

Councillors, Those in Attendance or Viewing from Home,

We are here today to present to you why the Cenotaph, belonging to the Village of Shubenacadie should be moved back to its original place of standing of 104 years, as well as why it never should have occurred in the first place.

I am Susan Smith, a 20 year member of the Shubenacadie Legion, a Past President of the Legion and have held numerous other positions on the Executive during my membership. I can, without hesitation, say that the relocating of the Cenotaph was never considered during my time as a member. Up until the day it was unceremoniously moved, not all of membership were even aware, consulted or considered by the Legion Executive regarding its' relocation.

Councillor's, you will have read emotional letters from residents and descendants of those named on the Cenotaph. You will have viewed numerous articles and emails regarding this whole ordeal. You are aware that a Freedom of Information request has been made regarding this matter, which has yet to be fully complied with. Therefore, I am going to point of the facts of this matter as known to date.

1. The Municipality claims there was never any plan to move the Cenotaph, and that the Legion requested the move
  - a. It is documented that the Legion only sent Letter to Municipality due to rumours (listen to the CBC radio interview)
  - b. The Legion letter sent to Municipality regarding the Cenotaph contains a lot of "ifs" based on and regarding **IF** the Municipality was planning on relocating the Cenotaph.

This is where the whole situation should have ended. If, as Councillor MacPhee has emphatically stated publicly, the Municipality never planned on relocating the Cenotaph, then why was the Legion's letter acted upon? Why were they never officially told that the Cenotaph would not be moved, commended them for their concern and the matter ended then.

2. Legion President Mike Chapman has stated in the CBC interview, as well as in an email to the Legion membership, that CAO Kim Ramsay never read the letter he sent (or at best barely glanced at it) and if she had, the Cenotaph would not have been moved.
3. Legion President Mike Chapman has stated publicly (refer to CBC interview) that the Legion has no objections to having the Cenotaph returned to its original home nor was it in their plans to ever ask for it to be relocated to the Legion.

4. From what has been ascertained so far from information requested from Freedom of Information request, The Municipality does not have any records related to public or community consultations for this matter nor any records or documentation related to research or data on this topic. This topic being protocols related to the relocation of Cenotaphs or War Memorials.

**Due diligence and procedures were either ignored or not considered**

5. Statements that November 11<sup>th</sup> Services would be better held at the Legion location are flawed

- a. The Legion has no outdoor audio equipment of their own so it will still have to be outsourced
- b. The cords needed for the running of the sound system will now be a tripping/safety hazard as they will be where people will be walking/standing/driving whereas when services have been held the last 104 years, all the cords and equipment were neatly located behind the Cenotaph with very minimal potential for tripping, being run over by vehicles, etc
- c. The Legion site has removed accessibility of Seniors and those with mobility issues to view/participate on November 11<sup>th</sup> Services. They will no longer be able to stay in their vehicles and “attend” the Service. They will be forced to either not attend or put themselves at risk by standing for a long period when they are not physically able. The original location had the space and was conducive to parking where people could stay in their vehicles and still be able to see and hear the service.
- d. Traffic control will still be required. People will now park along the side of the road in front the school, in front of people’s houses and thus become the safety and traffic hazard some say would be avoided. Whereas when Services were held in Village, nobody’s homes were blocked off and made inaccessible and parking options were more structured and safer.
- e. The Legion cannot hold the November 11<sup>th</sup> Service inside when there is inclement weather due to the capacity limits established by Fire Regulations. Once the limits are reached, people who there to show their respect would be turned away.

6. Statement that Cenotaph is “safer” at The Legion

- a. The Legion has been struggling financially for quite a few years, was it even considered what would happen to the Cenotaph if the Legion closes?
- b. The Cenotaph is now significantly closer to the floodplain the Municipality designated in 2016. Was it even considered that the Cenotaph would be damaged or even destroyed if flooding occurred?

## 7. Cost of returning Cenotaph

- a. Cost never seemed to be an issue to relocate so shouldn't be an issue now to put the Cenotaph back
- b. Funds are available to put the Cenotaph back through the Municipality's Contingency Fund (unanticipated expenditures)

It should be noted that people have no issue with trying to beautify the Village. The issue is with **why** move the Cenotaph because of it. How an opportunity was missed by the Municipality to create a space around the Cenotaph that would compliment and enhance their vision of bringing back the Village core is mind boggling. That opportunity was overlooked, disregarded or not even considered as a way to market the area as a historic place to visit when in the area. To work with the Tin Smith Museum, U raft and the boat launch area behind the ballfield and other local tourist attractions and combine efforts to promote Shubenacadie as a great place to visit.

If public consultation had been made available, these opportunities could have been realized, and we would not be here today debating the issue. A mistake was made; it happens all the time. However, what doesn't happen all the time is the courage to admit the mistake and the ability to have a positive outcome from learning from this mistake. It's not too late to correct the error. To put the Cenotaph back in the Village core where it belongs and show your commitment to serving the people and Community.

Thank you,

Susan E. Smith

Shubenacadie, NS