

RM of Springfield
Committee of the Whole Meeting
November 9, 2021 CANCELLED

WITHOUT PREJUDICE (E&OE)

from: RM of Springfield <connect_springfield@all-net.ca>

to: heatheranderickson@gmail.com

date: 9 Nov 2021, 09:36

subject: CORRECTION: Cancellation of Meeting - Tuesday, November 9.

Since this particular meeting was cancelled at the Ninth Hour, so to speak, and as new information from past inquiries has just been provided to me. I will share this knowledge with you.

CANWHITE SANDS PROCESSING FACILITY, VIVIAN - I will start with this issue which involves the most important resource, **WATER. NO LIVING CREATURE CAN SURVIVE WITHOUT WATER.** On the afternoon of November 17, 2021 I received a notice from the Minister of Conservation and Climate that this project will be subject to a Clean Environment Commission review. After a year of obtaining signatures on petitions, letters of objection, and one public demonstration, the Province has finally decided to do the "right" thing. A small cause for celebration. But the environmental assessment is being conducted by a Manitoba government sponsored body. Although difficult, I will await the findings of this body BUT SHOULD IT'S FINDINGS SUGGEST THERE IS NO THREAT TO THE SANDILANDS AQUIFER, I sincerely hope it can then be subjected to scrutiny by the Federal Department responsible for the Environment. In my humble opinion, water 200 ft. beneath the surface of the land brought to surface, exposed to air and the environment and piping, then returned to the Sandilands Aquifer below, is bound to have been exposed to any number of impurities. THIS AQUIFER PROVIDES WATER TO THE ENTIRE SOUTHEASTERN QUADRANT OF MANITOBA. In the past there was an attempt to access the Sandilands Aquifer to provide water to southwestern Manitoba which was denied by the Province. There currently is a new proposal to join a water cooperative (the Eastern Region Water Cooperative) to provide water to the entire southeastern quadrant of Manitoba. No one can say with any certainty what the capacity of this aquifer is. Previous studies showed that the capacity of this aquifer was limited. Mayor Fell has publicly announced that the Poplar Road wells, which are in this aquifer, will henceforth be the sole source of supply for those on municipal water in the towns of Oakbank and Dugald. (See attachments 1, 2, and 3, one an article in the Carillon, the notification of a Clean Environment Public Hearing to be held, and article in the Winnipeg Free Press).

LIST OF ACCOUNTS - On October 20, 2021 I queried a number of items on the List of Accounts on the agenda, one of which was payments being made to **Shandy Walls Consulting**. Sixteen (16) working days later, November 10th., I have now received a response which was that Shandy Walls is fundraising for the Springfield Heritage Housing Inc. and being paid to perform this service. Upon reviewing old issues of the Clipper, I found an article stating this. As of October 19, 2021, we the ratepayers have paid Shandy Walls Consulting, she having been a Councillor of the RM of Springfield from 2014 to 2018, a total of \$18,375. to date. On November 10, CAO Colleen Draper responded: "As reported to Council at the public presentation made by Springfield Heritage Housing (SHHI) Chair Lesley Thomson on October 26, 2021, Shandy Walls Consulting has been paid \$2,500 plus \$125 GST per month since march 2021, equal to \$18,375 (this includes \$875 GST). Of that, \$7,500 has been covered by a grant to SHHI to assist with fundraising costs. As a result, the total cost to date for SHHI is \$10,875. As reported at that same public presentation, SHHI to date has commitments of approximately \$700,000 for the Dugald Place Assisted Living Residence and Aquatic & Wellness Centre. It is Important to note that while the RM is the entity processing the invoices, the RM also recovers these costs from SHHI." Further the CAO advised that "the RM is the sole member of the Springfield Heritage Housing Inc." NOTE: Here are my issues with this. 1) While I myself certainly qualify as a senior, I personally do not feel that a municipal government should be in the business of developing housing for seniors. Dugald Estates, a seniors co-op in Dugald, was conceived by a group of local citizens who recognized a need and made it their business to put the funds from a former United Church, I believe, into an account and to fundraise on their own for the project. If I recall correctly, those interested in obtaining a suite in the seniors' building put up around, I believe, \$75,000. towards the design and construction of the building which guaranteed them a spot. The RM of Springfield Council agreed to donate the land for the project and as a taxpayer, while that does qualify as a significant contribution dollar wise, I was reasonably comfortable with that. 2) In terms of the Springfield Heritage Housing Inc, again, the land for the project known as the Springfield Heritage Housing Corporation, has been donated by the RM of Springfield which is the taxpayers of the municipality. However, the design and construction should not be the responsibility of taxpayers at large. Further in addition to paying for this in your municipal taxes, the RM web site states interested individuals can make a refundable deposit of \$1,000. to be on a priority waiting list. I am of the opinion that many residents of the municipality would be unable to afford the rents being charged in either the older or new portion of this seniors' complex, never mind having to put up money to ensure a suite or room in the complex. I FEEL THAT IT IS QUITE UNFAIR FOR MUNICIPAL RATEPAYERS TO BE EXPECTED TO FINANCE THE BUILDING OF A SENIORS HOME AND POSSIBLY THE AQUATIC CENTRE AS WELL SINCE THEY ARE PART AND PARTY OF THE SAME PROJECT.

