

Candidates Response to letter sent 10/16/11, in order received.

Louise Wallace, 10/16/11

Thanks for this and the work Shuswap Theatre has done over many decades to enrich and enliven the cultural and artistic life of our community.

I'm a fervent supporter of the arts acting as a director on both the SAGA Public Art Gallery and The Salmon Arm Folk Music Society. And I continue to offer my support to these groups despite not being either an artist or musician. My life has been greatly enriched by the arts and win or lose, my support will remain.

I believe in the economic power of the arts and would wholeheartedly support a serious pledge from the city to help make this next step happen for your society and for our community at large. In fact, a key concern of mine is that the city has a healthy budget for recreation and culture (please see the City of Salmon Arm 2010 Annual Report online at www.salmonarm.ca) yet a tiny fraction of those monies are allocated to operating funds for arts organizations. I'd like to see that change. Not at the expense of sports organizations but in addition to them. Add to this the funds set aside for economic development and tourism, and I feel there is a need to level the playing field. Studies suggest that dollar for dollar, investments in arts infrastructure and programming more than pay themselves back to communities in tangible economic terms. So, simply put. It's a yes from me.

Denise Reimer, 10/17/11

As a member of Shuswap Theatre Society and past board member I understand the need to replace the current building the theatre is housed in. I have seen the cracks in the foundation and also am quite aware of the ongoing heating and cooling issues, just to name a few of the concerns facing the board and membership. Having had the opportunity to perform in other facilities I also realize the magic that is performed by our technical support teams without the actual technical facilities to back them up. The opportunity to create a state of the art facility to house the theatre would be an ideal opportunity for Shuswap Theatre to showcase its many talents as well as invite other cultural events to the area thus enriching the tapestry of our beautiful city both culturally and economically.

I also embrace the idea of a "College Town" and would support STS working with the College Town Committee and understand the three criteria that need to be met in order for STS to participate in this concept. I feel it is a responsibility of council to encourage user groups to find ways to work collaboratively to meet the needs of all parties involved. I welcome the opportunity of exploring all the possibilities available to us in order to meet the needs of our Shuswap Theatre Society.

Ronald Telfer, 10/17/11

Thank you for your posting. Prior to relocation in Canoe/Salmon Arm fifteen months ago, I was a resident at the Kiwanis Manor on Milton Avenue in Oak Bay, BC for eight years and counted as very pleasant neighbours the nearby Canadian College of the Performing Arts on Elgin Street. I have interacted with Jacques Lemay on several occasions and the recent open house was well attended, (I just happened to be in Oak Bay on a visit) the college is thriving with the new Director and staff and over the years I supported their efforts whenever and however I could.

On a personal note, during a seven year business stint in St. Lambert, QB I sang as a second tenor with the St. Lambert Choral Society, reputed to be Canada's oldest choral group, we did some joint performances with Wayne Riddell and his singers, the Tudor Choir from Toronto and with the South Shore Philharmonic Orchestra. I also served for two terms on the board of managers, so I am well aware of your needs and what you are striving for.

As you know the City is run by a Mayor and Council of six, the Mayor has a casting vote in case of a tie but has the responsibility of setting the agenda for meetings. You may rest assured that you have my support for any positive measures you put forward, such as you have outlined in your attachment. Once the elections are completed I do look forward to meeting you and your membership to learn details and further your interests as best I can.

Warren Bell, 10/17/11

Thanks, Jake. W

Glenn Hill, 10/17/11

I am not quite sure how to respond to your letter as I agree with all the points. I don't feel the city can support this venue with direct financial support but I would certainly try to help in any way I can to get the support by those who appear to have the cash or perhaps with some city land, if that can be arranged. I was successful in arranging grants through both federal and provincial funding sources for Little Mountain Sports Complex and I believe a quality theatre would also benefit the community. I am in favour of these types of projects as these are the types of facilities that provide the favourable amenities that help attract new residents and business to Salmon Arm. I would assume your business plan shows the ability to operate and maintain the building on your own and would not require any city funding for operations. Let me know if you need any clarification.

Jim Kimmerly 10/17/11

Hi Jake!

