there would be a
- 5 question in there somewhere. And -- and I -- I don't
- 6 say that -- I -- I don't say that disrespectfully,
- 7 just because you're representing yourself. It -- it -
- 8 typically, there would be a question that you're
- 9 asking, rather than a statement --
- 10 MR. PAUL BONWICK: Right.
- 11 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: --
- 12 exclusively. You can certainly make a statement to
- 13 set the stage for your question. You can certainly do
- 14 that. But at some point, there would be a question
- 15 put to the witness.

- 17 CONTINUED BY MR. PAUL BONWICK:
- 18 MR. PAUL BONWICK: And -- thank you,
- 19 Your Honour. And so the question out of that is, I
- 20 think we both perceived to be a professional,
- 21 collegial environment, and open for dialogue. Why,
- 22 then, wouldn't you have taken the liberty of emailing
- 23 me, or emailing Kim, copying me, and saying, That's
- 24 not exactly what I meant?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: So there --

- 1 certainly. As I did say, I did bring to Kim's
- 2 attention. I did email it to Kim's attention. Kim
- 3 and I had a conversation about it, and I didn't say I
- 4 disagree with what you -- your email stated, because I
- 5 agree. It collect -- correct -- collect -- correctly
- 6 stated what we did discuss, and it was a professional,
- 7 cordial conversation.
- 8 I just wish that I had further
- 9 clarified back to you. And that's why Kim and I had
- 10 the -- the brief discussion and, you know, you know,
- 11 it's technically correct. It's what we had talked
- 12 about. So, you know, is it worthy of a response, or
- 13 just leave it be, because I was satisfied with it,
- 14 because the information that you shared with me versus
- 15 the information what Brian Bentz took might have been
- 16 different, but unlike the document -- summary doc --
- 17 evidence document says that I disagreed with his
- 18 email, and I don't disagree with his email.
- 19 MR. PAUL BONWICK: Thank you. The
- 20 municipality, Ms. Almas, spends, I'm sure, several
- 21 tens of millions of dollars every year. I'm not sure
- 22 what your budget is.
- 23 When I sat on Council back in the early
- 24 mid '90s, it was substantially less than it is today,
- 25 but as a result of living in a community the size of

- 1 our own, and recognizing that there is expenditures of
- 2 several tens of millions of dollars a year, and
- 3 whether that be through engineering, through financial
- 4 institutions, services, purchasing trucks, computers,
- 5 photocopiers -- you know the list better than I in
- 6 terms of all the things that happen. I think it's
- 7 safe to assume that many businesses in the community
- 8 are touched by the expenditures.
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: Absolutely.
- 10 MR. PAUL BONWICK: I think it's
- 11 largest employer, and certainly likely one (1) of the
- 12 largest entities that spends money in the community
- 13 for services and product.
- 14 With that in mind, and recognizing that
- 15 municipal councils are typically made up of people
- 16 from the community, it's safe to say that on numerous
- 17 occasions throughout any given term, that whether it
- 18 be an in-law, a family member, a brother, a sister, a
- 19 son, or a daughter, whatever the case might be, that
- 20 there's -- there's going to be links from time to
- 21 time.
- 22 And so my question to you is: How many
- 23 businesses in the private sector have approached you,
- 24 taken a proactive step, and said, I'd like to meet,
- 25 and discuss, and make you aware of what we're doing,

- 1 and to find out if you have any issues or concerns
- 2 about it, or get feedback. How many would typically
- 3 do that in the -- any given --
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: To me personally,
- 5 about products or services that I would acquire for
- 6 our portfolio?
- 7 MR. PAUL BONWICK: Just generally
- 8 speaking, for example. And then this is hypothetical,
- 9 so it's not an accurate statement, but for example, if
- 10 the engineering firm was providing a set of services
- 11 to you. Has an engineering firm ever come in and
- 12 said, listen, we're getting this contract, but my
- 13 sister-in-law sits on Council. I'm curious if there's
- 14 any conflicts.
- 15 And have you ever had somebody from the
- 16 private sector take that initiative?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No. Very rarely, if
- 18 ever, do I think that's happened.
- 19 MR. PAUL BONWICK: I suspected that
- 20 was the case, that typically, people in the private
- 21 sector do not take the initiative to go and determine
- 22 whether or not there's conflicts, or --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 24 MR. PAUL BONWICK: -- make you aware
- 25 of what their relationship is going to be, but rather,

- 1 they leave that up to the municipal councillors, or
- 2 staff members to source that out based on your
- 3 understanding of the Municipal Act. And again, if it
- 4 requires, they will get a legal opinion.
- 5 Specific to that topic, again, I was --
- 6 as I was looking at the email from Councillor Lloyd
- 7 requesting conflict of interest, I can reflect back to
- 8 when I sat at the Council chambers. And were you
- 9 aware that Councillor Lloyd was challenged -- I think
- 10 it was in 1995, but I -- it was in and around 1995,
- 11 based on voting for a -- awarding a contract to his
- 12 brother for -- I think it was a snow removal contract
- 13 at the time.
- 14 And there was significant debate around
- 15 the table about whether or not he should be able to
- 16 vote on that. And the world has changed significantly
- 17 in the last eight (8) years, or certainly in the last
- 18 thirty (30) years, since I was on it.
- 19 But are you aware that Councillor Lloyd
- 20 had already been through that situation once before?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, I was not aware.
- MR. PAUL BONWICK: Are you aware of
- 23 the fact that Councillor -- or that Mr. Lloyd's
- 24 brother had provided services on an on and off again
- 25 basis from time to time for the municipality?

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: In 2011/'12-ish, I
- 2 would have been aware of -- of his brother's company.
- MR. PAUL BONWICK: So based on that,
- 4 and following the -- the path that you have sort of
- 5 identified, and I'm pleased to hear you talk about the
- 6 reforms that have really taken place over the course
- 7 of the last eight (8) to ten (10) years, and I -- I
- 8 would argue that those reforms are long overdue.
- 9 I can speak to fifteen (15) years ago.
- 10 The reforms within the federal and the provincial
- 11 lobby registration systems, and the rules and
- 12 guidelines, and those that attached to staff, as well
- 13 as elected officials have changed rather dramatically.
- 14 And I think municipalities are -- are starting to
- 15 catch up in terms of lending transparency and more
- 16 accountability to the -- to the system than what was
- 17 in place many years ago.
- 18 So with that thought in mind, would it
- 19 not make sense that if Councillor Lloyd was concerned
- 20 about his brother possibly bidding for work, or doing
- 21 work for the Works Department, or something like that,
- 22 that he would reach out to you and ask for your
- 23 opinion on whether he was -- continued to be in
- 24 conflict?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: All council were

- 1 advised that I do not provide the legal advice, and
- 2 they need to satisfy themselves.
- 3 MR. PAUL BONWICK: Right.
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: So when he asked that
- 5 question, I wasn't specifically referencing his
- 6 specific circumstance. I was just addressing the
- 7 specific question of, is a sibling deemed an indirect
- 8 or direct interest of a member, and -- and confirming
- 9 that the legislation is not written that way.
- 10 Do I agree that -- now with the changes
- 11 that the -- the opportunities -- and this is the fine
- 12 line that I think -- that needs to change in the
- 13 Province -- between committee members and all of
- 14 their, like, Council volunteers with so many
- 15 organizations, and businesses, and has associates, and
- 16 friends, that there's a fine line between, you know,
- 17 performing their elected duty -- because the original
- 18 intent of the change to the code of conduct was to
- 19 declare -- decl -- publicly disclose that you have a -
- 20 a personal or private interest, because there's a
- 21 specific relationship, but that I -- I do not have a
- 22 closed mind, and I don't have a biased (sic) in this
- 23 matter.
- 24 And so I'm still going to be sitting at
- 25 the table, but I'm going to be open and transparent to

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1 the public that I -- that there is -- there could be
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- 2 this perception. And if that perception is so
- 3 significant, now that's what our integrity
- 4 commissioners are -- are saying, is, we want you
- 5 actually to leave the room altogether.
- 6 So I think there's a very fine line,
- 7 because some municipalities are going to be so
- 8 hamstrung, they won't be able to make decisions.
- 9 MR. PAUL BONWICK: It -- it -- but I
- 10 think this -- the spirit of it is good. It -- it's
- 11 lending -- it -- it's --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Totally.
- MR. PAUL BONWICK: -- it's -- it's not
- 14 one (1) silver bullet that's going to solve it, but
- 15 it's -- it -- I think the moves are good.
- 16 You spoke about your surprise or
- 17 disappointment that Councillor Lloyd forwarded on your
- 18 email to me. Typically, if a email is not marked
- 19 confidential, do councillors inform you of forwarding
- 20 on informations, whether it be from you, or whether it
- 21 be from somebody in the Works Department, or somebody
- 22 in the treasury? I mean, would they normally say, by
- 23 the way, Ms. Almas, I forwarded your email on to my
- 24 neighbour; I forwarded my email on to my constituent;
- 25 I forward my email on to my friend?

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, it -- it --
- 2 MR. PAUL BONWICK: I served on
- 3 Council. I certainly never, during my time, informed
- 4 any staff unless was marked confidential, about my
- 5 interactions with constituents, friends, colleagues,
- 6 whatever the case might be.
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: I do respond to all
- 8 my emails thinking that it could be, you know, on the
- 9 front page of the newspaper. My frustration was that
- 10 he was deceptive in his question of me, that wasn't
- 11 meant for me, it was meant for you.
- 12 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: I
- 13 think what we'll do, Mr. Bonwick, it's one o'clock.
- 14 We could break for lunch. I've been asked to vacate
- 15 at 3:30, so I suspect what we'll do is break for lunch
- 16 at 2:15, then when we come back, just sit straight
- 17 through till 3:30.
- 18
- 19 --- Upon recessing at 1:03 p.m.
- 20 --- Upon resuming at 2:17 p.m.
- 21
- 22 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: I know
- 23 Mr. Bonwick you we're asking some questions of the
- 24 witness. You want to --do you want to continue doing
- 25 that?

