

Village of Theodore TOWN HALL SPRING 2020



Village of Theodore - TOWN HALL SPRING 2020

With the current pandemic currently keeping everyone, and everything from doing anything or going anywhere I have prepared an "Abbreviated" Town Hall information package for everyone to get updated on and once we are all allowed to hold large gatherings again, we can try to pick up with a more formal in house session at the Village hall, if time permits.

This presentation was in the planning stages because of the pandemic to update you on a number of things going on here in Theodore and more was added to it due to a recent article in the local paper, and another circulated recently - I will do my best to address what I can to both of these without breaching any privacy matters.

Off the top -

*About the lease of the John Deere Tractor, yes, there will be a buyout at the end of the lease as there would be with any vehicle purchase should you have chosen the leasing option. We can, if we choose to do so, easily refinance and keep the payments low (with interest rates at low levels this is not a bad thing) and therefore be able to keep a valuable piece of machinery for years to come.

Let's be honest, the prior tractor was ready for the junk heap and had caught fire at one point so to say it was still a practical piece of useful machinery would be false.

Ask yourself this - Have you updated your own vehicle at some point? Why would you? Would it be because the cost to repair it was outweighing its actual worth? Or was it in the shop more than it was being used? Or was it at that point where you couldn't get parts for it? So why wouldn't we update / upgrade our own equipment for the village? If you can drive around in the latest model of car or truck, why could we not support our village workers with equipment they could use instead of using 'duct tape' & 'chicken wire' to hold it together? It is not fair for you to say to "keep using outdated equipment" while you yourself are driving a new one. That's hypocritical.

*Our oil truck needs new brakes, among other things such as seats for the guys to sit on. The Dump truck couldn't pass a safety if we put it through one and the costs to fully repair it up to proper standards are going to be significant. And that's just two pieces of equipment.

Down the road we're going to have to look at replacing the back hoe (it is at a point where repairs are constant and is unable to properly dig due to instability because of no functioning parking brake).

***Here's another example in our own daily lives** - We all update our computers, or our phones every few years because WE HAVE TO! The technology becomes outdated and non-compatible and we don't have a choice. Any upgrade to anything is going to have a cost, NOTHING is free.

But since the tractor lease, we have a contact now who is a broker who can find us the best deal on used or new equipment. We didn't have that contact before. **As we grow, we learn.**

Let's look at the backup generator we installed at the water plant this past year. It will power the water plant during any outage and water is one of the most important things to have in case of any emergency. We wired it into the Arena/Hall as well so that in the case of an emergency we could use that facility. The museum, while it does have a backup generator, is incapable of housing the residents of the village, let alone those from the Health Center if needed! The Arena / Hall has the space, and the facilities to do just that. I really do hope that we NEVER have to use it for any emergency, but WHAT IF? We never know what could happen any given day and IT IS Provincial Legislation (Since 1989) that we have an emergency plan in place JUST IN CASE. We need look no further than to the world itself right now and the situation we are currently in with the COVID-19 Pandemic. Every Country, state, or province was ill prepared for this. It really shows in some areas more so than others.

Village of Theodore - TOWN HALL SPRING 2020

So, to say we'll never have our own emergency situation and to NOT BE prepared would be completely irresponsible. To think 'Oh it'll never happen here' is likewise irresponsible. Ask anyone who has lost someone to a car accident, or sickness and they can relate to not being prepared for the unexpected.

Yes, Theodore has had only one train derailment incident long ago, but this past year there were two train derailments not all that far from here:

One in Canora (40 min to the North East of Theodore) and another one hour and 50 minutes to the West of us at Guernsey on the same rail line that goes right beside Theodore– Articles below

Train Derailment In Canora

Yorkton, SK, Canada / GX94 Radio - Now That's Country!

Craig Wallebeck

January 21, 2020 10:29 am



There's been a minor train derailment in Canora. One boxcar on a C.N freight has come off the tracks on the north side of the town, and has resulted in traffic

congestion.

There's no word when the site will be cleared. Canora RCMP say they were aware the train had been sitting still for some time.

Highway 16 Forces Evacuations

Yorkton, SK, Canada / GX94 Radio - Now That's Country!

Craig Wallebeck

February 06, 2020 10:22 am



This morning's train derailment and fire has forced officials to evacuate the village of Guernsey. Highway 16 remains closed in both directions, while

C.P Rail and emergency officials deal with the mishap. It wasn't immediately clear what the train was hauling, but some witnesses say as many as 30 cars may have been involved. It's not known how long the highway will remain closed. It was December 9th, over a million litres of oil was lost after 33 oil tank cars and one hopper car derailed, along Highway 16 between Guernsey and Plunkett.

