Rookie Councillor Tim O'Hare Involved in the Oldest Profession in the World? — Part 3 of 5

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Graphic, caption, sign-off, appendix charts, source notes and disclaimers excluded.

Continued from Part 2 of 5.

A conversation near former Mayor Mal Woodhouse's home four years ago

Before the 2022 election, I recall seeing Tim O'Hare leaving Mal Woodhouse's home while I was out walking. He appeared nervous to me and asked what I was doing there. I laughed and said I lived in the neighbourhood. When I asked whether he had been getting election advice from Mal, I recall that he said yes.

I told him I regarded Mal as one of Thorold's smartest and best mayors and an excellent person from whom to seek advice. I know him through our service on boards and respect his experience and knowledge. **My understanding is that he advises all new candidates who ask; that does not make him their campaign manager or establish an endorsement.**

I recall Mal telling me personally, on more than one occasion, that he had not run anyone's campaign in the previous election, including Tim O'Hare's. I regard that recollection as very reliable. I understood Tim O'Hare's comments as suggesting a closer campaign role, although he did not expressly say that Mal was his campaign manager. I do not know what Tim may have told anyone else.

As our conversation continued, I felt Tim presented Mal's involvement as more substantial than I understood it to be. I wondered whether he hoped that impression would help him gain support, but I cannot know his intentions. It may have reflected appreciation of Mal's general advice or wishful thinking. My concern is with the impression I took from Tim's words, not an established finding about what was in his mind.

I remain a student of Mal's experience, despite being proud of my own career. I affectionately call him "the professor" because of his knowledge of local politics. I smiled at the thought of a rookie student quickly surpassing the professor. That was my interpretation and metaphor, based on my conversations with Tim—not something Tim actually said.

Salesmanship or leadership

During another conversation, I asked Tim what skills he thought an effective councillor needed. I recall his answer as "it's all salesmanship." That surprised me. I believed the role required considerably more. I also recall him expressing an ambition to run for mayor after his first term if things went well. I told him that thinking big was good, and that we would see how the term unfolded.

My experience running my clinics, medical think tank and research institute taught me to hire, train and motivate staff, understand their needs, develop their strengths, build teams and improve service. Our team served and educated physicians and patients, provided cardiac testing, and worked with cardiologists to improve access to diagnostics and consultations for better patient outcomes. Research was an important part of that work.

I did not want to undermine Tim's confidence as the campaign progressed, so I did not press my concerns. I wondered whether his confidence exceeded his experience, but decided his subsequent performance would provide a fairer basis for assessment. I will return to that in later articles.

To me, leadership means investing in people and service to others so that the combined contribution becomes greater than the sum of its parts. It's about synergy. That is the distinction I was trying to explain. He disagreed, as I remember it. I was not there to win a debate; I hoped experience would clarify the difference for him if he became a rookie councillor.

As I have often said, the right experience is like a broken drumstick: you just can't beat it.

My concern is whether the sales pitch voters heard was matched by independent judgment and leadership once he was elected. A huge majority of people I have spoken with strongly believe it was not; that is their assessment, not an undisputed finding.

Why the Canada Games Park agreement mattered

By the 2022 election, I believed I could contribute through written commentary, research and conversations with residents. Canada Games Park was one of the issues that sharpened my concerns about municipal decision-making.

The consortium has four partners: Brock University, Niagara Region, the City of St. Catharines and the City of Thorold. Each has one representative and one general vote on the Management Committee. Under section 13.2, Brock, St. Catharines and Thorold share operating costs and deficits equally, while Niagara Region does not share those operating costs. Thorold therefore bears one-third of operating deficits but only has one-quarter of the general votes. [1]

I regard Canada Games Park as a good project but a bad financial deal for Thorold. My draft identifies Nella Dekker and Ken Sentance as supporters of the agreement; the specific approving vote should be linked before publication. I hope no political appointment is treated as a reward for a decision I believe overcommitted Thorold. I recall public praise for the mayor's role in making the project happen, but the relevant video and context need to be identified. My interpretation of that praise is not evidence of a bargain or promised appointment.