- 2 CONTINUED BY MR. PAUL BONWICK:
- MR. PAUL BONWICK: Ms. Almas, I was
- 4 review -- reviewing your comments related to the --
- 5 your responsibilities to the Municipality and Council,
- 6 if I understood it properly and I don't want to put
- 7 words in your mouth.
- 8 But basically to review and provide
- 9 opinions in part on the Municipal Act and how that
- 10 applies. And with that responsibility also comes the
- 11 responsibility of being able to bind the Corporation
- 12 in any number of different agreements.
- 13 Is that accurate?
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: So there's two (2)
- 15 separate questions. Yes, I have the ability to bind
- 16 the Corporation and, yes, I provide advice on -- on
- 17 legislative protocol, various matters.
- 18 MR. PAUL BONWICK: So where I got a
- 19 little bit confused was when you're dealing with a
- 20 multi-million-dollar transaction, would it be typical
- 21 having to fulfil those responsibilities not to review
- 22 the document yourself, but simply rely on any one (1)
- 23 of the many lawyers that were involved to tell you
- 24 that it was okay?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Typically, I do not

- 1 review in full substantive agreements like that.
- 2 Primarily because of my intimate knowledge now with
- 3 the exact documents that we're referring to because of
- 4 my awareness of the recent 2018 transaction that, you
- 5 know, they're very technical in nature.
- And from that, that's why we seek
- 7 solicitor advice to review and provide any sort of
- 8 oversight on -- on such agreements.
- 9 MR. PAUL BONWICK: Thank you. Did you
- 10 ever receive email correspondence from any councillor
- 11 or board member from Collus during the period of the
- 12 RFP or at the conclusion of the RFP that raised
- 13 concerns about me engaging them inappropriately or
- 14 applying any pressure or anything that would -- you
- 15 would view to be on towards?
- 16 Did you get any correspondence from any
- 17 member of Council or any Board member, regarding that?
- 18 MS. SARA ALMAS: Not that I recollect.
- 19 MR. PAUL BONWICK: Okay. That's --
- 20 that's good with me, Your Honour. Thanks very much
- 21 for your patience.
- THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: You
- 23 said -- apparently you've all agreed on an order so
- 24 who's next is next.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I got the short,

1 the long or the middle straw, I don't know which one

- 2 but...
- 3 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Okay,
- 4 Mr. Watson, yes.

- 6 CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. MICHAEL WATSON:
- 7 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Thank you. Ms.
- 8 Almas, my name is Michael Watson. I'm one (1) of the
- 9 lawyers for Alectra which I think you probably know is
- 10 now the name of PowerStream which was at the time the
- 11 purchaser of the 50 percent of the shares.
- 12 You understand that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I wanted to ask
- 15 you about the keeping of minutes. Mr. Mather asked
- 16 you about that and -- and minutes both of the regular
- 17 public Council meeting sessions and then the in camera
- 18 ones.
- 19 And what you said is that -- well,
- 20 first of all, sorry, I should stop here and say, it
- 21 was -- you had the responsibility of attending all
- 22 Council meetings?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And you have
- 25 responsibility with respect to the formulation of the

- 1 agenda and getting it ready, as you said?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 3 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And the keeping
- 4 of minutes. You sat beside the mayor right up at the
- 5 front in this very room; is that right?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: For public meetings.
- 7 Most in cameras were held across the hallway.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: In the Brandiff
- 9 (phonetic) room over here?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And you -- you
- 12 said in your evidence this morning, I would record the
- 13 minutes in draft at the meeting.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- and you
- 16 said that in the draft version I would include more
- 17 commentary then ultimately found its way into the
- 18 final minutes that are up on the Town website, right?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: When you said
- 21 that, that you would record the minutes in draft at
- 22 the meeting, how did you do that? And I'm sorry, I'm
- 23 talking about the 2010 to 1212 time period, which may
- 24 be different than now.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Okay. It was still

- 1 done the -- the same way, so I have a laptop or
- 2 notebook computer and I would have a template that's
- 3 already provided to me through my deputy clerk and
- 4 then I would fill it out as we go along and basically
- 5 that provides my draft and which is revised and tidied
- 6 up for the final version.
- 7 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And I
- 8 take it that -- is this a -- a Word template in
- 9 Microsoft Word?
- 10 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes. It -- it was at
- 11 that time.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right and you
- 13 would save that document, I take it?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And then you
- 16 would give that document, I take it, to the deputy
- 17 clerk to do the fi -- kind of the first cut anyway of
- 18 the final minutes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 20 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Would you then
- 21 review the minutes that the deputy clerk provided to
- 22 you?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I do.
- 24 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Do the draft
- 25 minutes from meetings back in 2010 to 2012 still

- 1 exist?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, they do.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Where are they
- 4 located?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: They're located on
- 6 our confidential server under the appropriate Tom
- 7 Rim's (phonetic) record-keeping coding for -- for
- 8 minutes in draft.
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I see. All
- 10 right. So for example, for the December 5th, 2011
- 11 meeting, you remember that one?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 13 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And that is the
- 14 meeting at which Council received a presentation from
- 15 the Strategic Task Team, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And that was done
- 18 in camera?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And then,
- 21 ultimately, it was brought into public session for the
- 22 motion by Council to accept PowerStream as the
- 23 preferred proponent, right?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: I'd have to go and
- 25 take a look at the -- the public minutes of that

- 1 meeting. I don't recollect not having them here.
- 2 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right, I -- I
- 3 understand. And so, for example, for -- for the in
- 4 camera session there, both the in camera final minutes
- 5 and the draft minutes that you prepared would still
- 6 exist?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: They should, yes.
- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And I take it
- 9 with the draft minutes that you would be -- and I
- 10 don't want to make it sound like a stenographer's
- 11 task, not at all, but you would be taking down what
- 12 people were saying?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. Perhaps
- 15 not verbatim --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: As much --
- 17 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- but as much as
- 18 possible what they were saying?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: Specific comments
- 20 that I think that would be valuable in the
- 21 conversation should I go back and have -- have to take
- 22 a look at them.
- 23 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I see, all right.
- 24 And then you said as well that Rogers recorded the
- 25 majority of Council meetings and that was under

- 1 contract with the Town or anything like that, was it?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: It's -- it's -- they
- 3 own all the equipment and they have the recording room
- 4 in the back. However, it wasn't -- there were
- 5 occasions where some meetings weren't recorded because
- 6 they had airing or television conflicts.
- 7 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Sorry, was that
- 8 done live then or cast live?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I believe at the
- 10 time it was a -- a two (2) hour delay.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. Now,
- 12 you were then asked by Mr. Mather about in camera
- 13 meetings, and in particular, the keeping of minutes
- 14 for the in camera meetings and what you said was that
- 15 we, basically, followed the same practice as in the
- 16 public portion of the meetings, is that right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 18 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And therefore, I
- 19 take it that you were there in a different document I
- 20 take it.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Writing down the
- 23 draft minutes what people we're saying and so on?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 25 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And then from

- 1 there you would give that document to the deputy clerk
- 2 to prepare the final in camera minutes, right?
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: Primarily, I was
- 4 responsible for the -- the in camera minutes and
- 5 preparation just because I had the intimate knowledge
- 6 of what was happening for the in camera.
- 7 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I see.
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: On occasion she --
- 9 she helps tidy up or look at any sort of typo or
- 10 grammatical errors.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And then you said
- 12 something when you were talking about the in camera
- 13 meetings that took place, you said on one (1) thing
- 14 when you were asked a question you said, I might have
- 15 to look at the video.
- 16 And I was wondering about that. So do
- 17 I take it then that the in camera meetings were
- 18 videotaped as well?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, I didn't have to
- 20 -- I should clarify. So I pers -- personally did not
- 21 have to look at the video on -- I don't call very
- 22 many, if ever, any occasions. However, if she was
- 23 typing up or revising minutes from a meeting that she
- 24 didn't have intimate knowledge on what would happen,
- 25 she would refer to a video.

- 1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right and -- and
- 2 that --
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: Versus coming to ask
- 4 me.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I understand.
- 6 And so that's the deputy clerk when you say "she"?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Were the in
- 9 camera meetings ever video recorded?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No, they were not.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: They were --
- 12 obviously being in camera, Rogers was not going to put
- 13 them on the TV even two (2) hours later, I take it?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So, therefore,
- 16 the only record then that would exist of the in camera
- 17 -- the only records would be (a) your draft minutes
- 18 that you were taking as it was going on, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 20 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And be the final
- 21 ones?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 23 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. Have
- 24 you been asked at all for the draft minutes -- to
- 25 produce the draft minutes to this Inquiry?

1 MS. SARA ALMAS: I was summons to

- 2 provide every single document that the Town had
- 3 regarding the transaction.
- 4 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- and did
- 5 you, yourself, do the search?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes between me and my
- 7 staff we undertook the search.
- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I -- I'm not
- 9 sure. I'm not the document grugru on our team, that's
- 10 for sure, but I haven't seen any draft minutes.
- 11 Did you come across or did you search
- 12 for or provide any draft minutes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, that they would
- 14 have been provided.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I see, all right.
- 16 Now, Municipal Conflict Of Interest Act, if I may say
- 17 was pretty impressed with how much you know about all
- 18 this and I appreciate you're -- you know especially
- 19 not being a lawyer, but you were talking about --
- 20 about Council orientation and presentations.
- 21 Remember that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 23 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And -
- 24 and you talked about -- about the 2010 Council and I
- 25 take it what you were talking about is the Council

- 1 that was elected in the fall 2010 elections?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 3 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: That took office
- 4 then in January of 2011?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: It would have been,
- 6 yes. Well, they took -- take office in December.
- 7 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 8 they get together now and start doing their work in
- 9 January?
- 10 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct. Well, they
- 11 can do work as soon as they're sworn in.
- 12 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And in January
- 13 2011, which was, of course, the year in which this all
- 14 started to happen, Council had a two (2) day
- 15 orientation workshop.
- Do you remember that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 18 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Is that typical
- 19 every -- you know, after every election that there's a
- 20 -- an orientation workshop?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, there is.
- 22 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: For new and
- 23 perhaps returning councillors, is that right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: For all of Council,
- 25 yes.

