

Admin. position eliminated at South Bruce Peninsula

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By Rob Gowan

Jacquie Farrow-Lawrence is out as administrator of South Bruce Peninsula.

Mayor Janice Jackson confirmed Sunday that council decided to do some restructuring at town hall.

"We just eliminated the position," said Jackson. "It was a decision of council and again it was strictly reorganization and it had nothing to do with her job performance."

Jackson said the department heads would now take on greater responsibility, with manager of financial services Michael Humble likely to take a lead role.

"We are kind of leaving it up to the department heads to talk amongst themselves," said Jackson. "They will come back to council with a plan."

Farrow-Lawrence said Sunday that she was advised by the municipality on Thursday that her position had been terminated, but she didn't know the circumstances of her dismissal.

"No reasons were given," Farrow-Lawrence said when contacted by phone.

When asked if she was upset with her dismissal, Farrow-Lawrence said, "what would you think?"

"I put in a lot of hours, a lot of overtime hours with no compensation for it," said Farrow-Lawrence, who declined to comment further on what compensation she is to receive for losing her job.

Farrow-Lawrence started with the municipality in January 2013.

At the time of her hiring, Farrow-Lawrence said she was looking forward to the experience.

"No one can tell what the outcome will be, but I will be doing my very best and hopefully the council will agree that that's what is taking place and will satisfy council's expectations," Farrow-Lawrence said just days after she began working for the municipality.

Farrow-Lawrence started out in municipal government in 1981 and served as a senior municipal administrator for more than 20 years. Before taking the position with South Bruce Peninsula, she was clerk with the Town of Arnprior in eastern Ontario for about two and-a-half years.

Before her job in Arnprior she was director of human resources and administration for the County of Annapolis in Nova Scotia since 1995. She also stepped in to serve as chief administrative officer twice.

Farrow-Lawrence said Sunday that she hasn't yet determined what her plans are.

The town council of the day created the administrator position in late 2012 after it was determined the town needed someone to make decisions above the level of department heads.

The administrator position replaced the CAO's position, which had been left vacant after CAO Rhonda Cook left the municipality in March 2012. No explanation was ever given about why Cook was no longer with the municipality.

"(Farrow-Lawrence) came to us at a very difficult time and really appreciate her contribution to South Bruce Peninsula," Jackson said on Sunday.