I found the agreement difficult to assess without legal and accounting assistance, and I was frustrated by what I perceived as inadequate opportunities to ask questions. It felt like looking for a needle in a haystack without knowing whether the needle had been put there. That is my metaphor for the difficulty, not a finding that records were concealed.

This is the group with which I believe Tim O'Hare later aligned. In my view, the mayor bears responsibility for decisions whose consequences the next council will inherit. I recall hearing that he described the heated election as a "clown show," although the exact words and context remain unverified here. My nicknames "Frado" and "Spendolini" are rhetorical expressions of my dissatisfaction; they are not allegations of a secret deal or improper appointment.

There are qualifications. Niagara Region does not vote on rental rates, so Thorold has one of three votes on those decisions. Some decisions require unanimity. Thorold has a share of the leasehold interest during the lease; Brock owns the land. Under the lease, the buildings pass to Brock when the lease ends, without compensation to the tenant, subject to the lease provisions. "No permanent ownership after the lease expires" is more precise than "owns nothing." Thorold is a co-tenant or lessee, not the lessor. [1–2]

My original draft referred to approximately $130 million over 40 years. That figure has not been verified for this draft and should not be treated as an established total, an amount already paid, or a confirmed Thorold-only obligation. The agreement's allocation of operating deficits is documented; a lifetime cost estimate requires its own source and assumptions. Some people I have spoken with fear costs could exceed those estimates substantially. That concern is not a verified forecast.

Returning to the oldest profession known to the world

My title plays on the familiar expression "the oldest profession in the world." I am talking about salesmanship and the limits of a sales pitch when the public needs leadership. Appendix A provides a cautious comparison of early human activities and later occupations. There is no reliable historical ranking that makes salesmanship, prostitution or elected politics the oldest profession.

Speaking of salesmanship—which, as I recall, Tim said the councillor's role was all about—here is my comeback: I received a call from the director of a remake of "WKRP in Cincinnati." He asked me, "The next time you see Tim, could you tell him to return that loud sport jacket he borrowed from our wardrobe department? It belongs to Herb Tarlek. Rehearsals start soon, and we need it back on the set. Please make sure he gets the message!" [4 — see Disclaimer at the end of this article]

Back to Pa, my father: the woman earned her money cleaning floors, kick plates, wood trim, windows, doors, walls, appliances and the bathroom. Dad felt guilty allowing a woman other than our late mom to clean the home she had looked after. **That was the sweetness behind his confession.**

The comparison I am making is about expectations and delivery. Dad received the service he wanted. In my view, Tim's performance did not match the independent approach that others and I expected or understood him to have promised. We interpret many of his voting patterns as alignment with the group we call the UN-FAB FOUR, identified in Appendix B. Shared votes alone do not prove an agreement, coordination or improper conduct. My concern is particularly with decisions that have significant consequences for Thorold.

After I raised concerns about that alignment, I recall being unable to access or interact with Tim's Facebook page as before. I understood that I had been blocked. I had a similar experience with Mike De Divitiis. I also understand that two other councillors reported being blocked by Mike while he was running for mayor, but their accounts and the timing need confirmation before being treated as established facts. These experiences reinforced my concerns about communication; the restrictions alone do not establish the reasons for them.

I supported Tim and wanted him to fulfil the promises I understood him to be making. Whether my assessment is fair should be judged against the public record, his explanations and the remaining articles in this five-part series. In conversations with residents, I have heard anger and frustration about his record, including reports of criticism during his door-to-door campaign. Those are accounts shared with me, not a representative survey or independently verified evidence of what occurs at every door. Some have used the nickname "Councillor Drama"; it reflects their opinion.