- 1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And this is -- is
- 2 organized, I think you said, by the CAO, the Chief
- 3 Administrative Officer?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Actually they're
- 5 generally organized with a great responsibility of the
- 6 clerk's department, in consultation with the CAO.
- 7 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So you were
- 8 involved, for example, in setting the agenda for that?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, I would've been
- 10 involved in setting the agenda.
- 11 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And could I ask
- 12 please for document CJI-9072. And I may embarrass
- 13 myself by having the wrong number. I hope not.
- 14 So look at that. So this is a special
- 15 meeting of Council. And this is the orientation
- 16 workshop in -- in 2011. Do you see that?
- 17 And were you present at this?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, I was.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: For the whole
- 20 thing, the two (2) days?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe so
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right and this
- 23 take -- took place, if you may remember, on a Thursday
- 24 and a Friday?
- 25 MS. SARA ALMAS: I couldn't recollect

- 1 right now.
- 2 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 3 there was -- if we can go down and I must confess, I
- 4 just didn't take a look. We can go down further there
- 5 is an item for Aird & Berlis. It may be actually on
- 6 the second -- second page, yes.
- 7 If you see that --
- THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: 1030,
- 9 Mr. Watson.
- 10 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Sorry, right
- 11 there. Yes, exactly -- exactly, Your Honour.
- 12
- 13 CONTINUED BY MR. MICHAEL WATSON:
- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So there's a
- 15 legal review and so Mr. Longo, about whom you've
- 16 spoken before, was present with another of his
- 17 colleagues talking about these items, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And impart -- and
- 20 the second item is Municipal Conflict Of interest.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That's right.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Now, I think it's
- 23 fair to say that you had a fairly good understanding,
- 24 if I may put it that way, not as a lawyer, but of the
- 25 Municipal Conflict Of Interest Act and its

- 1 requirements. Is that fair?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I'd say that's fair.
- 3 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. All
- 4 right, what I'd now like to do, please, is if we could
- 5 go to the Aird and Berlis PowerPoint which is CJI9080.
- 6 All right. And this is -- I believe
- 7 it's about a 20-page presentation on Municipal
- 8 Conflict Of Interest with Leo F. Longo and it's got
- 9 the date of January 7th.
- 10 As you just look at this cover page,
- 11 does this ring a bell? Do you remember this?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Absolutely, yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Did you get a
- 14 copy of this PowerPoint, either in its original PPT
- 15 format or in hard copy?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I believe we
- 17 did, yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And by "we" you
- 19 mean the Municipality the Town?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: The Corporation, yes.
- 21 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 22 did -- did you keep it handy for any kind of reference
- 23 or did you know it well enough you didn't need it?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No, actually, I
- 25 utilized a number of these slides when I do my own

- 1 committee orientations.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Oh, yes, right --
- 3 yes, because you -- you talked about that. All right.
- 4 All right, we may -- may come back to that. But what
- 5 I want to do is, I want to ask -- ask you about the
- 6 Municipal Conflict Of Interest Act.
- 7 How did you get your understanding of
- 8 it? Did you receive any training as a clerk or how --
- 9 how did you get that?
- 10 MS. SARA ALMAS: Certainly, since this
- 11 is one (1) of, you know, the significant pieces of
- 12 legislation that govern how a Municipality runs in an
- 13 open and transparent manner, there's a number of
- 14 training sessions that are offered through our various
- 15 associations. There's many on Municipal Conflict Of
- 16 Interest Act requirements and then also just my
- 17 regular work in dealing with our solicitors on the
- 18 Conflict Of Interest Act and the opinions that we've
- 19 received in the past is, basically, where I've -- I've
- 20 attain my -- my knowledge.
- 21 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And I take it
- 22 that you're aware of the fact that statutes are
- 23 amended from time to time?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: They are.
- 25 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And I think

- 1 you've made some reference to that. Could I ask
- 2 please for document ALE50204.
- Now, this is a document that we have
- 4 received. And are -- are you at all familiar with the
- 5 Canada Legal Institute website?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: Minor.
- 7 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. So --
- 8 so this is -- is a copy of the statute and you'll see
- 9 the arrows that we've put -- put on this. This is the
- 10 version that was in effect between July 1st, 2010 and
- 11 December 31, 2016. So during this entire period of
- 12 time. Not that the relevant provisions have changed
- 13 at all but just to show that we know how to find these
- 14 things, all right.
- 15 And I take it that you are aware of the
- 16 fact that a clerk has certain duties with respect to
- 17 municipal conflict of interest?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Could we turn,
- 20 please -- just actually scroll down the first page and
- 21 you'll see, obviously, there are definitions there,
- 22 right? Or do -- do you see that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Oh, sorry, yes.
- 24 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right and
- 25 could we go down to the definition of "member." Right

- 1 there. "Member" means member of a council or of a
- 2 local board.
- I take it that is familiar to you?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Indeed, you
- 6 replied to Mr. Lloyd's email in January of 2011 using
- 7 that term of "member"?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, I believe so.
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right and
- 10 when it says "member of a council" that would include
- 11 a municipal council such as the Town Council of
- 12 Collingwood?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. Could
- 15 we go then to section 6, please. And we see then
- 16 under "record of disclosure" that under section 6:
- "Every declaration of interest and the
- 18 general nature thereof made under
- 19 section 5" [and we'll go back to
- that] shall, where the meeting is
- open to the public, be recorded in
- the minutes of the meeting by the
- clerk of the municipality or
- 24 secretary of the -- of the
- 25 committee."

- 1 So that's a duty that you had and
- 2 you've known ever since before maybe you were a clerk
- 3 that that was one (1) of your duties?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Absolutely.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And indeed, in
- 6 the minutes -- and I take we've got a lot of Town of
- 7 Collingwood minutes on the website, we see that there
- 8 is, in your standard template, "declaration of
- 9 conflict of interest" every time -- and sometimes
- 10 there are and sometimes there aren't, right?
- 11 All right but it's a standard thing
- 12 that you have to fill in, right?
- 13 MS. SARA ALMAS: We -- we have a
- 14 registry system now that's in place where they have to
- 15 provide a written disclosure to us and that's an
- 16 amendment to -- Bill 68 but prior to that time they
- 17 had to disclose at -- at a meeting and then I would
- 18 have to record that they disclosed a conflict and the
- 19 general nature thereof.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Now can we go
- 21 back, please, to section 5. All right. And so "duty
- 22 of a member" and you'll see -- so this heading has to
- 23 do with and imposes a duty on every member of council,
- 24 right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.

1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And that inclu --

- 2 includes the mayor, the deputy mayor and all of the
- 3 other councillors?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Absolutely.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON:
- "Where a member either on his or her
- 7 own behalf or while acting for, by
- 8 or through any other has a pecuniary
- 9 interest..."
- Just stopping there. "Pecuniary
- 11 interest" was also one (1) of the things that Leo
- 12 Longo discussed in the Aird and Berlis presentation,
- 13 right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 15 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And that means a
- 16 financial interest or having to do with money, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 18 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And then it says
- 19 "direct or indirect." And you understood that
- 20 terminology?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And in fact, you
- 23 use that terminology again in your reply to -- to
- 24 Deputy Mayor Lloyd in January 2011, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.

- 1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right.
- 2 "In any matter and is present at any
- 3 meeting of the council or local
- 4 board at which the matter is the
- 5 subject of consideration."
- 6 And so what this statute talks about is
- 7 a conflict that may arise where there is a matter for
- 8 consideration by a council or local board, right?
- 9 Right and the re -- sorry, I just want
- 10 to make sure that your answers are recorded.
- 11 And be -- because -- and the conflict
- 12 on your understanding could arise because a councillor
- 13 might be voting on something or debating something for
- 14 action by the council where he or she might have a
- 15 pecuniary interest, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And that would
- 18 have to be declared as it says in section 5?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 20 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 21 then recorded?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And then there
- 24 are various things that the member then, who has
- 25 declared a conflict, is prohibited from doing and

- 1 they're listed in section 5?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 3 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So the key to
- 4 this whole thing is that the member -- first of all,
- 5 there has to be -- it has to be with respect to a
- 6 member, such as Mayor Sandra Cooper or Deputy Mayor
- 7 Rick Lloyd or any of the other councillors, right?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And there would
- 10 have to be a pecuniary interest?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 12 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And it would have
- 13 to be a pecuniary interest in respect of some matter
- 14 coming before the council for consideration, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 16 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Those are the
- 17 three (3) requirements for the Municipal Conflict Of
- 18 Interest Act to apply and for this section to be
- 19 triggered?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 21 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right and -- and
- 22 --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I'm not a lawyer --
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: No, no.
- 25 MS. SARA ALMAS: -- but I believe that

- 1 to be correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right, and this -
- 3 and that's how you approached it?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: yes.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And that, indeed,
- 6 is what Aird and Berlis were saying in their -- in
- 7 their presentation, right?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Your Honour, I --
- 10 my apologies, I forgot to ask that two (2) documents
- 11 be marked as an exhibit and the first one is the --
- 12 sorry, I think we should have three (3). The first
- 13 one is the agenda for the orientation workshop,
- 14 CJI99072.
- 15 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: I'll
- 16 make them all -- the 9080 and 50204.
- 17 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Thank you. Thank
- 18 you, Your Honour.
- 19 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: They
- 20 are all exhibits.