So for us to assume that we will never see another train derailment in Theodore would be naïve. Again, hopefully we never will, but to have a proper facility as our 'Muster Point' in this village is being proactive and not reactive. This council is trying its best to be proactive as best we can and that includes looking at others areas of the village.

One being the drainage in town – we're looking at the problematic areas that are prone to sitting water each spring and setting an objective for next winter to haul more snow away from these areas to limit the amount of water sitting in any ditch, over any street or in anyone's yard. This will be mapped out and set for next winter before the municipal election this fall. We are going to continue our cleaning out of the culverts, and if we need to, replace /remove/ add where we need to improve the drainage. This is not a quick fix, and is going to take time. AND council cannot just go and dig a ditch to improve drainage, the homeowners whose property would be affected have to give us permission to do the work. If even one household refuses, any probable project ends right there and then. We cannot snap our fingers and everything's magically fixed, there is a process that needs to be followed.

Village of Theodore - TOWN HALL SPRING 2020

Another - Our Water treatment plant is outdated and cannot do the job it needs to do anymore. In one of our water tests this past fall from the water authority who can, as he sees fit, drop in on any community at any given time to check and see if we're doing what we need to do to maintain safe water practices. It was on one of these drop-ins that a test of the water showed Ammonia in quantities higher than normal. It is currently not at a level where we have no 'BREAKING POINT' where it comes to adding chlorine. It is however, getting there. What does that mean? It means in the easiest way to understand, that at a certain point, no matter how much chlorine we add (which breaks down the ammonia and still keeps our water safe) we won't be able to add enough to have a 'BREAKING POINT'. That in turn, translates to a 'Permanent BOIL Water Advisory'. Something that a number of communities are already at. So council proactively hired a consultant who specializes in water treatment facilities and he thoroughly put both of our wells through a series of tests to determine exactly what we need and how to achieve it. Why do we need a consultant? Because we cannot get any sort of grant money without a consultation done first. The means of getting any grants, or funding through any government source requires a lot of leg work to be done prior to. It is extremely difficult to get any sort of funding if YOU DO NOT DO THE HOMEWORK first.

Not only was ammonia found in the water, but there were several other elements in our water that are considered ABOVE SAFETY LIMITS, and this is after the water is already treated and coming out of your tap. If this community wants to survive, and grow WE MUST HAVE good drinking water. Why would anyone move here, or for that matter, stay here if we are on a permanent BOIL WATER advisory / if our water supply is not safe??? If we do not upgrade our facility, we will over a matter of time become an abandoned village alongside the highway where photographers can get their next sunset photo. (We need look no further than 5 minutes down the highway at INSINGER). I will discuss the water treatment facility a little further on in this presentation.

Bylaws - Council is beginning to update a number of bylaws to bring them up to current standards. It is very apparent that some of these bylaws are a little outdated and need to be adjusted or in some cases a new bylaw written altogether to represent the 21st century. We do plan to implement use of a 3rd party (The Commissionaires) to enforce the bylaws and the fines that will be associated with any blatant disregard of any bylaw. The COVID-19 pandemic delayed use of the Commissionaires, but now that council has passed a resolution to hire them we will be able to utilize them effective June 1st to help the village enforce the bylaws.

One new bylaw I am bringing to council, and one that has been enacted in several other communities including the City of Regina, is an **"ANTI-BULLYING – HARASSMENT BYLAW"**. This is a must. And it will be enforced by the Commissionaires and in serious incidents, THE RCMP. This will include fines that will grow exponentially for each repeated offense. This is to protect our Village workers, administration staff, businesses and individuals in this village from those who think it is perfectly fine to use harsh language, yell, threaten or intimidate anyone. **This is unacceptable behavior in all places of business now and there are strict guidelines and policies in place - and thus it should be completely unacceptable behavior in any community and especially to anyone living in this village.**

Village of Theodore - TOWN HALL SPRING 2020

Village Staff – First off, I will not discuss private issues concerning any village staff member, or employee of the village. That's exactly what that is, private. That is not optional and will not be discussed in a public forum.