Thank you for your email regarding a Centre for the Performing Arts facility for Salmon Arm and district. Through my past involvement in Rotary and the DIA, I am aware of the situation you have in trying to turn a vision into a reality. Most people I have spoken to over the years including myself are favourable to the idea but it always boils down to where does the funding come from. One of the things you can do to help give your project a stronger position is to prepare a business plan that details the costs and benefits of having this new venue in the community. So you would need to project both the social, cultural, entertainment, employment and revenue benefits to the community and to council. In other words you need to sell the idea and get a buy in. If you already have this prepared I would be happy to review it with you. Without this most people will likely see this as a good idea, but it costs too much. Sincerely; Jim

Nancy Cooper 10/18/11

Dear Jake & Shuswap Theatre members, players and attendees:

First of all I would like to say I was the Treasurer for the Folk Music Society for a few years and worked with Linda Tanaka. I know how difficult it is for the arts. I also recognized Linda's vision for bringing culture to Salmon Arm as very important and supported it as best I could. For as long as I have lived in Salmon Arm I have enjoyed Shuswap Theatre productions. As mayor, I would certainly give moral support a project building a new theatre.

I would definitely lend political support and advice on how to proceed. I would look for partnerships that would benefit both parties. I am thinking of a possible partnership with Okanagan College or the SA Folk Music Society or other groups. At this time I don't know if I could add city financial support as I would need to have a close look at the city budget.

Definitely! I would certainly support grant applications and possibly other financial initiatives. I am not too bad at helping with fund raising events. I would certainly look into what might be available. Would you consider other sites? Do you own the site where your current building is located? What are your plans for that building/property. Do you have a business plan I could review? (answered by Jake)

I heard of youth (connected to the DAC) who attended workshops at the Theatre. My understanding is they found this experience enriching. I could support this even more if we could show the public a range of uses for the new building. Hope this helps

Alan Harrison 10/21/11

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your questions regarding Shuswap Theatre. First of all, I believe the project is a valuable project for the community. My advice on how best to proceed, is to make the project a group effort. I see two possible routes: The first is in cooperation with the Downtown College Project. A performing arts theatre would be a natural fit. The second would be to

bring in the Salmar Community Association in as an active partner. I see the City's role as assisting with grant applications and lobbying upper levels of government for funds. I am open to making available municipal lands as has been done in other instances (curling/tennis etc.). My preference is to have the Theatre in the vicinity of the downtown. As planning for the theatre proceeds, a detailed business plan is necessary. Once a viable plan with partnerships, as described above are attained, I believe it would be appropriate to go to the taxpayers for financial support through referendum.
Thank you, Alan Harrison

Kevin Flynn 10/24/11

Hello Jake, all those on your Board, and all those interested in building a new Theatre for Salmon Arm. Thanks for your letter and the opportunity to provide you with my thoughts on your project and a new facility moving forward. As one of the three candidates for Mayor, and having been on Council for the past nine years, I am very familiar with your project and your desires to build a new theatre for our community. I will try to provide you with my thoughts and some answers to your questions. This is not a simple issue so the answer may be long. First of all, I understand your need and the issues with the old Theatre. There is no question that Salmon Arm would benefit from a new and improved theatre. I also acknowledge all that your group does for the community and realize that a successful thriving theatre in our community is very important to the social fabric, the entertainment of our citizens, and can contribute significantly to tourism and the economy of our region. Thus, I feel that this project is very important for Salmon Arm and the Shuswap region and must be done properly, prudently and managed to be fiscally responsible or it will not be successful. One of the first things I want to do if elected Mayor is to have Council, Staff and the Community go through a Strategic Planning process in order to develop a Community and Corporate Strategic plan. The research done with the new OCP and the Greenways Strategy will form a good basis for the Community Input into this process but I really think we need to take a step back and look at the big picture. We did talk about a Parks and Recreation Master Plan in the budget process last year to ensure future expenditures in this area are focused on need and proper prioritization. However, this was specific to Parks and Recreation. I do feel that our community has done a very good job in the past (new Arena, Fletcher Park and the Water Park, Field of Dreams, Squash Courts, Blackburn Park, Waterfront Walkway, Skateboard Park, etc) with regard to recreation, parks and trails. This has largely been done by community groups like yours who have a passion and work to make something a reality, then get community and political buy-in.

