

From: Ed Sanders [<mailto:edsan@telus.net>]
Sent: February 26, 2010 3:41 PM
To: Casey Grundy
Subject: Personal submission for Senior's issues.

Casey, I was directed by Barbara Wahler of the OCP Steering Committee to submit the following personal submission to you.

I attended Faye White's focus group for Seniors Needs held at Bowen Court last year. Over and above those concerns that were identified, I have come to realize that there is one burning issue that I believe to be the topmost priority for seniors, and indeed the population of Bowen as a whole. Therefore I respectfully submit the following for the consideration of the OCP Steering Committee.

Seniors are a normal part of society and should be treated as such. In many ways they have the same needs and wants as everyone else. Society has the unfortunate tendency to classify and separate its members into tidy sub-groups, which are polled and studied *ad nauseum*. Let us get away from the propensity to look at seniors as a separate part of society; after all we live in society as a whole, therefore we are part of the whole, and without us the whole cannot exist. We have similar needs and wants as everyone else, except perhaps in the area of healthcare, where, because of our advancing age, we have a need to access it more frequently than the general population.

There is a fundamental difference between Needs and Wants. Let us separate the Wants from the Needs and we will have a clearer picture of a healthier and more productive society. Recreation and the Arts are currently treated as a priority by the present municipality. But these functions are Wants not Needs. Priority funding is allocated to these Wants because of the political pressure applied by the specific user groups. Hence the existence of the Artificial Turf field and the on-going plans for a community/performance centre. These facilities would be nice to have but are not an absolute necessity for the basic functioning of a healthy society; after all, we have successfully survived without them so far. However, healthcare, housing and education are absolutely necessary for the basic functioning of any civilized society. Bowen has made great strides in the area of education, and is attempting to answer the needs of affordable housing, nevertheless, ready access to adequate healthcare for everybody, not just seniors, is sorely lacking.

The basic healthcare needs of the residents of Bowen are mainly two-fold:

1. - A Medical centre that would provide the necessary services under one roof. – Doctors, health practitioners, physiotherapists, nurses, blood services, x-ray, massage etc, and
2. - Transportation in the form of a regular all-day bus service to and from this medical centre.

How this will be funded, publicly or privately, I leave to the experts. But the first priority *must* be healthcare, even if it means allocating a major portion of the funding that is now directed towards recreation and the arts. Again, arts and recreation are Wants not Needs. It could be argued that recreational facilities are an incentive towards good health, and indeed they are, but even without any recreational facilities whatsoever, a healthy lifestyle for everyone is still available on Bowen. One just has to look around this rural island, and take the individual initiative and responsibility to create, at no extra cost to the taxpayer, a healthy lifestyle. Understandably, we may want, for social reasons, these facilities provided for us, but fundamentally we don't really need them. However, we do need healthcare to basically survive, no matter what age we are.

Funding for healthcare must be our top priority, before we even attempt to look at any other services. In our Municipal budget for 2010, \$566,517.00 is allocated for recreation, and not one cent is allotted to healthcare, which is seen as a federal and provincial responsibility. This has to change. I submit that healthcare is also the responsibility of our municipal government. – Healthy people re-create.

Respectfully submitted by Ed Sanders. Age 73. February 26th. 2010.