

From: Kelley Denham <denh0013@algonquinlive.com>
Date: 2025-08-20 11:21 (GMT-05:00)
To: allinaday@cbc.ca (All in a day – CBC Radio Ottawa)
Subject: Segment with Councillor Paula Banks and "Poison Pen Video" Claim

Hi,

I am writing in response to your recent segment with Councillor Paula Banks. I'm the private citizen who posted the video clip she described as an "edited poison pen video," and I would like to clarify a few key points and add some balance to the story.

The video was a short, unedited clip from a public council meeting. The candidate, a long-time supporter of Ms. Banks, was speaking to his own Integrity Commissioner complaint. The video showed his public statements with brief captions added for context and accuracy, directly refuting Ms. Banks's false claim that I "altered" the candidate's Integrity Commissioner complaint, whatever that means. Far from undermining democracy, the clip gave voters access to a candidate's own public statements, which is a key part of an informed electorate. Referring to fair public comment as "poison" is a strange argument for democracy.

It is also important to clarify the connection Ms. Banks made between this video and Strong Mayor Powers. I am a private citizen and do not work for or represent the mayor in any way. Linking my actions to the mayor's authority is inaccurate and misleading. Also, framing public support for the mayor as a problem is inconsistent with her responsibility as an elected official to represent that public.

Ms. Banks' opposition to Strong Mayor Powers is an obvious irony, given her own documented pattern of conduct that has raised significant public concern about transparency and accountability. Her actions include: leading efforts to suppress sexual harassment, voting to reimburse legal fees of the councillor found to have engaged in sexual harassment, restricting public feedback critical of council, and supporting motions to increase her compensation and expand access to additional remuneration, including to solicit financial contributions from other municipalities for a legal challenge to Strong Mayor Powers.

Lastly, Ms. Banks's description of Strong Mayor Powers as being solely based on "one person's opinion" is factually misleading, and she knows it. She has twice attempted to override mayoral vetoes and failed because she could not secure the two-thirds council support required to do that, as per the checks and balances in the legislation Ms. Banks pretends not to know about. Her actions during this term actually make the case for Strong Mayor Powers. Maybe issues like higher council pay, stifling public feedback, and burying sexual harassment should also be subject to that two-thirds majority support. If they expanded veto power to these areas in the future, then that two-thirds majority could decide the outcome in such cases.

Sincerely,
Kelley Denham
Smiths Falls

*Referenced "edited" video: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1305508207577782>