

Mayor Brown and City Councillors:

Two matters that I wish you to consider in public meeting forum:

1. Water Restrictions: For a number of years we have had a diligent volunteer group concerned with the viability of our water: The Nicola Valley Watershed Roundtable; and Council has given support of their objectives by assisting with community meetings etc. But, the sad fact is that here in our valley we have a shortage of water, and the severe water rationing of Summer '19 is a sad reminder of that fact. So what can the City do? Please meet with the Roundtable to continue to learn what they have researched over the years.

While the City and its residents and businesses represent only a portion of water usage in the valley, I believe the time has come for the City of Merritt to adopt a pro-active stance towards water consumption. I urge you to find a way to penalize profligate water users; and to reward those who treat water as the scarce commodity that it is. Obviously, one method of doing this is water meters. And in that regard, I am advised that most cities of our size in BC utilize meters for all structured properties; and it appears that invariably, a typical residential water usage bill is considerably less than the flat rate that Merritt charges all residents. The careful users are subsidizing the wasteful in Merritt. Council should get the full facts.

For over twenty years Merritt has required home builders to buy a water meter from the City, only (a profitable venture by the City) and to install it before final occupancy. We have bought 38 of them. Sadly, most of these meters are now redundant; outdated, and worthless! It's not your fault present Council, but the time has come to curtail that costly requirement, and formulate a plan of action to both safeguard our water, and let residents who wish to use water wisely, profit from reduced water consumption charges.

I urge City Council to take affirmative action to safeguard our water supply; whether it be metering, or some other practice. I foresee the day that we won't need water 'restrictions'; because our water usage rates will do that for us.

2. I commend Council for the positive public messaging via the daily flooding forecast; and for acting cautiously to stockpile the new, re-usable, long lasting sandbags. But, let's plan for the day that buying and stockpiling sandbags, and staff duties absorbed with flood forecasting will not be required.

It may well be that our insurance rates will decrease; when insurers are advised that we are not in the same league as Grand Forks (which is buying 80 homes along their river).

Now is the time for the city to request the BC and Canada governments to help us; join with Merritt to update the 'Urban systems' report of 2012 (commissioned by the NV Stockbreeders Association). That, and only that, will show us what the most cost-effective

way is to control the Nicola River at freshet; and, hopefully, also deal with the cause of Mill Creek flooding; because the uncontrolled Mill Creek has a major effect on the Nicola volume.

I urge Merritt City Council to update the study, described above, now in 2020, so that we can all know what the solution is; and end the conjecture---and the apparent apathy of Council to concern itself with the real problem; control.

Thank-you for your consideration of the above. And, should Council decide to strike a committee for either of these initiatives, I'd be pleased to offer my assistance.

Sincerely

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