

October 19, 1999

The Mayor and Council,
Municipality of Central Saanich,
Mt. Newton CrossRoad,
Saanichton

RE: Further Action on Water Advisory Task Force Report

Dear Mayor and Council,

As you know, the Water Advisory Task Force submitted its final report to the Council several months ago. Action on the recommendations of that report was delayed pending the holding of an Open House. That has now been held, and further information on that is being presented to you.

As Chair of the Task Force, I request that the Council now take a decision to proceed with the implementation of the recommendations in our Final Report.

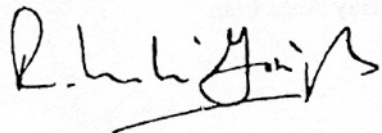
These recommendations are designed to resolve the Senanus issue in a rational, systematic manner. In our Interim Report, we suggested the need for further information on the health of the aquifer, given that the only information that was available was random, often anecdotal, and related to individual systems rather than to an assessment of the underlying source of water. As a result of the studies subsequently undertaken by Mr. Loewen, we have learned that the aquifer is healthy. This state of knowledge that is quite at odds with the information that had been presented to Council in previous years. The conclusions of this independent report necessarily shifted the pursuit of solutions to a more systematic assessment of individual systems.

In our Final Report, our primary recommendation was that the municipality should inform all Senanus residents of both the need to undertake individual assessments, and the willingness of the municipality to offer technical assistance in this task. After the Open House, our knowledge of the state of individual systems remains very uneven and anecdotal. The municipality is, for example, not fully informed of what remedial measures may have been taken by householders, and whether these have been done with professional advice. Information from the residents' survey last year suggests that the pursuit of remedies regarding both water quality and quantity issues has been most uneven (although in some cases satisfactory individual solutions have been found).

Ensuring proper assessments is now necessary, with the municipality informed of the results. The Task Force does not suggest that the municipality need contribute financially; it could simply facilitate the process by informing residents of the benefits of this avenue, and by providing a list of competent, independent experts. Completing the next step would then be up to the residents of Senanus Drive. Once it is completed, the Council will be in a better position to take any subsequent action that is warranted. It would again be premature to pursue larger, more costly, alternatives at this stage without fuller information.

The Task Force awaits your decision on this matter. It would be most pleased to assist in the drafting a letter, and in providing advice on competent professionals.

Sincerely yours,



R. Michael M'Gonigle
Chair, Water Advisor Task Force