



Regina City Council Delegation – Monday, March 27, 2017

RE: Regina Glockenspiel Refurbishment and Reinstallation

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, my name is Chad Novak, and I am here representing the Saskatchewan Taxpayers Advocacy Group, which is a grassroots organization proudly standing up for the rights of individual taxpayers. I am here to address the Regina Glockenspiel refurbishment and reinstallation.

I first want to extend my sincerest gratitude and appreciation to the Regina German Club, and the rest of the volunteers that worked so hard over the past seven years to get this situation corrected. By the sounds of the Committee Meeting, it is not clear as to who made the final call to dismantle the Glockenspiel in 2010, but if it turns out that the final costs are indeed in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, might I suggest that the City do some investigative work to find the party(ies) responsible, and charge back whatever the incremental costs are since 2010, as it seems to have been willfully destroyed during the dismantling and allowed to further deteriorate in a City yard. To me, this is not respectful of our cultural heritage, and taxpayers deserve to know why it was allowed to happen, and whoever made that decision needs to be held to some kind of accountability. *And....I'll leave that topic alone for now.*

I've gladly and wholeheartedly supported the Regina German Club since learning of it's fate through a member of the Club over a year ago. To me, there is nothing more important than celebrating our cultural heritage and our history, as that is something that we all know is lacking within Regina – or at least by the City of Regina organization, not necessarily residents of Regina, as is evident today. It is because of some amazing Regina residents and their willingness to continue to push forward in the face of adversity that we are all here this evening. Having grown up in Moose Jaw, where our Tourism Industry literally helped the City recover from the ghost town it was becoming in the 1980's, I know all too well the value of holding on to our past and not only celebrating it, but sharing it with the world. This is something that we desperately need to recognize as a municipal organization, but I'll talk more on that another day as well.

I must say, I was so proud to have addressed the Committee on March 15, as I have done so many times in the past, because finally – *finally* – it felt as though my words had real meaning on that side of the table. I respectfully requested that funding be done in one stage altogether, not the deferred two-stage approach as had been recommended by Administration, and guess what – it was brought forward as an amendment and passed unanimously! The reason I pushed for this amendment was that I felt strongly that deferring the project any longer – *especially with the open-ended reference of "a future date"* – was

both dangerous and disrespectful of the project as a whole. As I'm sure the German Community can attest to, it's already been deferred long enough. It's been seven long years of banging their head against a brick wall for them, and they deserve to see this issue finally settled once and for all.

We've all had enough of the blame game, hiding it from a simple inspection as they had asked for time and time again, or pretending as though the City is somehow cash strapped and needs to defer it for financial reasons. For me, that argument has long since expired, as many of you who are here today were part of our previous Council, which had absolutely no problems with building a \$278.2 Million Stadium, which will provide no true meaningful benefit to the residents of Regina – other than maybe a nice cup holder.

Finally, this evening, I want to once again thank everyone involved in getting this to where it is tonight. I've done what I can to help push this forward, and I strongly encourage you all to support the motion as presented to you this evening. 100% funding by no later than the 2018 Capital Budgeting season – and I think it's very important to note that I have the utmost confidence that the true costs to refurbish and reinstate it will be a mere fraction of the \$512k estimate.

Thank you for your time this evening, and I will gladly answer any questions you may have.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION (Dependent on time)

As for funding of this project, consider the fact that, according to media reports, the City of Regina is anticipating a whopping **\$9.8 MILLION surplus from 2016 alone**, which, combined with continual annual surpluses every year for at least the past decade, **total \$72 MILLION** (See Appendix A) just in that timeframe alone. Keep in mind that this is over and above any budgeted reserve transfers, and is effectively found money that could be used for a variety of purposes in that year or any future years.

Something I am very pleased to see is that the reason for these surpluses is because of what I would call very responsible, conservative budgeting practices. And, it is because of these proven conservative budgeting practices that it is reasonable to assume that we will continue to realize surpluses in 2017 and far beyond. With that taken into consideration, it would not be inappropriate to fully fund this project from any of those surpluses. Of course, the actual costs to refurbish the Glockenspiel to its former glory, which I have a strong feeling will be far lower than the projected \$512,000 price tag noted in this report, is most certainly a wise investment, to ensure that it can be enjoyed for generations to come.

Further to this, the notion of funding from unbudgeted surpluses is supported by Council's decision to reallocate parts of that projected \$9.8 MILLION surplus for Paratransit, improvements at Candy Cane Park and additional funding for Economic Development Regina. The latter of which already receives a large amount of tax dollars to operate, and many question the validity of that funding decision.

While I appreciate the intent of waiting until the 2018 Capital Budget process, I still feel that this ought to have been included as at least a line item in the 2017 Budget, and thus deserves 2017 attention. This issue was raised in September 2016, and was supposed to be brought back by Administration in December 2016, which for undisclosed reasons, it took an additional three months. Further, considering

the information contained within this report, it is reasonable to expect that the City ought to have been aware of at least some kind of funding requirement since the irresponsible dismantling occurred for the Plaza in 2010.

Appendix A

	Per Signed Executive Summary	
Year	Surplus	Deficit
2005		
2006	2,600,000.00	
2007	5,100,000.00	
2008	4,900,000.00	
2009	2,900,000.00	
2010	4,000,000.00	
2011	12,700,000.00	
2012	8,000,000.00	
2013	2,400,000.00	
2014	9,700,000.00	
2015	9,900,000.00	
2016	9,800,000.00	
TOTAL	72,000,000.00	