

**REPORT ON COMPLAINT**  
Filed in accordance with  
*Section 239 of the Ontario Municipal Act 2001 (as amended)*  
Corporation of City of Woodstock

*Prepared by:*  
John G. Maddox  
*JGM Consulting*  
July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014

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Effective January 1<sup>st</sup> 2008, the Municipal Act was amended to provide reasonable access to the Municipal ratepayers to file a complaint with respect to "Closed Meetings" and "Public Notice" of those meetings.

Municipalities were provided with an opportunity to appoint a "Closed Meeting Investigator" under *Section 239 of the Municipal Act* or in the absence of doing so the Office of the Ontario Ombudsman would undertake such a review.

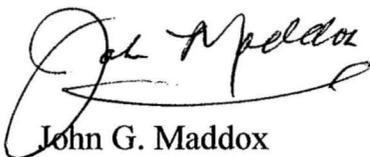
The legislative amendments were put in place in an effort to ensure greater accountability, openness and transparency with respect to "local government" decision making.

As the Closed Meeting Investigator for the City of Woodstock, I am in receipt of a complaint filed on July 14, 2014 which alleges that a closed meeting of September 19, 2013 undertook certain business that has not been ratified in a public meeting forum. The complaint does not challenge the matter having been considered in "closed session" but rather the ensuing process (public ratification).

I have reviewed the relevant minutes and have discussed this matter with the City Clerk. It is my view that the subject matter in fact met the criteria for closed meeting discussion however, the Municipality failed to meet the requirements of the *Municipal Act* with respect to voting in "closed session" *Section 239, sub-section (5) (6)*. The Municipality should have confirmed their discussions in a "public forum" at the completion of the closed meeting discussions. The City Clerk has agreed to review the "Procedural Bylaw" to ensure this practice is "enshrined" in the Municipal Procedural Bylaw in an effort to avoid this confusion and promote "open and transparent" local government.

I am prepared to assist the Municipality in a review of their "meeting guidelines" should that be appropriate.

Respectfully submitted



John G. Maddox  
JGM Consulting