DUGALD PLACE ASSISTED LIVING RESIDENCE - On Page 10 of the September 30, 2021 Clipper, there is an article entitled "Indoor swimming pool coming to Dugald". In the article, it states the total budget for the project is \$24 million and that they already have a 50 person waiting list. Apparently they have applied for a grant under the Green Municipal Fund to cover the cost of a higher level of energy performance standards. NOTE: I think the estimate of \$24 million is woefully understated for a 54 suite residence and a Aquatic and Wellness Centre. I seem to remember a Recreation Centre in Portage la Prairie quite a number of years ago that was estimated to cost approximately \$20 million and ended up costing \$40 million. Material, labour, and construction costs have gone up substantially since then. Adjacent to Dugald Estates, the new residence will have 54 suites ranging in size from 594 to 892 sq. ft. "The pool will be part of the 10,000 sq. ft. aquatic and wellness centre." While public meetings were being held a few years ago that led to the current Recreation Master Plan, a pool was considered a "pipe dream" due mainly to the expense of ongoing maintenance. Pools have to be staffed. Mayor Fell minimized these expenses by saying the property taxes generated by the complex will be earmarked for the pool's operation and augmented by admission fees and cafe revenue. NOTE: I would point out that property tax and revenues from this new facility would amount to a drop in the "pool" as admission fees would have to be affordable to ensure continuing use by residents of the complex and residents elsewhere in the municipality. Further most

residents are within less than a 1/2 hour drive to a number of pools in Winnipeg, and in Steinbach. Cafe revenue would be negligible. A virtual open house was held on November 8, 2021 announcing the new East of the Red RecPlex, an approximately 90,000 sq. ft. multi-use recreation centre. The proposed facility will be a "one-stop shop" multi-use centre where families and individuals can spend time pursuing different activities in the same location. The proposed centre is planned for the north-west corner of Transcona Boulevard and Plessis Road which includes larger indoor pools with lap tanks and leisure pools, walking tracks, fitness areas, and multiple court/gymnasium spaces next to the Transcona Library. **NOTE: Why would the RM of Springfield plan to build a significantly smaller facility perhaps only 10 miles from this new Rec Centre in Transcona?**

PEAT MOSS ISSUE - Once again I approached the Province of Manitoba regarding the classification of Peat. Regardless of this Council's passing of a resolution to consider it an agricultural product, the fact of the matter is the Province and the mining & mineral industry view it, just as coal which is also a product of the compression of vegetative material, a mineral. It is not sown and harvested, it is mined from deep beneath the surface of the land and occurs naturally. Allowing the Berger Peat Processing plant to locate on land zoned agricultural, using their resolution to justify this action, is neither transparent or the act of a "good" government. It is duplicitous, putting it simply. Below is the response I received from the Province. Also included below is information derived from the link they provided. There is no mention of it being used in a flocculant to stimulate seed growth in the Berger Peat Processing Plant on Oakwood. Councillor Bredin had to dig deep to find that miniscule use as it isn't even mentioned in the material below. Obviously the Province's information has not been updated to include the Berger Peat Processing Plant on Oakwood Road. **HOWEVER the major issue in my mind is not only the location of the plant although that is an issue for its residential and agricultural neighbours but the amount of water it will be drawing to use in its process.** While it is good to encourage industrial development in Springfield, Council should be mindful of the impact any particular industry will have on residents and resources. This Council will be renowned for ignoring those factors and inviting lawsuits which ultimately cost all ratepayers, including those bringing suit. If Mayor Fell runs in the next municipal or provincial elections, I would suggest voters should examine her track record as Reeve, or as she passed a resolution to change, Mayor. Traditionally rural heads of Council are Reeves, not Mayors.

+WPG1195 - Mines Info (ARD) 8 Nov 2021, 14:30 (7 days ago)

Greetings Heather A. Erickson,

Thank you for your inquiry.

In regards to confirmation that the Province classifies Peat Moss extraction as Mineral extraction and Peat Moss processing falling under Agricultural processing. I can share the following information with you regarding, Peat Moss extraction as Mineral extraction. Firstly, your understanding that Peat Moss, while comprised of vegetative material, like coal is considered a mineral insofar as the mining of it. As such it is considered an industrial mineral. Please see the following Manitoba Geological Survey (MGS) publication for information regarding this definition and Peat Moss extraction in the province from a historical perspective. <https://www.gov.mb.ca/iem/info/libmin/ES-9.pdf> Industrial Minerals in Manitoba

Peat moss is a significant industry in Manitoba, including bagged peat and fertilizer/peat mixes. Until 1983, the only major producer was Fisons Western Corporation, which operates east of Winnipeg from four bogs: Evergreen, North Julius and Moss Spur in the Julius area, and the Elma bog farther south. Harvesting began in 1939, and the company now has two processing plants, at Elma and Moss Spur. At the height of the season, the company employs well over 200 people, and has 80 hectares in production. The Fisons plant is typical of peat processing procedures. The company also produces specialty products by adding fertilizer, perlite or vermiculite to the peat. This produces a ready-to use horticultural soil mix. In the spring of 1983, a new operator, Premier West Peat Moss Ltd., started production from the Giroux bog, 50 kilometres southeast of Winnipeg. They brought a second bog, south of Falcon Lake, into production in 1987. Manitoba peat is good quality sphagnum moss, used primarily for horticultural purposes as a soil conditioner. About 90 per cent of the product is shipped to the United States, as far as Texas and California.