21

22 --- EXHIBIT NO. 11: Document CJI00090072.

23

24 --- EXHIBIT NO. 12: Document CJI0009080.

168 --- EXHIBIT NO. 13: Document ALE0050204 2 CONTINUED BY MR. MICHAEL WATSON: 3 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And 5 then if we can go -- oh, sorry, I wasn't actually done with that one whoever is controlling this, if we can still go back to the -- to the statute 50204. There's 7 one (1) more section on this and it's section -section 3. Okay, yeah, right -- right -- right there. 10 And so we've talked about this whole 11 thing about spouses and all that and siblings and so on. And -- and this is then the section that deals 12 13 with those relationships, right? 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct. 15 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay and so it 16 says: 17 "For the purposes of this Act, the 18 pecuniary interest, direct or 19 indirect, of a parent or the spouse 20 or any child of a member shall, if know to the member, be deemed also 21 22 to be the pecuniary interest of the 23 member." 24 And you're very familiar with that?

Yes.

MS. SARA ALMAS:

2.5

1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So that it's a --

- 2 it's a -- it's a deeming provision and if anyone who
- 3 falls within those categories has a pecuniary interest
- 4 on a matter coming before council, then the member is
- 5 deemed to have that same one direct or indirect,
- 6 right?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And it was the
- 9 absence of "sibling" from that section and, indeed,
- 10 anything else, you know, grandchild or, you know, who
- 11 knows what that then circumscribes what -- what is
- 12 required by that statute?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. All right,
- 15 I think that that then is that. Now, could we get to
- 16 the handwritten notes and I'm not sure which one that
- 17 is. Sorry, this was the one where the document ID was
- 18 pending. This is the May -- the May 18th notes that
- 19 we were talking about this morning. You remember
- 20 those handwritten notes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I do.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I'm sorry.
- MR. JOHN MATHER: The document ID is
- 24 CJI10492.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: 10492, thank you.

1 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 3 CONTINUED BY MR. MICHAEL WATSON:
- 4 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right, and if
- 5 we could go to the nonblack part because that will be
- 6 more interesting. Yes, all right.
- 7 So this -- these were the notes that
- 8 you made on May 18th, as we could see from the top,
- 9 right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- and you
- 12 said as well, I think a couple of times, that the next
- 13 meeting of Council that was coming up was on May 30th?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 16 actually in one (1) of the documents we actually put
- 17 in a whole list of the meetings from 2011 because
- 18 they're, of course, still on the website, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And -- all
- 21 right, so -- so, that then was the next meeting May
- 22 30th and did you make these notes in a meeting or on a
- 23 phone call or what or can you remember?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: I can't -- I can't
- 25 recollect where it was in person. I write from my

- 1 office in my own desk regarding information I get on
- 2 the telephone or -- and I take my book to meetings so
- 3 it could have been either one.
- 4 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Have you had --
- 5 well, I won't ask you this way whether you've had an
- 6 opportunity.
- 7 Have you reviewed, before coming to
- 8 give your evidence, the minutes of that May 30th
- 9 council meeting?
- 10 MS. SARA ALMAS: I took a brief
- 11 actually look at them yesterday and that's where I --
- 12 because I was specifically looking to see if there was
- 13 an in camera portion of that meeting and I don't
- 14 believe that there was.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. I'm --
- 16 I'm going to come to that because unless I'm grossly
- 17 misunderstanding the agenda and so on, I think there
- 18 was.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Okay.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And it's referred
- 21 to -- now when you set up agendas, they're not
- 22 infrequently, and I've taken a look through a lot of
- 23 them, are in camera sessions. Not every meeting but
- 24 often, right?
- 25 MS. SARA ALMAS: We've dealt with a

- 1 lot of significant items that required a lot of in
- 2 camera discussions.
- 3 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Including back at
- 4 that time?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 6 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- and on the
- 7 agenda, an item for an in camera meeting will appear,
- 8 right?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, it will.
- 10 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. And it
- 11 always appears at the end or right almost at the end,
- 12 right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And the reason
- 15 for that is that council meetings are open to the
- 16 public, except the in camera meeting, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That's right.
- 18 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And so you don't
- 19 want to have it some place in the middle where people
- 20 come, then they got to go, and then they've got to
- 21 come back at some time in determined time in the
- 22 future, fair?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 24 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. All right.
- 25 And then -- and then minutes of meetings, council

- 1 meetings, also have to be approved, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That's right.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And generally at
- 4 the next council meeting?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 6 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And from what
- 7 I've seen the minutes are attached to the agenda of
- 8 the next council meeting.
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 10 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And so the next
- 11 council meeting after May 30th was June 6th. Does
- 12 that sound right; a week later, one (1) week later?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And I'll be
- 15 taking you to them. The minutes also disclose that
- 16 there was an in camera meeting.
- When you were looking at the May 30th
- 18 agenda, did you see the one of the agenda items was
- 19 Collus Business Plan Report?
- 20 MS. SARA ALMAS: That's the one (1)
- 21 that I recollect looking at, yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. So let's
- 23 then -- all right. And -- and we'll -- we'll get to
- 24 that but that agenda then would've been something that
- 25 you would've prepared?

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 2 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: From information
- 3 given to you by various staff people and so on?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And so when
- 6 Collus Business Plan -- and I hope I'm quoting it
- 7 correctly and we'll get to it -- appeared in those
- 8 minutes that would've been as a result of someone
- 9 telling you that that was what was going to be coming
- 10 up for discussion, one (1) of the things, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 12 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- and Ed
- 13 Houghton was the CEO of Collus at the time?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 16 Tim Fryer was CFO?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 18 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And were you
- 19 familiar with -- did you know any of the other --
- 20 well, any of the Board of Director members?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: I was aware of them
- 22 because we have to authorize the appointment of those
- 23 members.
- 24 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Indeed, at a
- 25 shareholders meeting that takes place every year,

- 1 right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: And Council appoints
- 3 the various members to the -- the board if there's
- 4 vacancies and what not, yes.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right, okay.
- 6 And from what I've seen that happens in and around
- 7 June of every year. Does that -- does that ring a
- 8 bell?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: So in June there
- 10 needs to be a council representative that acts on
- 11 behalf of council at their AGM and I think that's what
- 12 you're referring to.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And so someone
- 14 obviously told you in the run-up to the May 30th
- 15 council meeting that -- that Collus was going to be
- 16 making a presentation.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 18 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And does that
- 19 help you now to remember that it came from Ed Houghton
- 20 because you were a little bit uncertain, I think, this
- 21 morning when we were talking -- when you were talking
- 22 about?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right. Most likely
- 24 it came from Ed but -- so these statements I'm
- 25 assuming came from Ed. I -- I'm just -- I can't say

- 1 for certain.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Fair enough, and
- 3 -- but this is information here on these notes that
- 4 somebody gave you, right?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 6 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And what was in -
- 7 and again I don't want to mis -- misquote them. But
- 8 we're going to see this when we get to the May 30th
- 9 agenda.
- 10 It talked about the Collus Business
- 11 Plan?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: There's a report
- 14 and a business plan.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And that
- 17 wouldn't surprise you. There'd be nothing more than
- 18 that that would appear in the agenda.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Generally.
- 20 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And so when
- 21 somebody told you or said something to you about
- 22 valuation in connection with a simple agenda item, you
- 23 know, presentation of -- of a business plan for -- for
- 24 the year, that must have struck you as a little odd?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: So in -- in my notes,

- 1 when I write "financial report" that is what I called
- 2 -- that was their financial reporting when they
- 3 presented their business plan.
- 4 So it -- it didn't catch me off guard
- 5 when it said "valuation" because they were presenting
- 6 their financial reports and they could have gathered
- 7 that information, and noth -- nothing was triggered to
- 8 me at that time to think, oh, my goodness, you know,
- 9 they're looking at some sort of sale transaction.
- 10 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I'm -- I'm going
- 11 to take it, and correct me if I'm wrong, it was many
- 12 years ago and it's not surprising that people can't
- 13 remember things particularly since there's no reason
- 14 to at the time, that what you can recall about this
- 15 meeting or phone call is basically just what's in the
- 16 notes; is that fair?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Exactly.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. Okay.
- 19 And so you have no recollection of whether the person
- 20 who told you said anything about the purpose for the
- 21 valuation. All you know is valuation, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I don't even know it
- 23 was a valuation of.
- 24 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 25 then it does -- it does say "in camera" and you were

- 1 asked about that this morning and your -- your
- 2 response almost right a way was but there was no in
- 3 camera meeting coming up.
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: You're going to
- 6 see that, in fact, there was.
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Okay.
- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And so when you
- 9 wrote "in camera," is this something that you think
- 10 was told to you or something that you thought, hmm,
- 11 okay, well, I guess that has to be in camera and you
- 12 wrote it down as a reminder to yourself?
- 13 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, general --
- 14 generally, I was advised whenever they thought that
- 15 information need to go behind close session. So what
- 16 I would do is they would provide that information, and
- 17 then I would have to decide whether it met one (1) of
- 18 the exemptions withing the Municipal -- Municipal Act.
- 19 So that's why whenever -- because I recall seeing the
- 20 Collus Business Plan in those May 30th and I didn't
- 21 recollect seeing it.
- I know that there was a few occasions
- 23 that I was challenged on having an in camera meeting
- 24 and I convinced them that there wasn't the appropriate
- 25 exemption and we didn't go in close session.