Just as important, our village staff are dedicated, to the say the least, to serving our community. Comments like 'driving around looking busy' are not warranted any day, or anytime. How the crew do their job may be different than what some may have been accustomed to but they do their job and do it well! We have fully certified staff in all aspects of every training requirement asked of by OH&S (Occupational Health & Safety) This was all accomplished over the course of Fall and early winter since the last town hall meeting. I'll also repeat something that was brought up at the prior town hall as well – The staff are tracked every day with logs, and by a GPS App that monitors every movement over the course of any given day. This was shown to everyone who attended the town hall and is still there to view on the town hall Power point presentation available on the village website. Download it, read it. The staff are not wasting our tax dollars - What would be a waste is if we had to replace the town staff, again. Then we are back at square one and having to pay out for more training, yet AGAIN. That would be a true waste of our tax dollars.

-What, and how things were done in the past will not necessarily pertain to how things are done today. Times change as do work habits and requirements.

We never criticize the town crew if they're slugging away replacing water lines – Remember the water line disaster of 2018? The guys were the ones down in the holes fixing the lines, not a third party, they were. They spent countless hours repairing those lines in short time considering what they had to deal with. I wasn't on council at the time but I don't recall anyone complaining about them putting in long hours then? If there were complaints, it was because those residents were upset they didn't have water. Of course water would be limited in such a circumstance, which can be expected when there were that many replacements needed (including the lines going out from the water plant – You can see that presentation on the prior town hall power point presentation).

Coffee breaks are more than merely a coffee. They are work related discussions and planning. Phone calls are made at times regarding finding quotes for a particular project or repair, there can be conference calls (ie: water plant discussions with our consultant), video workshops that are viewed online and even members of council may be there or myself discussing matters.

Can we refine some processes? Of course, that's to be expected. That will be tinkered with as we need to. At some point the guys will be required to put in longer days to repair or fix something – which I'm sure you'll be grateful for – It all balances out in the end. Yes the guys fix the hydrants, but can't do so in the winter, so if a hydrant needs fixing and in some cases parts need to be ordered, it will get done in due diligence in warm weather. The hydrants throughout town are old and getting replacement parts is not an easy task. Council will at some point have to contend with this as part of the aging infrastructure that needs to get updated but it can't all be done at once. The cost of replacing one hydrant is \$5000.

Replacement repair kits run at \$2500. Take a walk around town and count how many fire hydrants there are, then do the math. Not cheap to fix is it?

-If something should arise where staff are not doing their job as required, we as council will deal with it in the proper fashion. There is a disciplinary policy in place we need to follow.

If you have an issue with anything being done, you need to fill out the proper paperwork and present it to council at a council meeting. That is the proper process, and needs to be followed. There is no 'back door' as it were, to getting your complaints dealt with. You need to do up the paperwork, and present it to council and we in turn will respond with an answer to your concern in a set time frame agreed upon at the meeting. If you require something to be done, contact the office as usual and a work order will be done up and dealt with as soon as possible. Like everything else, priority issues will be taken care of first.

Village of Theodore - TOWN HALL SPRING 2020

Financials – Recent articles have made comments on this so here is a thorough answer to those - Currently because of the COVID-19 pandemic our audit for 2019 has been delayed. Once the Provincial government has relaxed certain regulations we can get our audit done, until then, it is on hold. Once it is done, it will be provided to anyone who wants to review it via our website on a PDF you can download. We will let everyone know once it has been completed.

-The council that was elected in 2016, and the subsequent by-elections in the last 4 years, have done a terrific job in getting the financial picture much brighter for this village. As it was brought up in one article, payroll was an issue, back taxes owed was ridiculous and other financial situations were out of control. With the assistance of an Administrator who has put in countless hours, along with his assistant, to get these dealt with has been a monumental task and both have been phenomenal in that regard. It is not easy to do this with a council that is constantly changing beside you. They have both tirelessly accomplished a lot in assuring taxes are paid, utility bills are paid on time and dealing with delinquent accounts and council is indebted to what they've achieved.

-**One loan** as mentioned was paid this past fall, a loan that was long time carryover from a previous council from a project that ballooned out of control (arena expansion) and we as taxpayers were paying for until recently. **Another loan** that was taken out in 2015 (A Commercial machinery loan to pay off some other debt and to purchase a used grader and dump truck) has just been paid off. **We can officially say, all loans, the carryover long term loans are paid in full and ahead of time I might add. This amounts to significant savings to us taxpayers because we saved thousands of dollars in interest on those loans.** At this time only the tractor lease is the only 'loan' to pay off. Prior councils not pursuing tax arrears, or enforcing utility payments led to a constant lack of funds for the village. As long as we continue to collect our taxes, tax arrears and utility payments – as they should be - we should easily be able to pay off our tractor lease and own a great piece of equipment for the village for years to come, with no money owing. To make the comment that 'Council, get your ship in order before it sinks' is misguided.

