



Occupy poll: Thumbs up for Rob Ford

By Don Peat ,City Hall Bureau Chief

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A new poll has found that found around 61% of residents surveyed think Rob Ford did a good job handling the protests.

TORONTO - A majority of Toronto residents think Mayor Rob Ford did a good job handling Occupy Toronto protesters, according to a new poll.

The Forum Research poll found around 61% of residents think Ford did a good job handling the protests. Not surprisingly, those who thought the protesters accomplished something were more likely to disapprove of how Ford handled the protesters.

Forum conducted the poll by phone on Wednesday among 1,029 residents as city crews and Toronto Police dismantled the remnants of the 40-day long protest in St. James Park.

"Torontonians are giving their mayor a thumb's up on his handling of this sensitive issue," Forum Research president Dr. Lorne Bozinoff stated in a press release Thursday.

The poll is considered accurate plus or minus 3.1%, 19 times out of 20.

Although the protest ended peacefully, there is a battle at City Hall over who should have the credit.

During a press conference Wednesday, Ford himself credited the peaceful resolution to Deputy Mayor Doug Holyday, Parks chairman Norm Kelly, city manager Joe Pennachetti and Toronto Police Chief Bill Blair.

Councillor Adam Vaughan has repeatedly credited local Councillor Pam McConnell for working with the protesters, city agencies and the church to broker a "negotiated settlement."

"She has been down there for the last two weeks, almost on a daily, if not hourly basis, she has been down there talking and finding out who in the Occupy Toronto movement is willing to engage in an evolutionary conversation," Vaughan said Wednesday.

Holyday blasted the notion McConnell brought about Occupy Toronto's peaceful end and accused her of letting her residents and local businesses down.

He pointed out McConnell signed the letter along with 13 other left-leaning councillors to put off the eviction until council could hold a debate on it next week.

McConnell disagreed with Holyday saying "you don't just click your heels and everybody goes home, it actually takes an awful lot of work."

"I think that if we had moved in the way in which originally the deputy mayor wished to move, that we would have caused a riot," she said.