- 1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I see. Again
- 2 because -- because not being a lawyer, you were very
- 3 familiar with your duties --
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- and with the
- 6 requirements of public sessions and in camera
- 7 sessions, I take it?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- among all the
- 10 other things you know a lot about?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 12 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. Fair
- 13 enough. And -- and then when it says "Council rep
- 14 motion," does that mean anything to you?
- 15 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah. So that would
- 16 be the Council representative that we appoint for the
- 17 AGM, is what I'm assuming that meant.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And -- and
- 19 there's nothing secret about that. That's done in --
- 20 in an open public session, right?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: Annually, yeah.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Yeah. Indeed,
- 23 every year. All right. So why don't we then get,
- 24 finally, to the May 30th Council meeting? And could I
- 25 see -- what do I want to take a look at, here? Yes,

180 CJI9 -- sorry, CJI7986. 2 3 (BRIEF PAUSE) 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. these are the Council minutes of -- of May -- of May 30th. And what I'd like to do, if I could, is go first of all right to the -- right to the bottom. just a little bit up from the -- up from the bottom -okay. Stopping right there, do you see right in the 10 11 middle of page: 12 "Council proceed to in camera 13 session as previously resolved at 14 7:39, and then rose from in camera, 15 and came back at 8:10." 16 Do you see that? 17 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes. 18 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And 19 so obviously, there was an in camera meeting that 20 you'd just forgotten about, right? 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: Can -- can we scroll up in those minutes --22 23 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Absolutely. 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: -- just so I can see 25 the in camera motion?

1 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- MS. SARA ALMAS: So -- so there, it
- 4 wasn't the item that was for discussion at that
- 5 meeting. It's potential land acquisition regarding
- 6 the Public Works. So that in camera meeting did not
- 7 have information on Collus.
- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay, I -- I
- 9 actually haven't asked you anything about Collus.
- 10 MS. SARA ALMAS: Okay, sorry. That's
- 11 what -- okay.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: My question was
- 13 that Council proceed to in camera?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And I
- 16 take it that you are, therefore, assuming because of
- 17 this item that you've just pointed out, that that's
- 18 all that was discussed in the in camera session?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe.
- 20 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. Now
- 21 then, if we can go back up -- and I'm not sure where
- 22 it is, I'm -- I'm sorry -- toward the top. And -- and
- 23 we'll see a -- something about the pri -- yes. All
- 24 right.
- So you see the Collus business plan

Transcript Date April 15, 2019 182 there, and it said: 2 "Mr. Houghton, president and CEO; 3 Dean Muncaster, Chair; Tim Frier, CFO, provided a detailed overview of 5 2011 Collus business plan, address 6 question by Council." Do you see that? MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes. 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And I -- I spent a really interesting time watching the 10 video of that, or at least some of it. And do you --12 do you have a recollection of that? 13 MS. SARA ALMAS: Not offhand. I 14 haven't re-watched since --MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. 15 16 MS. SARA ALMAS: -- I've never watched 17 it, actually. 18 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: May I ask this be 19 made the next exhibit, Your Honour? 20 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Yes. 21 22 --- EXHIBIT NO. 14: CJI0007986 23 24 CONTINUED BY MR. MICHAEL WATSON: 2.5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Now -- and let's

- 1 go to the June 2nd meeting with Mr. Bonwick. And you
- 2 -- I just need to situate myself here for a second.

3

4 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And we saw -- and
- 7 -- and I'm not going to ask to look at it again, but
- 8 we saw the email that Mr. Bonwick sent. And one (1)
- 9 of the things that he said is that you agreed to be
- 10 copied on it. Do you remember that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And I
- 13 take it that that was right, that you did?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I did.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. In your
- 16 evidence this morning, said -- that Mr. Bonwick --
- 17 that Mr. Bonwick said that -- that, first of all,
- 18 talked about Brian Bentz -- all right, and we'll take
- 19 a look at your notes -- and -- and said that -- that
- 20 Mr. Bentz said -- told him that, you know, if -- if
- 21 PowerStream was going to be doing any work in
- 22 Collingwood, that he, Mr. Bentz, had a concerns -- I
- 23 wrote down what you said -- if they would be -- if
- 24 they'd be doing something in Collingwood, right, a
- 25 concern about conflict?

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right, because of
- 3 Mr. Bonwick being the brother of the mayor?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. And
- 6 that's what Mr. Bonwick said?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: M-hm.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And that Mr.
- 9 Bonwick was -- might very well be doing the work for
- 10 PowerStream. He told you some things about that,
- 11 right?
- 12 MS. SARA ALMAS: That he had submit a
- 13 proposal to PowerStream, yes.
- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right.
- 15 Right. And -- and then you also said a little bit
- 16 later on that they, being PowerStream, were concerned
- 17 about a conflict in case of future opportunities that
- 18 might come along.
- 19 That's what you recall Mr. Bonwick
- 20 saying?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: M-hm.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Sorry, is that a
- 23 yes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right.

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, sorry.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And then
- 3 could we then go to your notes? And I believe that
- 4 that is CJI9206.

5

6 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 9 you talked about these notes this morning? All right,
- 10 June 2nd, corrected --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 12 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- corrected
- 13 date?
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 16 so -- and -- and so this is a -- a bit of a summary of
- 17 your discussion with Mr. Bonwick, right?
- 18 MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Now you said that
- 20 -- that the notes that you made shortly before the May
- 21 30th meeting, you know, those short two (2) or three
- 22 (3) lines, you couldn't really recall whether it was
- 23 on the phone or in a meeting. Remember that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- nor, in

- 1 fact, who told you all of that information, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 3 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Now apart from
- 4 the fact that you know that this is Mr. Bonwick --
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: M-hm.
- 6 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- is your memory
- 7 of that meeting basically what you see in these notes?
- 8 Is that fair?
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: No. Actually, Mr.
- 10 Bonwick was a pretty prominent gentleman, so I
- 11 actually recollect quite well that conversation,
- 12 because I had time to reflect upon it, you know,
- 13 within the days following that conversation. So it's
- 14 much more vivid to me.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. And he
- 16 was prominent -- he -- he had been an MP, a two (2)
- 17 term MP for Simcoe-Grey?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And I take it you
- 20 knew that at the time?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Are you from this
- 23 area?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And -

- 1 and you knew that he had -- had himself been a town
- 2 councillor?
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 4 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Did you have any
- 5 position with the town at the time he was a town
- 6 councillor?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, I did not.
- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So that was
- 9 before 2004?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. But you
- 12 knew of that?
- 13 MS. SARA ALMAS: I knew of that.
- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Did you see him
- 15 around town and the Town Hall from time to time?
- 16 MS. SARA ALMAS: At various events
- 17 that the Corporation was represented at, I would see
- 18 Mr. Bonwick.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And you were --
- 20 in -- in the course of some of your answers this --
- 21 this morning, you talked about the CHEC group?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 24 you describe that as a group of local LDCs?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.

1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. Local

- 2 distribution companies, right? That's what that
- 3 means?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So distributing
- 6 electricity locally, right?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah. Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And that's what
- 9 Collus -- that's what Collus was?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 12 there were, we -- for all we knew, LDCs in various
- 13 committees all around the Province?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And, indeed,
- 16 there had to be a local LDC for every community in the
- 17 Province, or people wouldn't have electricity, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And so you said
- 20 that you had -- you had heard the name of -- you knew
- 21 the name PowerStream?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 23 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: But you didn't
- 24 know a lot about it?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.

- 1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- but you
- 2 knew that it was an LDC?
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 4 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: From --
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Well, I knew -- I was
- 6 familiar of it, and -- but Mr. Bonwick confirmed it
- 7 was an LDC.
- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. And did -
- 9 did you have any idea where it operated?
- 10 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, because I've
- 11 drove by it on many occasions.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. And I --
- 13 I'm talking about back then and not now, so the 2010
- 14 to 2012 time period.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Okay.
- 16 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Did you know that
- 17 it -- you know, it -- it consists of, you know,
- 18 Markham, and Vaughan, and Barrie, and those areas?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: I don't think that I
- 20 would have been familiar with the -- the makeup of the
- 21 company specifically.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- and so he
- 23 raised CHEC, right? He talked about CHEC, and -- and
- 24 he said, as one (1) of the region, and Collingwood is
- 25 a member. Now, you, yourself, had said that -- that

- 1 Collus was a -- a member of CHEC?
- 2 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I didn't even
- 3 know what CHEC was at that time. I'm only familiar
- 4 now because I was the co-Chair of Collus PowerStream.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Indeed. And we
- 6 understand that, yes. So, again, I'm asking you not
- 7 about now, but about back then, what you can remember
- 8 --
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah.
- 10 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- about back
- 11 then. All right. So you didn't know that, but he told
- 12 you about CHEC?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- and
- 15 Collingwood is a member. And I take it he told you
- 16 because of PowerStream, and so on, that it was -- it
- 17 was a group of LDCs?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And -
- 20 and he was raising this -- I take it this was very
- 21 clear from your conversation with them because of his
- 22 relationship with the mayor?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That's why he came to
- 24 talk to me.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: In -- indeed.

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. And his
- 3 concern as to whether the Municipal Conflict of
- 4 Interest Act might apply, right?
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: M-hm.
- 6 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- because if
- 7 -- if the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act treated
- 8 siblings in the same way as it treated parents, or
- 9 spouses, or children, then the mayor might very well
- 10 have a conflict. That was what you understood his
- 11 concern to be?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And --
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: Well, I ended --
- 15 understood to be a concern of PowerStream's.
- 16 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right, right.
- 17 And he had been kind of directed by PowerStream to --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- raise this
- 20 issue? And -- and the reason that there might be such
- 21 a concern would be the possibility of a matter we
- 22 discussed before, in which Mr. Bonwick had a pecuniary
- 23 interest coming before Council for consideration in
- 24 the words of the statute, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.

