

Options needed after government denies funding for McMeeken replacement

By **Content Team** - September 15, 2020



The City council has asked for staff to come back with options for funding the replacement of the W.J. McMeeken arena.

During the council meeting on September 14, 2020 council members expressed their disappointment and discussed the arena in depth. The discussion revolved around the deteriorating condition of the arena and the provincial decision not to move forward with their application.



In his comments Ward five councillor Corey Gardi believes all the councillors felt the decision let our community down.

"We were all disappointed by the decision of the province not to approve this project to be sent to the federal government to see if we could access to the funds that we asked for," said Gardi. "I'm very confident had the Province actually selected this to go forward we would have had as good a chance as any through the federal government and its criteria."

Matt Shoemaker who sits on the twin-pad committee with Gardi and represents ward three was hesitant to call the McMeeken a health and safety risk but is concerned about using it going forward.

"Is it fair to say the place (McMeeken) is or is very close to being a health and safety risk?" asked Shoemaker of city staff.

Malcolm White the city chief administration officer responded they would not operate the facility with any health and safety risks, but it is getting more and more difficult to operate it without any risks. White said Shoemaker was referring to the carbon monoxide leak in 2017 which hospitalized over 70 people. He noted the facility is beyond its serviceable life at this point, but they are taking some steps to extend the lifespan of the facility.

There are currently no other significant sources of funding to help the city with the projected 27.7-million-dollar project.

The report is due back in front of council on October 26, 2020.

By: Dan Gray

Content Team

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