

What's gone wrong in Vaughan

WHO THEY ENDORSED

Jackson
Di Biase
undeclared

THE 8 COUNCILLORS

Alan Shefman
Incumbent



Sandra Racco-Yeung
Incumbent



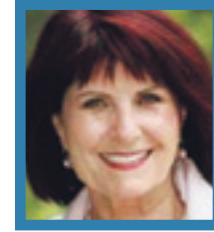
Mario Ferri
(regional councillor)
Incumbent



Peter Meffe
Incumbent



Joyce Frustaglio
(regional councillor)
Incumbent
Self-described deputy mayor, second in line to the mayor by vote count. Faces a campaign audit.



Bernie DiVona
Incumbent
Escaped bid for an audit on his election finances. Has initiated a libel lawsuit against Richard Lorello, who called for the audit.



Tony Carella
Incumbent. Escaped bid for an audit on his election finances.



Gino Rosati
(regional councillor)
Newly elected; endorsed no one. Escaped bid for an audit on his election finances.



PHINJO GOMBU
URBAN AFFAIRS REPORTER

Politics in Vaughan has always been a rough-and-tumble affair, as was evident in the raucous scene at city council just days after Mayor Linda Jackson's 90-vote victory over Michael Di Biase in late 2006.

Supporters on both sides jammed council chambers at a special meeting called by then-mayor Di Biase, who requested a recount. The meeting had to be adjourned and police were called.

Today, Jackson finds herself facing possible dismissal from office, with charges expected to be laid under the Municipal Elections Act regarding campaign finance irregularities. An auditor's report alleged she had overspent her campaign limit of \$120,419 by at least 10 per cent, and possibly double that, while she campaigned on a promise to clean up troubled city hall. She also faces a coming audit on her office spending.

The imbroglia is a continuation of the controversy that has dogged Jackson since the campaign.

Her predicament arises from the confluence of a tangled web of alliances and shifting allegiances at city hall. But primarily it's the result of actions begun by former Jackson supporters who have become disenchanted with her performance since the election, such as Gino Ruffolo, Mary Ruffolo and Carrie Liddy. At least part of their motivation has to do with Jackson's failure to press through with her campaign call for a public inquiry into allegations of corruption and other issues in city government.

Jackson's problems are amplified by the fact that she faces a council that, save one member, publicly endorsed Di Biase in the election.

MAYOR LINDA JACKSON

Elected mayor November 2006 by a 90-vote margin.

Faces probable charges and potential dismissal from office for election finance irregularities.

Is awaiting results of second internal audit on her office expenses, as well as a court ruling on a conflict of interest allegation.



MICHAEL DI BIASE

Former mayor

Faces an audit of election campaign finances.

Won a partial recount of Jackson's narrow victory. Not satisfied, he went to court for a full recount, which cost the city over \$600,000. It didn't change the result, but led to dismissal of city clerk.



Asked for campaign audit of councillor

Asked for campaign audit of Jackson

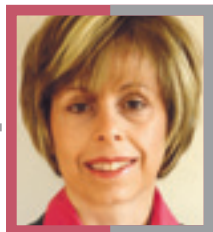
Asked for office expenses audit of Jackson

Filed wrongful dismissal lawsuit against the city

Asked for campaign audit of councillor

Asked for campaign audit of Di Biase

Asked for campaign audit of councillors



Gino Ruffolo and Mary Ruffolo
Former Jackson supporters who have turned on her

Mary Ruffolo launched a sexual harassment lawsuit against the city after quitting her job; the suit was settled out of court.

Couple is the subject of a gag order requested by the City of Vaughan; the city wants an injunction against them because of the number of information requests they have filed.

Gino, together with former Jackson supporter **Quintino Mastroguseppe**, sought and won the audit of Jackson's campaign expenses. Audit led to hiring of independent prosecutor to lay Municipal Elections Act charges.

Gino has also filed in court allegations that Jackson was in conflict of interest when she voted in favour of the city's lawsuit against him and his wife.



Carrie Liddy
Disenchanted former supporter and key campaign aide to Jackson

Sought and won an audit of Jackson's spending while in office, due later this month.

She has now publicly declared support for Di Biase.

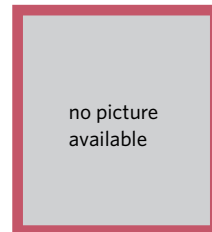


Paul Donofrio
Former city employee, supported by Ruffolo and Liddy

Fired by the city, he filed a wrongful dismissal lawsuit and raised questions about invoicing practices in the city's fleet department.

He was the subject of private emails between Jackson and an unnamed York Region police officer, copies of which mysteriously landed on Di Biase's doorstep during the election campaign, causing an uproar. Jackson said they'd been stolen. Opponents questioned whether her personal contact with an officer who was privy to the investigation gave her an advantage in the election, which she fought largely on a platform of fighting corruption at city hall.

An independent investigation by Waterloo Region police resulted in a reprimand to the officer.



Richard Plouffe
A director of Conservative Party in Vaughan

Sought and won an audit of Michael Di Biase's 2006 election campaign expenses.

Sought and won audit of Regional Councillor Joyce Frustaglio's 2006 election campaign expenses.



Richard Lorello
Friend of Jackson's husband and campaign manager Mario Campese and federal Conservative candidate for Vaughan

Campese also sits on board of Conservative Party in Vaughan.

Sought an audit of Councillor DiVona, but was turned down by council. Is appealing that decision in court, along with two others.



Paul De Buono
President of Vaughan Watch, watchdog group of which he is the main member

Sought an audit of Councillor Tony Carella and regional councillor Gino Rosati, but was denied by council. Has yet to decide whether to appeal decision in court.