- 1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And so Mr.
- 2 Bonwick merely doing public relations in the community
- 3 isn't something that's going to come before Council.
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- and him
- 6 doing community outreach for PowerStream isn't going
- 7 to be something that comes before Council, right?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: That's right.
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: There's -- it had
- 10 to be something else, not just that. That was pretty
- 11 clear? Yes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I -- actually, I
- 13 -- I kind of left the meeting kind of surprised about
- 14 what could be the interest, because of that very fact.
- 15 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. But
- 16 he was certainly raising it, and so you thought that,
- 17 well, that might very well be a pos -- a possibility,
- 18 and that's why he'd be raising it, that PowerStream
- 19 instructed him to do so, right?
- 20 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, not necessarily.
- 21 It -- I wouldn't -- I don't know -- I didn't know his
- 22 familiarity, I guess, with the Municipal Conflict of
- 23 Interest Act, so I wasn't exactly sure, you know, you
- 24 know, how these specific activities could impact his
- 25 sister, I quess.

1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. So

- 2 you were curious about that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: M-hm.
- 4 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: But you didn't
- 5 ask?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, but this was all
- 7 the information that he was providing.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Yeah. All right.
- 9 It seemed from some emails, that maybe you knew him on
- 10 a first name basis. Is that right?
- 11 MS. SARA ALMAS: I would call him Paul.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: He called you
- 13 Sara?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 15 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: You'd seen him
- 16 before and talked to him?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah. We weren't
- 18 acquaintances by any means.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And you -- you
- 20 talked about the -- about his company Compenso, yes,
- 21 and you had talked about what was on the website,
- 22 right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So you had made
- 25 it your business to go onto his website to see what

- 1 that company was doing and so on, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I only went onto
- 3 his website at -- at one (1) point whenever it was
- 4 suggested to me that one (1) of our councillors was a
- 5 member. I did not go onto his website to -- to look
- 6 at his activities, or what the details of his
- 7 corporation was about.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And so -- and --
- 9 and he sent you an email that morning asking to come
- 10 to see you?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Not just to get
- 13 on the phone with you or anything like that, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 15 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Nor did he send -
- 16 merely send an email like Mr. Lloyd had sent in
- 17 January, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: He asked to come
- 20 to see you?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Had he ever done
- 23 that before, asking to come to see you?
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: I don't believe so.
- 25 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So this was

- 1 something that was new and different?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah.
- 3 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And in your
- 4 email, you will -- you -- you -- the email that you
- 5 discussed this morning -- we'll take a look at that --
- 6 there obviously is mention of the discussion about the
- 7 Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, right?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: It -- it mentions the
- 9 Provincial Conflict of Interest Act, but it is
- 10 Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And -
- 12 and just -- and just to be fair, the Municipal
- 13 Conflict of Interest Act is an Act of the Province,
- 14 right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That's right.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Yeah, of the
- 17 legislature of the Province?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. So
- 20 it's not necessarily, you know, a formal title that he
- 21 was using, but perhaps a recognition that it was a
- 22 Provincial statute?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: He had put -- put it
- 24 in quotations, and said it was the Act. That's why I
- 25 --

1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. Okay. In

- 2 any event, you knew perfectly well what it was and why
- 3 he was there. He needed to discuss, right?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. Now there
- 6 is no reference in your notes whatsoever of Municipal
- 7 Conflict of Interest Act, is there?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: No.
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. And that
- 10 doesn't mean that it didn't take place and it wasn't
- 11 discussed at the meeting, fair?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Fair.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right,
- 14 because indeed, that was a central thing that --
- 15 that's why he was there?
- 16 MS. SARA ALMAS: That's right.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And -- and
- 18 this morning, also, when you said that -- that he had
- 19 been told by Brian Bentz that he -- they had to come
- 20 and talk to you about that, there's nothing in your
- 21 notes about that either?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I note in here that
- 23 he talks about the present CEO, a Brian Bentz --
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: -- and that's why the

- 1 conversation came up about the president.
- 2 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I -- I do
- 3 understand that. And -- and, listen, please, I am not
- 4 in any way being critical of this, because you weren't
- 5 taking a verbatim transcript of it, were you?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- 7 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. But what
- 8 I'm getting at is that there were some things that
- 9 were said in that meeting -- and you talked about some
- 10 of them this morning -- that don't appear in your
- 11 notes, fair?
- 12 MS. SARA ALMAS: Abs -- absolutely,
- 13 like --
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Yeah.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: -- like you said,
- 16 it's not verbatim.
- 17 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. In --
- 18 including that -- when you said that -- that they,
- 19 PowerStream, were concerned about a conflict in case
- 20 of future opportunities that might come along with
- 21 Collingwood. Nothing there in your notes about that
- 22 either, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 24 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And so I -
- 25 I take it that, then, you were -- you remembered,

- 1 obviously, the conversation. You discussed with Ms.
- 2 Wingrove aft -- afterwards, but there are various
- 3 things that were said in that meeting that -- that, in
- 4 fairness, aren't -- aren't --
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Absolutely.
- 6 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- in these
- 7 notes?
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah.
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Then let's --
- 10 sorry. Could we go, please, to the June 27th Council
- 11 in camera meeting. This is TOC516351.
- 12
- 13 (BRIEF PAUSE)
- 14
- 15 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Yeah. So it's
- 16 called to order at -- at 6:10 p.m. And if we can just
- 17 scroll down, just to, you know, see what this has to
- 18 do with, we see Collus Power Property. So there is an
- 19 item concerning that. Do you see that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, I see that,
- 21 sorry.
- 22 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 23 Mr. Houghton was there, and -- and made a -- and --
- 24 and made some kind of presentation. And you'll see
- 25 that it says:

	- -
	199
1	"Mr. Houghton provided an update for
2	Council's information on a study
3	that Collus Power is undertaking to
4	investigate their strategic
5	opportunities."
6	Do you see that?
7	MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
8	MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And then it says:
9	"Mr. Houghton and Mr. Frier, CFO,
10	address questions from Council,
11	including concerns with valuations."
12	Now you were, of course, at this
13	meeting?
14	MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
15	MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And you took the
16	minutes?
17	MS. SARA ALMAS: I did.
18	MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And when when
19	they were talking about valuations, that must have
20	rung a bell with you for what somebody, maybe Mr.
21	Houghton, had talked about just a month and a half
22	earlier?
23	MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
24	MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Strategic
25	opportunities, as it says here, right?

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And then
- 3 if we can continue on down, there is -- there is --
- 4 and they said:
- 5 "Mr. Houghton confirmed that
- 6 following the completion of the
- 7 study, a detailed report will be
- 8 provided to Council."
- 9 So Collus was, as it -- as it says in
- 10 the previous paragraph, doing a study with respect to
- 11 strategic opportunities, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 13 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Was this the
- 14 first time that you had heard anything at all about
- 15 it, or had you heard something about it before, some
- 16 kind of intimation, some of discussions?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Well, I received --
- 18 obviously, in my handwritten notes from May 18, when
- 19 it's noted that there was going to be a Council --
- 20 there was going to be an in camera discussion
- 21 requested. There was going to be -- it -- because it
- 22 indicated valuation -- sorry, if you can repeat your
- 23 question?
- 24 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Of course. Of
- 25 course.

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: Sorry.
- 2 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: It was -- my
- 3 question was -- was this, June 27th, the first time
- 4 that you had heard anything about a possible strategic
- 5 opportunity, or a study that was being done with
- 6 respect of that, or a valuation with respect to that?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes. The
- 8 significance of it, it didn't catch my attention
- 9 anytime significantly before that I recollect, but
- 10 this was clearly presented, and that's when I became
- 11 fully aware of what they were undertaking.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. Now
- 13 if we can scroll down slowly, we see a great big, you
- 14 know, a big -- a black patch. If we can keep going
- 15 on. It's big, okay? And then -- sorry, just stop
- 16 there.
- So I'm going to take it that -- that
- 18 redaction is something that -- that you put in, or did
- 19 inquiry Council do it, or who -- who did it? Do you
- 20 know?
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: I think inquiry
- 22 Council, I believe.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And -
- 24 and as far as you're concerned, I take it, then,
- 25 that would indicate that there's nothing in there that

- 1 was relevant to the Collus Transaction, right?
- 2 MS. SARA ALMAS: So based on some of
- 3 the documents I see, if there's more than two (2)
- 4 items or three (3) items that are on -- on our in
- 5 camera agenda, they've blacked out the items that
- 6 weren't pertinent to the conversation.
- 7 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. So we'd
- 8 have to look at the agenda to see --
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yeah.
- 10 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- how many of
- 11 those boxes were ticked off --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- and what they
- 14 might be?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 16 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Is that fair?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 18 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 19 so if we can go to -- back up to the top -- well,
- 20 first of all, sorry -- sorry -- if we stay there, you
- 21 see that -- that the in camera session adjourned at
- 22 8:49.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 24 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. Do you
- 25 remember one of the previous ones, the in camera

- 1 session lasted for about twenty-five (25) minutes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 3 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: This one (1)
- 4 ended at 8:49, right? Let's go to the top. And --
- 5 and the top says calling to order at 6:10. You see
- 6 that?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So this was a two
- 9 and two-thirds (2 2/3) hour in camera session.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And we see
- 12 that there's just, you know, a whole bunch of stuff
- 13 there but if we then, sorry, go -- go back down --
- 14 down a little -- a little further, we see that Collus
- 15 Power -- Power Property, and that's certainly one of
- 16 the -- one of items -- and you got there, you know,
- 17 six (6) lines, well five (5) lines there and then
- 18 another one (1) just -- just below that, for a
- 19 discussion of the study -- the strategic
- 20 opportunities, taking questions, valuations,
- 21 partnerships, assets, and so on. And -- and these the
- 22 final minutes with respect to that, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe --
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: -- that they are.

