

LOCAL NEWS

Last updated at 7:42 PM on 22/05/08

Andy Wells needs ethics pointers; opposition **LATEST NEWS**

The Telegram

The Liberal Opposition says Andy Wells may need a refresher course on exactly what is, and what isn't, a conflict of interest. And justice critic Kelvin Parsons says Premier Danny Williams is the one to teach him. Parsons has asked Williams to ask the Conflict of Interest Advisory Committee to investigate the latest actions of the former mayor of St. John's, in which Wells endorsed mayoral candidate Marie White on a call-in radio show. Wells resigned as mayor, causing the by-election in which White is running, when he took over as head of the Public Utilities Board.

The liberals are crying foul, saying Wells' new position is supposed to be an apolitical one.

"As the Premier should know, Mr. Wells' statements earlier today are contrary to the provisions outlined in the Conflict of Interest Act," said Mr. Parsons. "This is the second incident in two weeks involving Andy Wells that have placed him in a potential conflict of interest. "

Wells was the subject of controversy last week when a plan for a fundraising dinner to offset his personal debt was uncovered by the media.

"The Premier must immediately direct these two incidents to the Conflict of Interest Advisory Committee for a complete investigation," Parsons says.

"... With two potential breaches of the Conflict of Interest Act in less than two weeks, I believe the premier has no other option but to take action. Even though the premier has a vested interest in this political appointment, every public servant should be governed by the same rules and guidelines."