

Want to save \$105,000? Here's a suggestion

Chris Cooke - January 2025

I see Steve Henschel has a title.

He is the \$105,000 manager of communications for the City of Sarnia and aside from making the sunshine list this past year his track record as a manager and particularly a manager of communications leaves me wondering why does the city need this guy?

Over decades I have come to appreciate that there isn't much communication going on if it has to be managed.

I'm aware that Mr. Henschel drags himself from his home office in Strathroy to his business office at city hall when Sarnia council meets. At least he used to before his boss Chris Carter filed a work place harassment complaint against Councillor Bill Dennis last May and life as we know it moved from real and in person to a few hours of screen time on Zoom.

When I would arrive at city hall Mr. Henschel would be standing near the Front Street entrance having a smoke.

Back then he was engaged to a health care professional who worked in London and he explained Strathroy was a good jumping off place for their careers.

That was then and this is now.

I can't help but suspect coming to work for work has become more of an after-thought.

If Fridays at city hall are any indication of the amount of work being done by municipal bureaucrats, then one must wonder what Mr. Henschel has to communicate.

The place is a tomb.

As a sidebar Mr. Henschel worked in communications for the city of St. Catharines and prior to that was making pocket change working for a Niagara weekly newspaper that went on line after its parent company filed for bankruptcy.

An interesting tidbit appeared in the most recent Sarnia budget.

In addition to managing social media and other mundane activities Mr. Henschel wrote 39 press releases to mostly local media outlets during the past year.

If you are keeping score that's \$2,692.30 per release.

Nice work if you can get it and for the time being Mr. Henschel apparently can get it.

At your expense of course.

If Sarnia is looking for budget cuts this year I have a \$105,000 suggestion.

But what do I know?

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