

Furniss refuses to retract paid Bala Falls protester comments

Posted on September 30, 2014

by Matt Sittler



A Huntsville woman camped out at Bala Falls in protest of the proposed power plant wants a retraction from Muskoka Lakes mayoralty candidate Don Furniss. Peggy Peterson tells the Moose his recent comments about her being a paid protester are false. “Nobody asked me to do this,” she said in a statement released to this station. “I felt I was called to be here – Nobody paid me to do this. The only payment I have received is the wonderful support and gratitude from the people of Bala and Muskoka and from people all over Ontario.

Last week, Furniss told a crowd at an all-candidates forum in Bala that “the occupation of this hydro site by paid protesters with aboriginal involvement is a charade concocted by your Mayor and other Save the Bala Falls fanatics to turn Bala into Caledonia North.”

Contacted to respond to Peterson’s request for retraction, Furniss still maintained she is paid. He also didn’t provide a retraction. “Who’s paying for the Johnny-on-the-spot across the road” he asked. “Who’s paying for her food?” Furniss says people have been spotted buying food at local restaurants and delivering it to Peterson. He also said a Save the Bala Falls supporter had asked the Bala United Church for a key to its washroom so that Peterson could use it. Furniss says the church rejected that request and that’s when the portable washroom appeared.

Peterson says she’s on the site on behalf of the people of Bala who are “overwhelmingly opposed to the project.”

“I am here on behalf of the First Nations for whom this is a historical and traditional portage,” she stated. “I am here on behalf of the animals, the waters, the rocks and the trees and on behalf of the future generations who should be allowed to appreciate this beautiful spot forever.” **(Photo of Peggy Peterson at Bala Falls)**