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## Poll finds little appetite for change at city hall

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Don't expect any major changes with the upcoming municipal election. A new Bristol Omnifacts Research poll commissioned by Metro Halifax shows urbanites and suburbanites have a weak appetite for change at city hall, with two thirds of those surveyed reporting some level of satisfaction with council. Mayor Peter Kelly rated even higher, with about three-quarters admitting some level of satisfaction.

Respondents were asked their satisfaction level on a scale with 1 "completely dissatisfied" and 10 "completely satisfied."

Three-quarters of respondents said they pay attention to municipal politics.

"If I were an incumbent, generally speaking, I would not be concerned, unless there were specific issues in my district," Layton Dorey, Bristol's managing director of project development. "I wouldn't expect to see broad-based changes."

However, he pointed out the survey was done in August before the municipal campaign had really heated up. Council was also on summer break for three weeks in August.

"This could be considered a snapshot of what the public was thinking over the summer," Dorey added.

The mayor calls the results "phenomenal." But he isn't pouring the champagne yet.

"The main poll that counts is on election day and I would never take anything for granted," Kelly said.

The mayor has two mayoral opponents: David Boyd and Coun. Sheila Fougere, who says you can't declare a winner before the race has even started. She asked people to keep an open mind and look at her record.

"I am very much a team player and even though Peter Kelly may say he is, I've worked with him for the past 10 years and I don't believe that he is," Fougere says.

When Coun. Tim Outhit was running in Bedford during a May byelection, he heard voters complaining about council.

Now, he says, the approval probably stems from council's recent approval of several major downtown developments and the \$40.5-million Mainland Common athletic centre.

"We're not talking about dang cats anymore," Outhit said.

The chair of Citizens for Halifax, a non-partisan citizens' group with the goal to improve leadership at city hall, says two-thirds having enough.

"How come they're not very satisfied?" Malcolm Fraser asked. "You get 50 to 60 per cent on an exam. Did you do really well? Do you Probably not."

While he admits it's a bit frustrating to hear the numbers, Fraser says it doesn't change his group's impact or approach.

"If we've done nothing more than to inspire people to run for council, then that's a good thing," Fraser said.

He says his group now has about 500 members. That there are interest groups popping up all over the city are at odds with the resu

"I don't think it changes the fact that there's still a lot of people who are looking for vision, which is not necessarily a satisfaction issi  
Dalhousie political science professor Jennifer Smith says the results are an important indicator for regional council and the mayor. B  
poll results have a direct effect on the outcome of an election.



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