Next in the series

The next article will explain why I did not write about Tim O'Hare four years ago, when I was a registered third-party advertiser. It will examine my concerns about salesmanship, leadership and independent judgment, with attention to the supporting evidence. **Later articles will follow his council record chronologically up to the present.**

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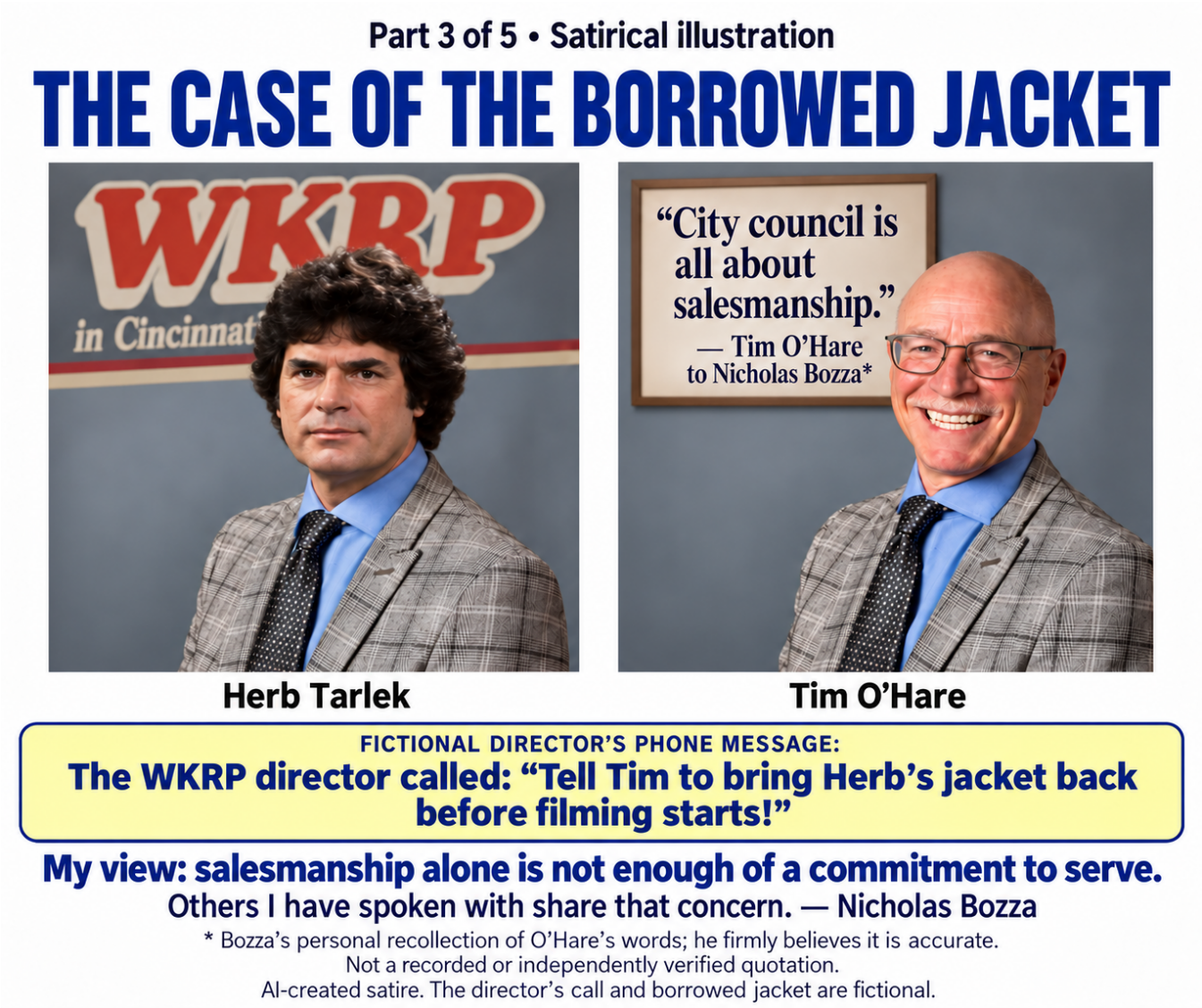
Postscript to Pa and Ma

P.S. Pa, forgive me for sharing your secret. Your Thorold friends who are still with us needed the story. You and Ma keep praying for Thorold. My wish remains to see the UN-FAB FOUR replaced by councillors who exercise independent judgment. I worry that re-electing only part of the group could leave the same voting pattern in place—my metaphor is that, like mice, the group can replenish its numbers, as I believe happened this term.

