

DISTRICT OF HUDSON'S HOPE
SPECIAL MEETING
HELD AT THE HUDSON'S HOPE COMMUNITY HALL
THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2009 AT 7:00 P.M.

Present **Council:** Mayor Anderson; Councillors Johansson, Johnson, Webster, Stacey, and Summer
Staff: C. Bonnicks, Administrator; and B. Mercereau, Deputy Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Anderson called the special meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

PROPOSED SITE C PROJECT

The facilitator, Wayne Plenert, explained how the meeting would be conducted. He began the meeting by reading the letters that had been submitted prior to the meeting. The following comments were highlighted in the letters on the positive and negative aspects of the proposed Site C project:

Sam Kosolowsky's letter stated:

- he and his wife are opposed to the building of Site C;
- they feel that enough damage has already been done to the Peace River;
- the increase to the water level would rise above the current high water mark which would cause sloughing and erosion; and
- the people in the lower mainland and the Americans who need the electricity should flood and destroy the land in their own area.

George Chatten's letter stated:

- would like to see benefits with new infrastructure, such as camping and recreation sites if the construction begins;
- if BC Hydro is able to provide positive outcomes from the construction then he would be in favour of the project proceeding.

Mary Brereton's letter stated:

- the suggestion of increased recreation potential should the dam be built is limited with the cold, shallow waters that would be created;
- the negative aspects would be the loss of tourism during the four years of construction and the two years to fill the reservoir;
- the scenic drive appeal will be lost with the flooding of the islands; and
- BC Hydro is uncertain of how much more fog will be caused or how much more dust or sloughing of the banks will be caused.

Rose-Ann Kirkeeng's letter stated:

- the negative aspects of the proposed construction would be degradation of the valley, more negative weather, loss of scenic drive to Fort St. John, and loss of wildlife, habitat and farmlands; and
- if people were more conscious of how they waste power it would make a huge difference.

Tad and Connie Simpson's letter stated:

- more employment for transients in Fort St. John would be created;

- the Peace Valley will be destroyed, animals will not cross the river, the migration routes will be changed, and the environment will change;
- with the banks caving in, there will be no more nesting grounds; and
- it will isolate Hudson's Hope even more than it currently is.

Anita McWilliams letter stated:

- will take the entire BC Hydro management and focus to Fort St. John, leaving Hudson's Hope with very little;
- the oil companies will be able to walk all over Hudson's Hope;
- the class one agricultural land in the valley will be lost forever, and with ever-growing populations in the world and ever-shrinking food producing lands this should not be done;
- another lake with sloughing banks will not be a great recreation asset;
- re-routing the highway will lose a long-term tourism asset; and
- other means of producing power must be used.

Ken and Arlene Boon's letter stated:

- will lose the following: agriculture land, scenic drive, river boating, tourists, heritage sites, archaeological sites, wildlife habitat and travel corridor;
- will cause bank erosion, changes in weather, and changes in micro climate of river bottom;
- the lower mainland consumes 73% of BC's domestic use, yet produces only 23%; and
- approximately 15% or more of the power from the Peace River area is lost in transmission to the south, therefore it is obvious that we need to generate electricity closer to the demand.

Families Haake and Freiburg's letter stated:

- they moved to this area because of its geology, climate, wildlife and ideal balance between wilderness and cultivated land;
- a reservoir will certainly have a negative influence on tourism, as is a perfect example when you look at the ugly banks and sand storms on Williston Lake;
- if the wind blows upriver in Hudson's Hope the sand will be in all the people's houses; and
- there will be a loss of habitat for animals, especially moose, and plants and valuable farmland will be destroyed.

An anonymous letter stated:

- will lose the valley and river;
- would like to know who will pay for the project; and
- do not want to be obligated to the USA again for another 20 years.

Mr. Plenert then allowed anyone who wanted to give their opinion on the proposed Site C to come forward and speak.