-**This council, and its various changeover in councillors, have only raised the taxes ONCE in during the past four years!! ONCE!** Very few communities can make the statement that they've only raised their mill rate once in the past four years. To do that - pay off those long term loans - get our back taxes paid to the point they are at - Reclaim properties due to back tax arrears (A total of over 30 with more coming soon) - having not to worry about payroll issues - AND STILL have a positive bank balance is not a council needing to 'right the ship' but to continue being thorough and responsible in their handling of our taxpayer dollars. After all, the council members are taxpayers to. **I might add there will be NO MILL RATE increase this year either.**

Let's touch on the Reclaimed properties – From 2000 to 2016 – Only ONE property was ever taken back into village hands. **In 2016, with the new council, up to present day we have now taken over 30 properties back due to tax arrears. 30!** And more will soon be back in village hands. Over 17 years nothing was ever done to get either tax arrears / or reclaim property. That would roughly be 5 different councils who chose not to pursue tax arrears. In less than three years we have brought over 30 pieces of property back to the village of Theodore. Properties we can now resell for future development, and therefore, potential growth for the village.

2020 will be a year like no other, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and funding from the provincial government did go up marginally. However, This council will continue its 'proactive' approach to being diligent in our spending this year. The pandemic will have repercussions province wide and it will affect Theodore indirectly because of it. That is the next topic, tourism.

Village of Theodore - TOWN HALL SPRING 2020

Tourism: The pandemic will affect all avenues of tourism in Saskatchewan this year, and us locally as well. The Whitesand park will have their provincial regulations to adhere to because of it and will undoubtedly affect the amount of traffic traveling to the park this year. The museum will in all probability not open this year because of the pandemic. **We had applied to two separate grants to hire someone for the summer season at the museum but both were rejected.** Chances are the museum won't be able to open regardless because of provincial restrictions on what, or what may not open this year. It is even possible the CFL will not play a down this year because of the pandemic and that will impact this province substantially, partially because the Grey Cup was supposed to be held in Regina this year. Campgrounds are only allowed to operate on 50% capacity, with one site always being empty between campers. Camp grounds can only be for Saskatchewan residents, so seeing tourists from other provinces or from the states will be virtually zero. 2020 will be, to be honest, a brutal year for tourism for the entire province.

Arena – Hall: This facility and its costs have been covered by the taxpayers of Theodore 100% since 2010. This, as mentioned in one article, is a significant burden on us and is one predominant reason why the village has fallen behind on updating infrastructure and equipment. It is not the only reason, but one of them. The pandemic will likely prevent the arena/ hall from even opening its doors this year. However, that is a bridge we will cross when we get to it.

-In 2010 when taxpayers were left on the hook for the full costs of the arena/hall, a new recreation committee was supposedly being looked at to run the facility but never came to be. The prior incarnation of the Theodore Recreation Board was essentially folded by the council of the time and the new Theodore and District Recreation Board was created then by its new group of members (some carried over from the prior board) and it was incorporated as a non-profit organization without being under the umbrella of council.

-In every other community, a Recreation Board/ Leisure Committee / Rink Board is under their respective councils AND oversees the operation and funding of their recreational facilities and covers the expenses with some of those expenses covered by the village/town/city taxpayers if that board approaches their respective councils and asks for funds. Yorkton as an example, has a set dollar figure that is put towards the operation of their facility and is put on their taxes. The prior Theodore Recreation Board was responsible for the facility, and paid the majority of the expenses (A former Theodore minor sports association also helped with covering expenses) with council 'chipping in' when they had to, to help offset any shortfalls. When that Recreation Board ceased to exist then the village became responsible for the full costs of the arena/hall. Council – Administration office - has since 2010 been responsible for dealing with the arena/hall. That is NOT council's job, nor the administration office. Council is to govern and make legislation and enact such. Council should not be operating any sort of business, which is what the arena/hall essentially is.

-At one point, depending on who you talk to, the arena/hall was trying to be sold to an outside group who had no intention of keeping that facility as a recreational home for the village. This was also around 2010. I want to assure everyone, this council has no intention of selling to an outside group who would not continue the building as a recreational facility for Theodore and area.

