

Springwater fires Forfar, it wouldn't tolerate the intolerable

Chris Cooke - July 2026

She got the boot.

And it took Springwater, Ontario barely six months to figure out that Stacey Forfar wasn't particularly good at her job.

Sarnia spent \$80,000 in raises and benefits, pumped up her compensation to nearly \$250,000 and spent six years ignoring the obvious.

Contractors and home builders who described her as a bureaucratic nightmare were thrilled with her voluntary departure to Springwater, just north of Barrie last fall.

And while her Sarnia boss, Chris Carter spoke in glowing terms about his departing general manager of community services the mayor of Springwater had nothing glowing to say about her.

In fact, Mayor Jennifer Coughlin seemingly went out of her way, using her strong mayor power to oust Forfar from her role as chief administrative officer.

Her firing says a lot about Springwater but even more about Sarnia.

Let me suggest here that Springwater was either unaware of her shortcomings, which were laid bare in Sarnia, or simply intolerant of them upon her arrival.

I can't help but sense it was a little of both.

In Sarnia, Forfar reprimanded a service club attempting to give back and do good in the community.

Her nastiness toward the Seaway Kiwanis Club which spent more than \$100,000 rebuilding the Canatara Park log cabin was made public in a letter denouncing organizers for failing to get her approval for every aspect of the project.

She tried to put the owner of a Lakeshore Road detailing shop out of business, curtailed house building in Sarnia with obscene development charges and let a consultant run rampant with a proposed \$750,000 memorial to Victims of Chemical Valley.

Forfar did all that in a vacuum oblivious to her surroundings while apparently living in Barrie and working in Sarnia.

Her demise just months after her departure is emblematic of the Sarnia she came from.

Sarnia is bureaucratically headed by Chris Carter, who hired her upon his arrival from Niagara where he was fired and later reprimanded by a provincial ombudsman in a dispute with a local newspaper reporter.

Here he has been entangled in a workplace harassment suit filed against a municipal councillor, namely Bill Dennis.

And then there is Mike Bradley, who faced his own workplace harassment problems with his previous chief administrative officer only to replace her with Carter, a seemingly less problematic yes man.

Bradley, a 38-year, 11 term municipal politician who hates controversy, can be a bit of a bully and lives in a world of mediocrity surrounded with like-minded people who can't cut it beyond the confines of the city he controls. The key to success in business and politics is to surround yourself with people who are better than you because they do nothing but make you look good.

The demise of Stacey Forfar, the reprimand of Chris Carter and the inability of Bradley to move the city beyond what it was 38 years ago is testament to his own insecurity and his inability to heed the success doctrine.

This October we have an opportunity to do something about that.

The question of course is will we?

I could be wrong about this but I'm usually not.