

# County council critic “ecstatic” at new Court dates

## Bill Manderson glad hearing is before elections

Rob O’Flanagan – Saturday February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010 – Guelph Mercury

Guelph – A County of Wellington watchdog who is being sued by a pair of county officials is pleased that one element of his legal challenges will be in court sooner than originally scheduled.

Citizen journalist and retired engineer Bill Manderson, 74, had an Ontario Court of Justice appearance Friday where the issue of dates for a peace bond proceeding were discussed.

Puslinch Mayor and county Coun. Brad Whitcombe and the county’s chief administrative officer Scott Wilson are seeking a peace bond against Manderson, first launched over a year ago.

The officials claim they have cause to fear personal injury or property damage related to alleged threats Manderson made between 2007-08.

None of the claims have been proven in court.

Due to circumstances, including limited availability of court dates and health issues among Manderson’s legal representation, the criminal proceedings were pushed back to early December.

However, according to Manderson’s lawyer, David Doney, a regional senior justice of the peace was of the opinion the Dec. 7, 8 and 9 dates were too far in the future, and requested earlier dates be found.

“We were more or less dictated to, to go to court today,” said Manderson, in an interview, referring to the judge’s instructions to find earlier dates. Those dates were arrived upon, and are now set for a full day on August 3, and August 4 and 5 if required.

“I’m ecstatic,” said Manderson. “That is a huge difference and definitely an enabler for me because it is prior to the (municipal) elections.”

“It now subjects them to the court case at which time all the evidence will come out,” Manderson added, after the matter was in court.

Whitcombe and Wilson are also the plaintiffs in a civil defamation lawsuit against Manderson, which originally sought \$2.4 million in damages, but was recently reduced to \$1 plus \$1000 in court costs.

That action includes an injunction to have certain material removed from Manderson’s smelly-welly.com website.

Christopher Wayland, of McCarthy Tétrault LLP of Toronto, said earlier this week that the county officials launched the action to protect their reputations.

No date is set for a trial in that action.

Manderson said he intends to contest the lawsuit at trial.