-Council has put an offer towards the Theodore and District Recreation Board for them to consider for the facility and it would in turn release the burden of village taxpayers from carrying the full expense of the building. We, the taxpayer, will in all likelihood still have to cover some of the expenses for the arena/hall but it would be drastically less than what we currently pay and it would still free up some much needed dollars for council to upgrade our infrastructure and ultimately a new water treatment plant. **The status quo cannot continue in its current form.** Which brings us back to the water treatment of Theodore.

Village of Theodore - TOWN HALL SPRING 2020

Water Plant funding – The village can't continue to fully fund the arena/hall to the extent we do and be able to fund a new water treatment plant. A choice has to be made. We need this water treatment plant, we seriously do. We are on the cusp of being a 'Permanent Boil Water Advisory' for this community. Ammonia has become increasingly present in larger quantities recently and in addition to that, the consultants thorough report indicates a few other elements in our water that are above recommended safety limits, those being manganese, sulphate, and with high concentrations of sodium (This "can cause health issues particularly for those with pre-existing heart conditions" – quoted from the consultant's report -) in our water as well .

This is a key note as Quoted from the consultant's report – "Elevated levels of DOC -Dissolved organic carbon – can complex with Iron and Manganese and interfere with their oxidation. It can also react with chlorine and form trihalomethane (TMH) which is a known CARCINOGEN." With the amounts of chlorine we are needing to have our 'breaking point' with the ammonia, the carcinogen TMH is a major concern.

The carcinogen doesn't have to be drank in your typical glass of water, but can be absorbed through our skin when we are showering, brushing our teeth etc. As I said, this is serious. We need a new water treatment plant, our current facility cannot do the job to remove these elements. **We've crossed that bridge and need to address this now, not later.** This village will never grow without good water, and for all intentions will progressively shrink because who of us really want to live in a community where the water isn't safe?

This is an excerpt from the Consultants final report on the actual treated water that is coming out of our taps:

Conclusion

Based on raw and treated water quality results several parameters exceed the treated water aesthetic objectives.

Recommendation

Ensure these parameters meet their aesthetic objectives in the treated water.

4.1.4 Treated Water Quality

Treated water quality results are presented in **Table 3**. The results indicate that sodium, manganese, sulphate, DOC and TDS do not meet their aesthetic objectives. It appears that the water treatment plant is not capable to lower their levels to meet the requirements set by SDWQSO.

Conclusion

The water treatment plant is not able to lower the levels of manganese, sulphate, sodium, TDS and DOC in the treated water.

The cost of a new water treatment plant is in the vicinity of \$550,000 - \$600,000. We had initially thought it would exceed one million but our consultant has put together a plan that reduced our costs considerably. Regardless, the cost is still significant. Our consultant also did an investigation into our lagoon to see if it meets required guidelines. What good is a new water treatment plant if our lagoon can't handle the waste? To our surprise, it does, and actually exceeds the guidelines. CONTINUED >>>>>

Village of Theodore - TOWN HALL SPRING 2020

We have the capacity to see our population grow to over 500, and as high as 600 without needing to expand the lagoon. Therefore we don't need to be concerned about any expansion of our lagoon any time for the foreseeable future. We can focus exclusively on the water treatment plant we desperately need. The money we drop into the arena can be diverted to paying for the new water treatment plant.

- Yes, we have applied for grant money / funds from the federal and provincial governments. **IF, and I do emphasize, IF** we get this funding we are still going to be responsible for one third of the cost of the treatment plant. That math will show us having to pay for approximately 200- 250,000 of the total cost, IF we get funding. IF we don't get it, well, the total cost falls on us. Our consultant has a backup plan for us should we fail to get any government funding. We would still be able to finance the total cost, over a period of years, in case the government decides against our application. Regardless, this village can't pay for both the arena and treatment plant, not without raising your taxes extensively to do so. Therefore this village needs to make a choice – A new water treatment plant OR continue full payment of expenditures of the arena/hall. You the ratepayer, will ultimately decide that.

