

Springfield News and Views

Submitted by: Reeve Peter Skrupski

THE COST OF SAYING NO

The recent rejection of a business opportunity in the municipality comes with a financial burden to every taxpayer in the RM. A local retired concerned certified accountant described the total amount lost as \$100,000.00 per year or the combined municipal tax per annum of 100 average homes in the municipality. He used the lost interest of the investment made to the purchase the building in October of 2006, the interest on the new revenue from the profit of the sale, the utility costs, maintenance costs, and the new property tax created.

The petition of 1200 ratepayers collected in 6 days was ignored and unfairly discredited. In actuality the petition should have been used as forecast of the wishes of the majority. The rejected company will now be taking their business and 50 employees to another municipality. This disappointing blunder will be once again recorded in Springfield's History.

THE MOST FISCALLY RESPONSIBLE SOLUTION

One option is selling the Dugald building which is full of unknowns and financial costs to the ratepayer. The building should be listed on the open market at its fair market value and sold. The proceeds from the sale would be directed straight back into the municipal building reserve allocated for a municipal office. At the same time conduct an inclusive future detailed inspection and analysis to the structure which will indicate the true costs of renovating this 27 year old building to a fully functional administrative building. The most recent cost of renovations came in at \$920,000.00. Add on 10% engineering and architecture costs to complete the project, the \$75,000.00 cost to hook up to town sewer/water and decommissioning of the septic field. I as your Reeve cannot justify spending a total of \$1,750,000.00 of your tax dollars for this project with the below option on the table.

The most practical financial alternative is to construct a 5000 square foot addition onto the most recent constructed 6000 square foot public works building on Oakwood. The cost of this project would be a generous \$200.00 a square foot or one million dollars. Fiscally responsible government was my election platform and continues to be. This solution would house all the employees (CAO, department heads, managers, administration, public works, recreation, public safety, planning and development, and council chambers) in one building with no duplication. This is the ultimate best bang for your dollar from a taxpayer's point.

Communication is the key to any organization and wasting your money back and forth between buildings miles apart is pure nonsense. The existing 102 year old municipal office could become the head quarters for the fire rescue service, office of the full time fire chief, and also a new municipal museum building. This is an authentic historical building and is the foundation of the municipality's military monument in front, which represents the men and women who gave their lives and limbs for our municipality and country.

Innuendos about towns separating or breaking away, is simply not true and is no longer approved or considered by the province. Our strength is working together for the betterment of the whole municipality. Those who want to muddy the waters or orchestrate ambiguous information to the public are now recorded in our history.