Ross Peck, stated:

- has had family connections with the valley since his paternal grandparents moved to Hudson's Hope in 1924;
- flooding of the valley would be a travesty and the decision needs to be made to not build Site C and remove the flood reserve in conjunction with the implementation of an appropriate strategy to guide land use decisions within the valley;
- the wildlife, fishery, scenery, agricultural land and a way of life would all be lost with the Site C project;

- the proposed road and bridge relocations will be required at 4 different sections, with related delays and obstructions;
- with the proposed plans to clean the entire reservoir and the impacts of clearing, logging, burning, and related activities will deem the valley a no go area for tourists and recreationists for many years and Hudson's Hope will not be on their destination list;
- the Peace River is currently used for river fishing, canoeing and river boating;
- upgrading of the Jackfish lake road and connecting the access across the Peace river at the dam site would have devastating impacts on Hudson's Hope, isolating the community;
- questioned how secure the properties, roads and utilities would be on the reservoirs edge;
- the safe line or usable property line, will vary over time and by property depending on soil, substrate, land use, and as property owners we often can't determine that;
- the loss of crucial habitat will increase and compound us of un-flooded uplands, potentially impacting agricultural and other land uses;
- there are serious flaws in many of the assumptions that drove the BC Energy Plan and they need to be re-evaluated in the context of today's political and financial climate; and
- other impacts would be the transmission lines, construction, loss of archaeological and heritage sites.

Deborah Peck, stated:

- European countries have a smaller land base and high populations but have found a way to produce adequate power without ruining their land base, therefore why can these types of technology not be used in BC;
- the Site C dam would be out of sight and out of mind the people in the lower mainland, and therefore they do not seem to care about happens in our area; and
- need to make a loud and united stand against the proposed Site C project.

Steve Metzger, stated:

- the valley, wildlife, recreation, farming and ranching will all be negatively affected when river habitat is lost;
- mercury levels will rise in the waters;
- some of the best agricultural land in the world will disappear forever;
- people of the Peace Valley will be displaced and their lives destroyed;
- the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Suzuki Foundation both agree that when all aspects of large hydroelectric dams are accounted for they are environmentally dirty;
- recent reports have revealed that the estimates and projections for future energy needs in BC are far off the mark, with the Government and BC Hydro manipulating numbers to make us think we are net importers of power because we do not produce enough;
- geothermal, solar, wind and smaller run of the river projects are greener energy generation possibilities;
- the Peace Region is ideally suited to solar generation on both large commercial and small private scales; and
- the wind generation has already been developed in Dawson Creek and has unlimited potential for expansion in the Peace Region.

Caroline Brown, stated:

- has a long family history in this community, which includes the loss of her relatives home and land when the WAC Bennett Dam was constructed;
- she currently lives on the river with her children and they have been able to learn

lots about animals and life on the river, the loss of this for generations to come would be detrimental; and

- Hudson's Hope is already looked upon negatively by younger families because of the lack of medical services, the length of time it takes to get to an actual hospital and these concerns from the younger population will only increase if Hudson's Hope becomes more remote with a longer drive to Fort St. John.

Carol Johnson, stated:

- people are unable to develop any land along the river because BC Hydro has bought up all of this prime land;
- this area would mirror the Williston Lake reservoir where not much development has taken place since the reservoir was completed;
- nuclear energy plant should be looked at, as it would preserve the natural habitats;
- questioned what other energy sources BC Hydro is considering;
- with the economy in a down turn there should be less energy being used; and
- she would like to see BC Hydro provide information on the current energy usage.

Renee Ardill, stated:

- BC Hydro has four models that they are considering, two of which include the construction of Site C; and
- BC Hydro seems to want to be energy net exporters.

Arlene Boon, stated:

- documents she has found show that they are net exporters and have a surplus load;
- in one of the reports it states that BC Hydro does not require extra energy; and
- they currently export to the United States over \$400 million dollars worth of energy.

Doug Summer, stated:

- have already given up enough for the other two dams that are on the Peace River;
- need to look at other options "if" the energy is required;
- with the economic downturn the government may want a big project to provide jobs to people;
- the Peace River seems to be the only area being considered for a hydro electric dam;
- the Peace Basin Trust seems like a way to buy us with our own money;
- with BC Hydro owning so much of the land along the river it is held up the potential of the area; and
- want land ownership given back to the residents along the river.