- 1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And I take it
- 2 then that there would be a whole heck of a lot more in
- 3 your draft minutes about what was said about all of
- 4 these things.
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Generally I would
- 6 have more. This would be the summary.
- 7 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. Then
- 8 I'm -- I'm going to reiterate a request that we have
- 9 previously made for -- for minutes. I did not --
- 10 however, to be fair, I did not appreciate before your
- 11 evidence this morning that there were draft minutes
- 12 and not just final ones.
- And so what I'm going to ask for on
- 14 behalf of our client, and my guess is some other
- 15 people here as well, is the draft minutes that would
- 16 undoubtedly have, I take it, Ms. Almas, a lot more
- 17 detail than what you've recorded here, fair?
- 18 MS. SARA ALMAS: Some of them didn't
- 19 have significantly more, but there's -- there's always
- 20 more in the draft than there is in the final.
- 21 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I'm -- I'm going
- 22 to ask that and we'll -- we can take it up later with
- 23 Inquiry counsel, but I just want to make that request
- 24 on -- on -- on the record.

2.5

1 (BRIEF PAUSE)

2

- 3 MR. FREDERICK CHENOWETH: Are you
- 4 asking -- thank you, I've got it on. Are you asking
- 5 for the minutes, all draft minutes with respect to
- 6 council meetings that have been produced to Inquiry
- 7 counsel or are you asking for the draft minutes
- 8 relating to the June 27th, 2011, meeting?
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: The request --
- 10 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Why --
- 11 why don't we just deal with this -- why don't you --
- 12 the two (2) of you can about the nature of the
- 13 request. Why don't we try to continue with the cross-
- 14 examination of the witness and then you and -- and
- 15 counsel for Mr. Houghton can sort out the nature of
- 16 your request.
- 17 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Indeed.
- 18 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Let us
- 19 know what your request is and we'll, if we have those
- 20 minutes, we'll produce them.
- 21 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. Thank you,
- 22 Your Honour.

- 24 CONTINUED BY MR. MICHAEL WATSON:
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So that's that.

- 1 Now you talked about procurement this morning.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 3 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And the Town of
- 4 Collingwood had a procurement bylaw.
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes
- 6 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And it was passed
- 7 in 2006.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe so.
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I was curious
- 10 about that so I spent a -- a little time, that's the
- 11 kind of life I have, going over various minutes of
- 12 meetings and so on over the past few years, and I see
- 13 there is a -- an updated procurement bylaw in 2017, is
- 14 that right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 16 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- and so the
- 17 twenty (20) -- 2006 procurement -- sorry, it's a
- 18 policy, right?
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: They're both bylaws.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. Yeah,
- 21 sorry, yes, it -- yes, it was, because it has that
- 22 number.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: 2006-42, all
- 25 right. And -- and -- and that 's that's something

- 1 that's mandated by the Municipal Act, right, that is,
- 2 that the Municipal Act uses the term "policy." You're
- 3 familiar with that?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Not bylaw. It
- 6 doesn't require a bylaw.
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: But it requires
- 9 the municipality to have, among other things, policies
- 10 respecting procurement.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And procure means
- 13 to obtain something from someone, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And so
- 16 could we take a look, please, then at TOC517154?
- 17 And, Your Honour, while we're getting
- 18 that, just to give an indication, I am hoping, and I
- 19 may very well be done by 3:30.
- 20 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Well,
- 21 we have to stop --
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I understand.
- 23 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: -- you
- 24 know, so just govern yourself accordingly. If you're
- 25 not finished, then pick a convenient point and stop.

- 2 CONTINUED BY MR. MICHAEL WATSON:
- 3 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Fine, fine. All
- 4 right. And so this is the bylaw, I take it, that, you
- 5 know, you don't necessarily take around with you to
- 6 parties, but you're familiar with it.
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: I am familiar, yes.
- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. And you
- 9 have some -- you have some role with respect to
- 10 procurement, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: I do.
- 12 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. So --
- 13 well, this is not going to be fun. I'm not going to
- 14 go through the whole thing, but basically -- and I
- 15 want to take you to something -- it deals with the
- 16 procurement of goods and services, fair?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: That's what it's
- 19 basically about.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 21 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. And if we
- 22 can go, please, then to -- I think it's 2.0 policy
- 23 statement and a whole bunch of definitions which are
- 24 really boring, and then what we see here, a policy
- 25 statement. So this is a general policy statement that

the Town has put in place describing what the bylaw is all about and what the intent is, right? 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: (NO AUDIBLE RESPONSE) MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And so we 5 see: 6 "No expenditure, purchase, or commitment shall be incurred or made and no account shall be paid by the 9 Town for goods and services." 10 You see that? 11 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes. MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And of course 12 that's a defined term, okay. 13 14 "Except as provided in this file or 15 otherwise approved by council" --16 Da da da da. And then (b): 17 "In implementing this, no contract 18 shall be entered into and no 19 expenditure shall be authorized or 20 incurred unless council has provided 21 funds for such purpose in the annual 22 budget." 23 You see that? 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: (NO AUDIBLE RESPONSE) 2.5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right. And so --

- 1 and so what that has to do with is, if there are goods
- 2 and services that are going to be purchased, then you
- 3 can't sign a contract for that unless there has been
- 4 an allocation in the municipal budget for -- for the
- 5 year or unless council specifically approves it, fair?
- 6 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 7 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 8 then (c) says:
- 9 "Department heads shall ensure that
- 10 bylaws and provisions of the bylaw
- 11 are complied with."
- 12 And then (d) deals with unsolicited
- 13 proposals, and so we see what it has to do with and
- 14 that is the acquisition of either goods or services by
- 15 the Town, right? Yes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Sorry, which --
- 17 which section are we on?
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Well, I'm talking
- 19 -- talking just now overall. We've taken a look at
- 20 all of these, and again this -- the whole thing has to
- 21 do with the acquisition or procurement of goods and
- 22 services by the Town.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay, thank you.
- 25 Now, could we please go to then the RFP for this

1 transaction, which is CPS6891.

2

3 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And I daresay
- 6 you're familiar with this document.
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: I am.
- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: I think everybody
- 9 in this room is. All right. So this was the request
- 10 for proposal, the RFP, for the strategic partnership
- 11 put out by Collus Power Corp, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 13 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: In October of
- 14 2011.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 16 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And that then led
- 17 to various proposals being made by four (4) bidders in
- 18 November, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And evaluation by
- 21 the strategic task team of Collus and a presentation
- 22 to council on December 5th.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 24 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: In an in camera
- 25 session.

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And then Council
- 3 voting to approve PowerStream as the preferred
- 4 proponent.
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: I don't recollect
- 6 that to be specifically correct.
- 7 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. We'll
- 8 leave that point. That's all right; that -- that's
- 9 fine. Could we then scroll down, please, and I want
- 10 to take a look at the -- at the purpose of the -- of
- 11 the request. Okay. So stopping there -- sorry.
- 12 We see -- the first thing is the
- 13 purpose of the request and then there's a whole bunch
- 14 of stuff about background and governance, right.
- 15 Okay, so let's go down to Purpose of Request section
- 16 on page 1. So here we have -- this request for
- 17 proposal is being issued by Collus Power Corp and the
- 18 Town of Collingwood. So it actually, in fairness, is
- 19 both, right, both the Town and Collus. Yes?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 21 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And -
- 22 and you appreciated that Collus had a whole bunch of
- 23 associated and affiliated companies, right, utility
- 24 company, the asset company, the LDC company, and so
- 25 on?

- 1 MS. SARA ALMAS: yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And
- 3 some of them were dormant and some of them were
- 4 active.
- 5 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 6 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And -- and
- 7 what it says is:
- 8 "For the purpose of soliciting
- 9 written proposals to enter into a
- 10 strategic partnership arrangement
- for the purpose of this request,
- some of the key needs of a strategic
- partner include the following."
- 14 And so you see purchase of shares of up
- 15 to 50 percent in Collus Power. That was a very
- 16 central feature of this entire transaction, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Just for
- 20 clarification --
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Yes.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: -- if I may --
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Yes.
- 24 MS. SARA ALMAS: -- actually I didn't
- 25 -- I don't recollect, because I didn't prepare this

- 1 document nor was involved in this document, I didn't
- 2 actually recollect that it had the Town of Collingwood
- 3 included -- included in that purpose. So that -- that
- 4 is -- I -- I thought it was being primarily issued by
- 5 Collus Power Corp.
- 6 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And that may be
- 7 primarily by Collus Power Corp, I wanted to mention
- 8 that out of fairness --
- 9 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 10 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- right, because
- 11 the Town of Collingwood was the sole shareholder --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Absolutely.
- 13 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- of Collus and
- 14 -- and indeed you have talked about that this morning
- 15 in connection with the Aird & Berlis -- Aird & Berlis
- 16 sort of acting in a way kind of for both and all of
- 17 that, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. So it's
- 20 talking here about the purchase of shares of up to 50
- 21 percent in Collus Power, and of course that would be
- 22 the -- the purchase of shares by some other company or
- 23 entity, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. Such as,

