

January 3, 2024

District of Mackenzie Council

Dear Mayor, Counsellors, and District of Mackenzie administration.

Re: Stored Dental Equipment

***I am writing at the suggestion of our Director of Corporate Services, Emily Kaehn, to request the Mackenzie District Council consider leasing the dental equipment to Dr. Johannes Yliruusi for a nominal annual fee.***

I have been working diligently with Emily and Diane for more than five years to find Mackenzie a permanent dental care solution. We all believe that retail sales are leaking from the community as our residents combine dental appointments with shopping and dining in Prince George.

To date I have enticed six potential dentists to consider setting up a practice in Mackenzie. In every circumstance the high capital cost of building and furnishing a dental suite has been the barrier to success. Experienced dentists do not want to undertake the risks and prohibitive cost of opening a new clinic without some indication of “buy-in” from the community – especially when they are aware of past practices and stimulus that has been offered in Mackenzie. They rightly ask, “If for others in the past, why not me, now?” Further, new dentists from the college simply do not have sufficient funds or a business history to attempt this feat.

I think it worth noting that the District of Mackenzie has underwritten and incentivized dental practitioners in the past - a practice that I believe still happens in many smaller communities in Northern BC.

I have been told that there are two barriers to incentivizing a potential new dentist.

1. An appraisal suggesting a potential, yet unrealized, \$50,000.00 value in the dental equipment, and
2. Perceptions of favoritism if the District and Council offer a valuable benefit to a private individual. In response, I would offer that:
  1. The highest value of the dental equipment is in Mackenzie serving its citizens
  2. The valuation included dental hand tools which are not in the inventory. They are all missing.

3. The equipment is not aging well and has been disassembled and moved twice and was not particularly well treated in its moving – rather dumped on the floor of unit #3 @ the Town Centre Mall; and
4. The equipment has been idle for more than five years and will require a qualified person to reassemble, test, certify in some cases, and service it

It is simply not worth the appraised value in its current condition and location.

While I am not a tax expert on civil public assets, it seems to me that five years of simple depreciation could easily apply and consequently change the book value of the dental assets on the District's financial ledger.

As to the question of perceptions and favoritism, I suggest we avoid that issue with a termed lease arrangement for a nominal fee and limiting conditionals. For instance, \$1.00/month for a fixed term. Or, how about “serving the community for 24 months and it will be given to the dental practice” as a condition? I am sure that there are other solutions.

I should add that Dr. Johannes Yliruusi is uniquely qualified in three specific and beneficial ways. He is both a dentist and a mechanic. He can assess, repair, and maintain dental equipment. I believe that he is our last AND best option.

And thirdly, I should add that Dr. Yliruusi has been practicing mobile dentistry in the region with a traveling clinic. There is a potential that his years cultivating a clientele in the region will result in patients and families coming TO Mackenzie for dental service, rather than leaving it for larger centers. Wouldn't that be a refreshing change?

Honestly, I am getting discouraged that we will ever find a dentist. It has been an enormous amount of work convincing, mollifying, planning, traveling, meeting, and eventually regrouping and taking up the task again after failure. After years of seeing services and talent drift out of Mackenzie and our community reduced by degrees, I would like to see us take steps to correct this.

***I urge you to seriously consider my request and support Dr. Yliruusi in this small way. It could make an enormous difference.***

Sincerely,

Darcy White  
Manager  
Ydenberg Properties Ltd.