Terry Webster, stated:

- should look at a fifth option that would be all green energy options;
- would like to see reliable and affordable power;
- when she asked BC Hydro representatives how much more money it would cost to do a wind and solar energy project they advised that it would cost no more money than to build Site C;
- BC Hydro would have a perfect mix if they could have wind, hydro and sun, because when one isn't working then one of the others most likely would be, such as when the sun isn't out the wind would be blowing or the hydro could be used;
- discussed the green energy mission that has net zero homes built in Edmonton;
- with the money it would take to build the Site C project, which is estimated at 6.5 billion dollars, they should take some of the old homes in Vancouver and upgrade them for \$40,000.00 each, which would decrease their energy usage and also

- decrease the amount of energy that BC requires; and
- they should look at other ways to spend the money as well.

Pat Enderlin, stated:

- she requested that Council not support the proposed building of the Site C project; and
- she asked that Council find out whether British Columbia is in actual need of power.

Michelle VanStam, stated:

- there are many proposed projects in southern BC that have been scrapped because of public outcry, therefore the people in this area need to take a stand;
- the project is not good for the environment or the community; and
- we should educate people in the lower mainland about our situation by sending information and pictures to the newspapers and ask them for support and help, as we need a bigger voice.

Gwen Johansson, stated:

- if this specific valley existed in other areas of the world it would not be destroyed or even considered to be destroyed;
- not in favour of building a hydro electric dam for net exporting;
- a year long project involving BC, Alberta, the western American states and one Mexican province has identified potential electrical generation projects in western North America, the next steps would be to lay out a transmission network that could be used to connect these generation projects to areas where there is demand for the electricity;
- need to consider that you do not know what you have until you lose it and cannot get it back;
- there is a need to work with other groups such as the industrial customers who have questions about the cost of Site C electricity;
- we need to participate in the BC Utilities Commission hearings and let our opinions be known; and
- questioned how California will be able to pay for the power that is planned to be exported to them.

Mr. Plenert questioned what Council's best way to oppose the Site C Dam would be and which strategies could be used. The following comments were provided:

Rosaleen Ward, stated:

- BC Hydro had stated that there would be not public bridge across the Peace River, however, they are now considering this and surveying people for their opinions on the bridge;
- tourism jobs will be lost in Hudson's Hope;
- administration and management jobs will most likely shift to the Fort St. John offices; and
- Hudson's Hope needs to make a big stand against Site C.

Wally Harwood, stated:

- the actual decision on whether this project will proceed will be made by people elsewhere; and
- we need to identify the damages that will be caused and then take those threats and analyze what can be mitigated.

Lori Warren, stated:

- BC Hydro is not a good friend of Hudson's Hope;
- the school already has decreasing numbers and may be less if Site C is built;
- some BC Hydro managers don't live in the community and take no interest in the community; and
- they should be giving more to the community to make it more sustainable.

Ken Boone, stated:

- he is not interested in any type of mitigation; and
- research should be completed for using smart metering in Hudson's Hope.

Robert Bach, stated:

- had tried in previous years to have BC Hydro change their name to BC Energy, as they should be considering all types of energy sources, not just hydro electrical;
- BC Hydro has done a lot of damage to the community by holding up development along the river;
- they should have an agreement that if they do not build within a certain number of years they should sell the lands back to the residents;
- even if we were able to get all the people in the region to oppose the Site C project, there would still be no comparison in numbers to the lower mainland populations;
- the town could become a recreation and tourism destination;
- Council needs to take a united stand in opposition and let BC Hydro know that they need to do more for Hudson's Hope; and
- the District needs to make a wish list of everything the District wants to see from BC Hydro, which should include a commitment to keeping their employees in Hudson's Hope.

Darryl Johnson, stated:

- Hudson's Hope is not a one company town, we have a diversity with oil and gas, forestry, and tourism;
- tourism alone though will not run this town;
- the cheapest alternative would be wind, however, wind is not clean with the new road that would need to be built, the disturbance to animals in the high country and crossing of water tributaries; and
- if Site C is not needed then it shouldn't be built.

Mayor Anderson concluded that at the beginning of the meeting she had thought mitigation was the best option but has started to change her mind. Council needs to move forward and try to come up with a some kind of solution.

ADJOURNMENT

The Special meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Certified Correct:

Clerk

Mayor