- 1 as it turned out, PowerStream or Veridian or -- or
- 2 Horizon or Hydro One, who were all invited --
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 4 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- to the show,
- 5 right. Okay. And then provision of strategic and
- 6 specialized resources to Collus Power while continuing
- 7 to effectively engage in the Collus Power and
- 8 affiliate -- and affiliate employees, right. We saw
- 9 that. That's a "yes"?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And -
- 12 and so -- so that -- so the first point, purchase of
- 13 shares, would be purchase of shares from the Town,
- 14 because the Town was the owner of the shares, right?
- 15 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes. The Holdco was,
- 16 I guess, technically the owner but the Town was -- was
- 17 -- was responsible for the entire company.
- 18 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Fair enough.
- 19 MS. SARA ALMAS: I believe --
- 20 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: There was a
- 21 holding company --
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes, yeah.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- and you're
- 24 familiar with the fact that what then happened, I take
- 25 it you know for tax reasons beneficial to the Town,

- 1 was that it was changed to the Holdco, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Near the end,
- 3 correct.
- 4 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. So
- 5 that -- that's fine. The entire Collus Group, if I
- 6 can put it that way, was wholly owned by the Town.
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: That is correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. Through,
- 9 as you point out, carefully -- a -- a holding company.
- 10 MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And -
- 12 and so this then would be a purchase of, indirectly,
- 13 through the holding company, of an asset of the Town--
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 15 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: -- which would
- 16 explain, I take it now that you think about it and
- 17 look at it, why the -- it was stated to be the Town of
- 18 Collingwood, right? Because the first part of it has
- 19 to do with Town.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 21 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: But not the Town
- 22 getting goods and services, the Town selling 50
- 23 percent of its shares, right? So the procurement
- 24 bylaw had nothing to do with this, correct?
- 25 MS. SARA ALMAS: I don't -- I'm -- I'm

- 1 not sure.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay, all right,
- 3 all right. That's fine. And the only reason I'm
- 4 asking this is that you were asked a bunch of
- 5 questions about the normal way in which the Town does
- 6 various things and RFPs, but those are RFPs for the --
- 7 for -- for the -- for the acquisition of goods and
- 8 services, right, because that's what that bylaw is all
- 9 about, fair?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 11 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Yes, all right.
- 12 And then the rest of all of this has to do with
- 13 providing services to Collus Power, as you can see,
- 14 right?
- 15 MS. SARA ALMAS: (NO AUDIBLE RESPONSE)
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. Then --
- 17 how are we doing?
- 18
- 19 (BRIEF PAUSE)
- 20
- 21 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. I
- 22 think actually maybe the last point that I want to get
- 23 to -- I'm starting -- myself -- is, you were asked
- 24 about -- and -- and we're now going forward and I'm
- 25 going to situate you to the January 2012 time period.

- 1 So this is after Town Council has
- 2 approved -- yeah, has approved PowerStream, and now I
- 3 think you were aware of the fact that the parties were
- 4 then negotiating the various documents through their
- 5 lawyers, and Aird & Berlis of course was acting for --
- 6 for -- I'm just going to say the Town/Collus, right.
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And you're
- 9 familiar with the fact that both the Town and Collus
- 10 were signatories to the Share Purchase Agreement.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 12 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And you --
- 13 forgive me, I may have forgotten or gotten this wrong
- 14 you. You are signing officer for the Corporation on
- 15 those documents, right?
- 16 MS. SARA ALMAS: That is correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So that would
- 18 include the Share Purchase Agreement?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And you remember
- 21 that there is a Unanimous Shareholders Agreement?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: You signed both?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Did you read them

- 1 before you signed them? And I'm not asking --
- 2 critical, because you used lawyers. I appreciate
- 3 that. Did you read them?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: No, I did not read
- 5 them.
- 6 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. You -- you
- 7 relied on advice from people you trusted.
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Is that a fair
- 10 way to put it?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And --
- 13 MS. SARA ALMAS: And again to
- 14 reiterate, they're extremely substantial legal
- 15 documents.
- 16 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Yes, I understand
- 17 that. All right. And one of the things that -- that
- 18 you said this morning that was interesting -- when you
- 19 were asked about this, you remember Mr. Mather took
- 20 you through the bylaw and -- and the -- the fact that
- 21 Mr. Nolan of PowerStream had written back with
- 22 comments and what he wanted to see in the bylaw.
- Do you remember that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- and you

- 1 said that you were very surprised with that. Do you
- 2 remember saying that?
- 3 MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 4 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And you said this
- 5 wasn't for PowerStream's interest. Do you remember
- 6 saying that?
- 7 MS. SARA ALMAS: M-hm.
- 8 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And you said, and
- 9 I kind of detected an element of effrontery. Well,
- 10 this is the Town's bylaw. That was your view. So
- 11 sort of, in your view, what the heck is PowerStream
- 12 doing, sticking its nose into a Town bylaw?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And then
- 15 you were taken to -- do do do do...

16

17 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 19 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Yeah, yeah,
- 20 sorry. And I -- I have not made a note of this, I'm
- 21 sorry. You -- the -- the four (4) items with respect
- 22 -- that -- in that document that Mr. Nolan was asking
- 23 about. Do you remember those four (4) items, (a),
- 24 (b), (c), (d)?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Oh, yes.

- 1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: You were asked
- 2 about that. I'm sorry, for some reason, didn't make a
- 3 note of the document.
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: Like the various --
- 5 progressive change to the bylaw.

6

7 (BRIEF PAUSE)

8

- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: If --
- MR. JOHN MATHER: 494?

11

12 (BRIEF PAUSE)

13

- 14 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: It's -- I can put
- 15 it on the record, paragraph 494, Foundation Document
- 16 1. Okay, thanks. All right, if we can get up, that'd
- 17 be great. Thank you.

18

19 (BRIEF PAUSE)

- 21 CONTINUED BY MR. MICHAEL WATSON:
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. So
- 23 you remember you were asked about this, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- 25 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And -- and -- and

1 it included a whereas clause. Basically you said this

- 2 morning you didn't have any concerns about any of
- 3 these.
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: I -- I wasn't
- 5 terribly concerned, no.
- 6 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Well, I wrote
- 7 down you said, "I had no concerns about these." You
- 8 say basically -- you had some concern about the fact
- 9 that PowerStream was involving itself, right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Right.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: But leaving aside
- 12 that, you didn't have any concerns about these
- 13 specific items, fair?
- 14 MS. SARA ALMAS: That is -- that's
- 15 fair.
- 16 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And -
- 17 and when -- and when we see, for example, on Item
- 18 (c), and you were asked about this, "Remove the
- 19 requirement that Town staff and Town solicitor report
- 20 back to council before closing of the Transaction.
- 21 You see that?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And indeed in
- 24 your evidence this morning, you said that it's a
- 25 pretty unusual thing to do this because it's already

- 1 authorized, why do you have to come back to council
- 2 unless there is a very significant change, is what you
- 3 said, right?
- 4 MS. SARA ALMAS: That is correct.
- 5 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: So what would had
- 6 been put into the draft bylaw, was in fact something
- 7 that you thought was unnecessary.
- 8 MS. SARA ALMAS: yes.
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Yes. So thank
- 10 goodness, PowerStream came along and said that. Fair?
- 11 MS. SARA ALMAS: Not -- not
- 12 necessarily.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Is it something
- 14 that maybe you would have thought your lawyers would
- 15 have done?
- 16 MS. SARA ALMAS: To report back to --
- 17 to council, obviously is not a bad thing, so it's not
- 18 the way normal process would work, so it was odd that
- 19 it was in there.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Right.
- 21 MS. SARA ALMAS: But it -- but it by
- 22 no means is it -- is it wrong, and if anything, you
- 23 know, it -- if we thought there should have been a
- 24 report back to council, it could be in there but it's
- 25 generally not that case.

1 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: All right. And -

- 2 and when you're talking about the bylaw and you were
- 3 being asked about the bylaw, you said that, well, you
- 4 know, we need authorization for this. This is the
- 5 words you used. In other words, the Town would need
- 6 proper authorization to enter into this transaction,
- 7 right?
- MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- 9 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. And that's
- 10 done by bylaw.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Yes.
- MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And, because
- 13 after all, it was selling 50 percent of of a pretty
- 14 significant subsidiary corporation that ran the
- 15 electrical utility.
- MS. SARA ALMAS: Correct.
- 17 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: And town council
- 18 had to be apprised of that and had to pass a bylaw to
- 19 that effect.
- 20 MS. SARA ALMAS: That's correct.
- 21 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Okay. Now, what
- 22 I'd like to do then, and I think this may be just --
- 23 maybe toward the end. Could we go then to ARB513?
- 24
- 2.5

225 1 (BRIEF PAUSE) 2 3 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Sorry, no, no, no. 5 6 (BRIEF PAUSE) MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Give me a moment, 9 Your Honour. 10 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: Mr. 11 Watson --12 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Yes. 13 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: 14 we've got about two (2) minutes to go before we're --15 we're asked to vacate. Is this a good point to stop? 16 MR. MICHAEL WATSON: Well, since --I'm trying to figure out the document. It's a great 17 18 place to stop, so, yes, and I can finish up in just a 19 few minutes in the morning. 20 THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO: That's 21 fine. We'll finish up tomorrow. 22 We talked about and agreed that we're 23 not sitting on the 22nd, so we'll start on the 23rd at 24 one o'clock because I have a -- a commitment in 25 Toronto at 8:00 in the morning. Would -- could we sit

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226
  on the Friday, the 26th? People available?
 2
 3
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
 5
                   THE HONOURABLE FRANK MARROCCO:
   Perhaps you can let me know in the morning if -- if --
   if that's literally -- but that way we would -- for
   some reason we're not sitting on -- on the Friday, but
   it might not be a bad idea to do that. So anyway, let
10 me know tomorrow if that is a great inconvenience to
11
   people or not. Well, let me know in the morning.
12
13
                          (BRIEF PAUSE)
14
15 --- Upon adjourning at 3:31 p.m.
16
17 Certified correct,
18
19
20
21
   Wendy Woodworth, Ms.
22
23
24
2.5
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