Pa, would that lady clean up Thorold's house for $1,000? That is my extension of the housekeeping joke: I want a council whose members exercise independent judgment, rather than the bloc voting I and others criticize.

I am lighting a candle and, in the spirit of this family joke, asking you, Dad, and Mom too, to spread the word among our loved ones resting at Lakeview Cemetery: pray for Thorold and the families who still live here. This is a personal appeal expressed through humour and love for Thorold and for those who lived here before us, not a prediction of the election result or an allegation about anyone's private affairs. No joke from this point on: see you both soon—I hope not too soon. I still miss you both terribly, Ma and Pa. Love, your son Nicholas.

Satirical comparison [4–5]



[5] The accompanying AI-created Herb Tarlek / Tim O'Hare comparison is fictional satire. The director's call, remake and borrowed jacket are not actual events. The salesmanship wording represents Nicholas Bozza's personal recollection of what O'Hare said to him; Bozza firmly believes that recollection is accurate, but it is not a recorded or independently verified quotation. The opinion that salesmanship alone is not enough of a commitment to serve is Bozza's assessment, shared by others he has spoken with, not a representative survey finding.

Appendix A — Early activities and professions

Activity or occupation	Historical qualification
Salesperson or trader	Exchange and trade have long histories; salesmanship has no established claim to being the oldest profession.
Sex worker	“The oldest profession” is a popular expression, not a demonstrated historical ranking.
Court jester or entertainer	A court entertainer who amused others through performance, wit and flair. Its position here is editorial, not a claim about when the occupation began.
Toolmaker	Stone-tool production predates modern states and formal employment.
Hunter and butcher	Animal processing is an early subsistence activity; it does not establish a modern job title.
Fisher	Fishing has ancient roots; dates vary by site and the kind of evidence.
Storyteller or oral historian	Oral traditions do not leave a direct archaeological record from which a precise starting date can be assigned.
Tailor or clothier	Clothing and sewing have prehistoric roots; evidence for each differs.
Artist	Prehistoric imagery and symbolic objects are evidence of artistic activity.
Potter	Early fired-clay objects and pottery vessels are distinct categories.
Healer or shaman	Caregiving, treatment and ritual roles cannot all be dated or treated as one occupation.
Farmer	Agriculture developed in different places at different times.
Builder or architect	Shelter construction predates modern architectural professions.

Summary: survival activities are ancient, but modern occupation labels and precise rankings can mislead. **The article uses “oldest profession” figuratively.**

Appendix B — Councillors described as the UN-FAB FOUR

The mayor is added below as an associated figure in the author's commentary. His inclusion does not change the four-councillor meaning of the UN-FAB FOUR label.

UN-FAB FOUR is the label others and I use, having heard it from Thorold residents, to describe a perceived recurring voting alignment during the 2022–2026 council term. In my view, that pattern continues. **It is not an official caucus or proof of coordinated conduct.** I have heard the description for years, and some of my informal inquiries produced unanimous agreement among the people I asked. Those conversations were not scientific or representative surveys and do not establish the views of Thorold voters generally.

Councillor	Position in the author's commentary
Nella Dekker	Included in the group the author describes as a recurring voting bloc.
Tim O'Hare	Included in the group the author describes as a recurring voting bloc.
Ken Sentance	Included in the group the author describes as a recurring voting bloc.
Mike De Divitiis	Included in the group the author describes as a recurring voting bloc.
Terry Ugulini — Mayor	Additional figure I associate with the voting alignment, listed separately from the four councillors. My impression is that the alignment included the mayor until the cemetery issue; the specific vote needs to be identified.

My impression is that Mayor Terry Ugulini is distancing himself from the group as he approaches retirement. I have wondered whether a future political appointment might be a consideration, but I have no evidence of an appointment, agreement or private motive. Public praise for his role in Canada Games Park does not establish any such arrangement.