-If our offer to the TDRB is turned down, and they have that choice to do so if they see fit, then the ratepayers will have a survey to complete to help council decide a final decision on the arena/hall. In your July utility bill you will receive a questionnaire that you will be required to return to the village office. The wording of the questionnaire is still being determined, but basically it will be the choice of using our tax dollars to finance a new water treatment plant OR continue covering all expenses of the arena/hall. One water bill to each household will equal one survey. IF a majority of ratepayers choose the arena option, then there very likely will be no water plant. IF a majority of ratepayers choose the water treatment plant then council will vote to effectively close the arena until a board/committee steps up to oversee the facility for the purpose of keeping it a recreational facility for Theodore and surrounding area. If TDRB chooses to accept council's offer- as I mentioned earlier, we are still likely going to have to subsidize the arena to a certain extent (That will be determined IF the TDRB accepts and we will negotiate that in private) but it will be far more affordable to do so and we will have a recreational facility and a new water treatment plant. **To raise our taxes significantly to pay for the arena/hall AND the water treatment plant will effectively see our taxes as high as the city of Yorkton or WORSE and deter anyone looking to find affordable living in our small village.** To those who say I'm exaggerating, believe me, I am not.

In closing: We need to keep our tax rate affordable to our current residents, and appealing to new home buyers looking to locate in our community. With new residents our tax base grows and council is able to hold the line on increasing the mill rate. **This is vital and everyone needs to understand this.** The more residents we lose, the tax burden will fall on to the rest of us still here and as costs increase as they do every year then councils of the future will have no choice but to keep raising taxes. It is self-defeating but inevitable because the cost to run the town isn't going to go down anytime soon. This is why we need to invest in a new water treatment plant, keep upgrading our equipment, repairing our roads because as we do then those looking to move here will see we are dedicated to improving life in our village. **If we do not hold the line on taxes, do not upgrade our water treatment facility, or upgrade infrastructure and equipment then simply take a 5 minute drive west down the highway to INSINGER.** Park your vehicle and take a walk around the place. What you see there is exactly what's going to happen to Theodore. **Let that sink in, think about it. We are at that crossroads now.**

-There are new residents who want to preserve the history of Theodore, not destroy it as some seem to think they are doing. However, things need to be done differently in order to preserve the past so we can have a future in this village. What good is a storied history if our village has become an empty sideshow alongside the highway? Then all of that history will be forgotten.

Village of Theodore - TOWN HALL SPRING 2020

There are around 330 people in our village, and of course those in the surrounding areas who have an opinion on things. We aren't going to agree on everything, it's impossible so there's going to be disagreement on things. INSTEAD of insulting, or yelling or worse how about we have a discussion on how we can meet somewhere in the middle? Just because my opinion may be different than yours, it doesn't mean I'm wrong. Let's look at it this way – you may think your deluxe pizza you make is fantastic, but personally I think it tastes horrible – You like it, but I don't because I hate pineapple on pizza. We each have our own thought on what is good, bad or right. That includes how we do tasks around the village or organize an event. If we opted to work together as a collective village just think of what we as community could accomplish?

Change is inevitable, and necessary in order to adapt to the ever changing world around us. There are those who hate change, the common cliché is “If it ain't broke why fix it” But let's look at it from a different perspective: Do you wear the same shirt every day? Pants? Socks? Not likely. You change because, well, for a new look or because you need to do laundry **but it's still a change!** So change isn't really that hard when you think about it and easier to accept if you keep an open mind. Again, we aren't going to agree on every change and sometimes a change will need to be fixed in order to work or be better. Without trying though nothing will ever get accomplished.

So, if you want to really be part of the solution and not just sit on the sideline – I challenge you to run for council. There's a municipal election this fall and if you want to bring your perspective to council then here's your chance to make a difference.

A few things to remember, as a council member you are one person which translates into one vote. If you want to work with council on making a change you'll need to convince your fellow councillors that your idea is a good one. That's how a democracy works, one person, one vote. If you don't get enough votes your idea doesn't come to fruition. There are no rogue councillors, or mayors who can go do their own thing because there is a council code of ethics in place that must be adhered to. This was set in place by the provincial government to avoid abuse of power. There are several communities in Saskatchewan which this has come in to play because of a complete disregard for those ethics and the Ombudsman, and the Provincial government have stepped in. You may think they aren't paying attention, but they are.

If you are going to run for council, a back check is required. It will take seven days to process if you go through the Yorkton detachment of the RCMP. Remember that, and it is mandatory, not optional to have one done and it must be done within 30 days once the call for nominations has commenced and submitted before the deadline for nominations.

It's easy to be a critic, and sit back but it takes dedication to be on council and it's not as easy as most think it is. So, ante up, run for council.

Council will do its best to keep you informed on what's going on throughout the community. Take care, stay healthy and try your best to enjoy the great outdoors in the days ahead.

I'll leave you with these thought provoking words from Theodore Roosevelt, the 26th U.S. president: “Complaining about a problem without proposing a solution is called whining”.