

Claire Hoy ? Up to voters to decide his fate

For those who think



that Toronto isn't a significant player in the scheme of things, you should know that on Tuesday afternoon Fox News broke into their regular program to bring viewers a live telecast of Toronto Mayor Rob Ford's abject apology.

Indeed, Ford's well-known, ongoing shenanigans have made the news around the globe lately, a reality which, obviously, isn't exactly enhancing Toronto's image abroad.

As you likely know by now, Ford, after months of obfuscation and outright denials, finally admitted that, yes, he did smoke crack cocaine. He says he did it once about a year ago in ?a drunken stupor.?

Still, despite even shrill calls from his political enemies ? and some of his friends as well ? for him to resign, he said that despite embarrassing himself, his family (whom he didn't tell about his crack experience) and the citizens of Toronto, Ford has pledged to stay on and do what he actually is rather good at, i.e. saving taxpayers' dollars.

Rather than be ridden out of town on a rail, Ford says he'll leave it to the voters to decide his fate next October when he says he'll run for re-election.

As a Toronto resident ? and Ford voter in the last election ? I'm okay with that.

Ford is correct when he says that nobody is to blame for his terrible predicament but himself. Clearly he has some substance abuse issues which he'd be wise to deal with. He says it won't happen again and maybe it won't. But he'd still be wise ? both politically and personally ? to sign himself up for rehab of some kind and really get a handle on his problems.

That having been said, however, Ford has been subjected to one of the most prolonged and vicious attack-dog campaigns from the media ever since he upset the Toronto elite by cruising to his easy election victory.

The elites never liked him when he was a councilor and have grown to hate him as mayor. Almost from the inception of his term, various groups and individuals have taken him to court and otherwise harassed him in hopes of getting him out of City Hall.

But Ford, obviously, is a stubborn guy. Why he wants to put up with this ongoing crap is beyond me, but there you have it.

One of the ironies to me about this whole sorry affair is that the lefties ? who are absolutely apoplectic that Ford actually got himself elected mayor ? are the ones who generally claim to be more supportive of persons with personal problems.

You hear this all the time. Those nasty old right-wingers, don't you know, have no compassion for people with personal issues. But the lefties, ah yes, we're brimming over with compassion.

Well, they haven't shown it to Ford, that's for sure.

Mind you, as he says himself, a large part of that ? indeed, the bulk of it ? is his own fault, what they refer to in tennis as self-enforced errors.

He's chosen to hang around with some sketchy characters; he's been drunk in public places; he's done all sorts of things one doesn't expect from the chief magistrate of a city, let alone one of the most important cities in North America.

As is so often the case with these political issues, had Ford come clean months ago when news of the controversial video first came out, he would have saved himself ? and the city, and his family ? considerable pain and embarrassment.

But he didn't. He says he was too ?embarrassed? and ?ashamed? to admit what he had done, adding now that he has admitted it, a huge load has come off his shoulders.

None of this will calm the baying from the opposition wolves who want him out of there ? most of whom just simply could never accept that he got there in the first place ? but, having watched Ford's news conference Tuesday, I don't think they're going to get

their wish. He'll hang in regardless.

Ford no doubt hopes that in the meantime, if he truly cleans up his act and continues with his program successes ? something that for obvious reasons has been completely overshadowed by his personal missteps ? the electorate will be able to forgive him his trespasses, as it were.

Maybe. Maybe not. But I do agree that's it up to the voters, not a lynch mob, to decide his fate.