I PERSONALLY believe that Arts and Culture have not been given enough focus in the past and I think the Community needs to have the opportunity to be involved in the prioritization of limited resources (land, money, volunteer energy, time, etc) based on need, previous investment, etc. What I am basically trying to say is that I believe we have to look at the big picture before any other major projects are chosen. We need to prioritize as a community based on demand, need, age of existing facility's, community desires, etc. That having been said I would suggest that the Arts and Culture have typically taken a back seat in Salmon Arm to Sports/Recreation, Infrastructure, roads and other amenities and maybe it is time the community looked more closely at this. Perhaps the time is right to swing some investment, some grant prioritization, some municipal support (land, capital, etc) to the Arts or specifically to the Shuswap Theatre. I think the process of a Community and Corporate Strategic plan for Salmon Arm will help to determine if your new Facility IS a priority for the community like you truly believe that it is.

All this being said, I truly believe that any successful project will HAVE to be done with partnerships and may have to be multi-use... I don't know what those final partnerships will be, or who they will be with, but I don't think any partnerships should be overlooked in trying to build a viable, sustainable and successful new Theatre. Some of my possible thoughts on partnership (some examples off the top of my head, not limited to these and not a proponent of any one over the other) would be a possible downtown college and focusing programming in the college on some new Arts programs made possible by the new Theatre partnership, a joint venture with the Salmar, a venture in combination with the Okanagan library system. The partnership possibility's are numerous but at the

end of the day I understand your organization has some minimum needs for a new facility. As you well know, grant money is very difficult to get in this economic environment with Senior levels of Government running deficits and cutting programs to try to balance their budgets. We have worked very hard locally to try and minimize tax increases while providing services and infrastructure required and requested by our taxpayers. I am not sure you could be facing a more difficult economic time to be looking for money for what many may consider a WANT and not a NEED (I know in your groups mind it is a need). Further, I reviewed your business plan that was given to council and I have to say it was not nearly detailed enough, extremely simplistic, had no sensitivity analysis done on revenues, and really was not even close to where it needs to be before the community and the governments of the day could support and buy into a project. I am extremely concerned about future operating costs and I am not sure a stand-alone facility WITHOUT partnerships is viable. There needs to be more work done in this area moving forward.

I will finish by saying that it is extremely difficult to provide an easy answer to your letter. I cannot commit to saying that I think this is the next major project for Salmon Arm. I can say I don't know if it can happen WITHOUT partnerships. I do feel that the Arts have been given less money than they deserve in our community when balanced against recreation and sport. However, I think we need to have the community involved in some form of prioritization about this issue. I am concerned about future operating costs and long-term viability of a stand-alone Theatre but do recognize the benefit and needs of your organization. If the right lands could be identified, and it was proven that the project could be viable, then I could support moving forward to more serious planning. However, you must remember I am only 1 vote if I am successful in my bid for the Mayor's seat and more importantly, we need to get the community to speak to what they want as their priorities moving forward. Please call me if you need any clarification on anything I have verbosely dissected in my reply. Thanks for the opportunity. I truly believe that now is the time to ask the community if the Arts and Culture component of our proposed OCP needs to be made a bigger priority moving forward. I look forward to further discussions on this issue with the new Council chosen to lead our community over the next three years. Cheers. Kevin Flynn

Tim Lavery 10/25/11

Great questions as well as strategy! Here is my response. A new community theatre for Salmon Arm is an important community initiative that I believe in. I would strongly support partnering on grant applications as well as direct municipal financial contributions given a detailed business plan. While I would prefer a downtown location, ideally in conjunction with the DCC initiative, I also understand that there are differing timelines and acquisition issues. I am not against the city property by the Rec Centre as a location. I have always viewed this area as a secondary hub of the city. I do have a proviso to my support that I want to be clear about. For me, the funding of a focused economic plan for the city and the implementation of clear environmental policies for development are my top budget priorities for the next two budget cycles. You can find much more information about my overall *Action Plan* at www.timlavery.ca. Thanks for asking. Ciao Tim

Tom Sakamoto 10/27/11

In response to your e-mail on October 16th 2011.

I am in strong support of the arts: fine art, dance, music, and of course, theater. I can see a new Theatre [recte] as a valuable asset to this community. We ran a small drama camp for youth here in Salmon Arm for several years recently and believe in the promotion of endeavours to support theatre, to support youth, to support the arts.

We built a new beautiful City Hall here. I would love to see a facility of the same caliber and attractiveness in Salmon Arm supporting the arts. If a reasonable proposal for a new theatre came to the table, as a city councillor, I would be in support of it.

Sincerely, Tom Sakamoto