



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT
 Information:

☐ Mayor/Council



Ballen Park, Esquimalt, BC
 September 8th, 9th and 10th, 2017

RECEIVED: JUL 14 2017

Referred:

☐ For Action

☐ For Response

☐ COTW

☐ For Report

☒ Council Agenda

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July 12, 2017

Hello Mayor Desjardins, Councillors Brame, Burton-Krahn, Hundleby, Liberchuk, Low and last but not least, Morrison :

I realize you will be inundated with requests, suggestions and options for the compensation Esquimalt will be receiving for the mis-guided sewage treatment plant and for a change, what a pleasant problem to have!

We at Esquimalt Ribfest want to step up to the plate with a powerful, community guided initiative that most of you are already aware of. In 2013 when we first initiated Ribfest in Esquimalt, we made it our explicit goal to raise funds for the development of the Esquimalt High School field and surrounding track which was funded back in 1972 by the graduating class that year. Needless to say, it is more like a BMX track now and although the field was recently given a minor facelift, it is not a long term solution to a problem we have here in Esquimalt.

Although we got a bit side-tracked by purchasing the new bus for the school, we have managed to save \$100,000 and have it secured in an interest bearing account with SD 61. Altogether, we have raised over \$200,000 for local Esquimalt charities and through the Esquimalt Fire Fighters Charitable Foundation, we are continually making donations to various worthwhile local charities. These donations come from the admission by donation revenue while all other revenue goes towards our big dream ☺

So, why have we made what we are calling our 'Field of Dreams' the #1 priority? If you can believe it, we are the only core community in Greater Victoria that does not have an all-weather surface for our kids to play year round and for approximately 3 months of the year, they need to leave Esquimalt for games and practices for all outdoor activities. Our rugby academy at EHS even trains indoors for at least two school months as the field is closed even though Nov-Feb is great rugby weather. A quick and likely not comprehensive count shows 17 turf fields from the Westshore to Oak Bay (WS – 6, OB – 2, Saa – 7, Vi – 2) and not only does OB get a new \$60M high school (where they steal some of our kids by the way), but they almost immediately raised the funds for a turf field which is in use already at the school.



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The project we have outlined, in consultation with some of your very knowledgeable staff, is no small undertaking. Five phases total: turf field, lights, new track, grandstand and changerooms.

Gorge Soccer (close to 50% Esquimalt kids) is starved for field space and are 100% behind this initiative, promising to contribute monetarily from start to finish and with 1000 members, have significant clout – I believe they will match Ribfest \$ for \$ in fact. Other community sports partners have also expressed interest including rugby, football and field lacrosse.

On a side note my Mom actually left me some photos from 1970 with my team sitting on the bleachers at Bullen after an Esquimalt Minor Soccer Association game (prior to merging with Gorge), covered in mud. So this is definitely not a new phenomenon we are facing, we are just behind the race a bit.

A business plan for field usage is certainly needed to substantiate a return on investment and the way we see it, SD61 will get unlimited use of the turf during school hours and the Township will manage and receive the benefits from all silent hour bookings. SD61 has numerous similar arrangements and we think this is a win-win for our community - especially our kids.

We will happily present our plan to you in its entirety and think this project is an all-encompassing one that will benefit Esquimalt for generations to come. We also know this is a perfect fit for the goal of improving our amenities, helping our kids and most importantly, keeping Esquimalt healthy and active.

Please let us know what steps we can take to move this forward and we will get right on it. See you at Ribfest in September if not before!

Thanks kindly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Tom Woods".

Tom Woods
Esquimalt Ribfest