

## Public Statement by Jackie Hunt

May 2, 2017

I had the opportunity to work with some of the finest people. Not only staff, but community groups, planners, developers and elected officials from other municipalities and other levels of government. The decision to walk away was heartbreaking.

When a Council cannot function as a group, and when mediation does not work, and when name calling and belligerent behaviour become the norm, it is time to re-evaluate your spot at the table.

There is currently no mechanism in The Municipal Act that allows for elected officials to be disciplined for behaviour that would not be tolerated in any other work environment. There is a Council Code of Conduct, but it allows only for censuring, which is ultimately a public slap on the wrist.

I gave up my seat so that it might start a conversation at the Municipal and Provincial levels of government about how to better protect the residents that want to serve our communities. If I stayed and did nothing, then I became complicit and accepting of the behaviour. We are trying to encourage people to run for public office, and we need to ensure they are protected from bullying and inappropriate behaviour while serving their communities.

My hope is that the RM of Ritchot can find people to run for office who are community minded, want to work together towards common goals, and always, always look at the big picture when making decisions.

I always served my municipality with integrity and put its needs ahead of my own.

I would like to thank my colleagues Jeannot Robert and Ron Mamchuk, Mitch Duval and all of the staff at the Municipality for their dedication, integrity and support of the RM of Ritchot. It has been a pleasure serving with you.

I am now a private citizen and this will be my only statement on this matter. I plan to take time to regroup and focus on my family and charitable work.

Make a habit of two things: to help; or at least to do no harm. (Hippocrates)