I wish Terry and his family all the best in retirement: enjoyable travels, good health and plenty of time in his garden. He is a very good gardener with an excellent green thumb and neatly arranged plants. Two green thumbs up, Terry—all the best!

Appendix C — Earlier group identified by the author

I identify the following people as an earlier group called the FAB FOUR, a description I have heard from Thorold taxpayers and voters. **This is my characterisation, not an official caucus designation or a finding of coordinated conduct.** The relevant council term and specific votes need to be identified. The revised chart lists four councillors, two unnamed, and the mayor as an associated figure.

Name	**Position identified by the author Like the NHL's Original Six, this is the group I describe as the original FOUR as many taxpayers did also.**
Nella Dekker	Councillor
Ken Sentance	Councillor
Terry Ugulini	Mayor
Two other councillors — names omitted	The author has omitted their names because they are no longer active in Thorold politics.

Source notes and review checks

[1] City of Thorold, Consortium and Co-Tenancy Agreement, sections 10.1, 13.2, 13.3 and 17, and the Legacy Lease. Supports committee composition, operating-cost allocation and voting qualifications. https://www.thorold.ca/en/recreation-and-culture/resources/canada-games/Consortium-and-Co-Tenancy-Agreement---website-version.pdf

[2] Bernard Lansbergen, ThoroldToday, "City Council still debating 'crappy' Canada Games Park deal," October 25, 2023. Reports the solicitor's explanation of ownership during and after the lease. https://www.thoroldtoday.ca/local-news/city-council-still-debating-crappy-canada-games-park-deal-7734304

Where information has not been independently confirmed, I rely on my own recollections and those of others, which I consider reliable. These accounts remain recollections rather than independently verified facts. When I refer to "voting patterns," I mean the perceived patterns that many others and I see; this is our interpretation, not an official finding or proof of coordination. My informal surveys and conversations found that many participants believed this voting alignment existed. In many instances, everyone I asked agreed that they perceived a voting bloc. To me, that indicates a commonly shared concern—not simply a mirage of my own making. Although these surveys may or may not meet everyone's definition of a scientific survey and do not establish the views of all Thorold taxpayers, they do show that my interpretation, and that of others, was shared by many of those I consulted through surveys. **Agreement among participants does not, by itself, prove coordination among councillors.**

Further review: The original approving council vote, the video of public praise, and the source and context of the reported "clown show" remark should be identified. My recollection of that remark comes from watching a video on Niagara Region's website. I have not had time to locate and recheck the recording, so I am relying on my memory; readers may consult the recordings themselves. These editorial revisions do not independently verify recollections or reports from residents.

[3] National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, Health Risks of Overweight & Obesity. Supports the increased-risk wording in the health analogy; it does not establish municipal outcomes. https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/weight-management/adult-overweight-obesity/health-risks

Disclaimer

This draft contains my opinions, personal recollections, interpretations, humour and metaphors, alongside information identified from public sources. Recalled conversations are not verbatim transcripts. Unless expressly documented, my descriptions of motives, independence, inclusiveness or voting alignment are my assessments, not established findings of misconduct. **Shared votes do not prove collusion, and a Facebook restriction does not establish the reason for it.** The family anecdote is my recollection. The "oldest profession" title, jacket comparison, "Night Mayor," "Spendolini," spending-addiction language and cemetery postscript are rhetorical or satirical expressions; they do not allege sexual conduct, a medical condition, an actual treatment fund or a factual message from the deceased. Humour reflects frustration and my viewpoint; it does not substitute for evidence. Readers should examine the cited records and relevant responses. I welcome documented corrections and responses from anyone discussed. This disclaimer does not validate unsupported claims or remove responsibility for accuracy. I am willing to attest to my own recollections, but that is not independent corroboration of another person's words, intentions or conduct.

[4] The director's call, television remake, borrowed jacket and request to Tim are entirely fictional. This passage is a joke and satirical comparison with the Herb Tarlek character; no actual call, production or borrowing of a jacket is being reported.