

## Further amendments required for bylaw: Geremia

By Alan Hustak  
Grasslands News

Community activist Noel Geremia admits some improvements have been made to Fort Qu’Appelle’s controversial business license bylaw but insists that further amendments have to be made before it is passed.

“It needs more work. My message is to meet with the business owners and gather feedback from these important community stakeholders,” he suggested.

Geremia spearheaded a petition to force a referendum on the issue but failed to get the required number of signatures. He now wants council to call a public meeting or provide mechanisms for feedback to determine “what businesses want, what their needs truly are.”

He began his presentation to council by stating that many of the town’s businesspeople “are reluctant to get political or vocal because they fear repercussions or a backlash.”

Councillor Darren Carroll interrupted him by demanding to know “What backlash would there be? Just who do you represent? Is it the bylaw itself, or is it the dollars and cents that is the problem? Is it your impression of the bylaw (that you object to) or how it was presented?” Carroll added that of the 85 businesses polled during council’s door-to-door canvass about the proposed business license, only four objected.

“There are a number of businesses

who support us, but they are afraid to sign our petition publicly because some of them have contracts with the town. They are afraid of the backlash,” Geremia replied.

Geremia further argued that because the mill rate for businesses stands at 8.6 per cent, (2.5 per cent higher than the assessment for property owners) businesses are already paying more than their fair share. He pointed out the anomalies in the fee schedule charged for licensing various services and suggested that many businesses could save on property taxes and rent by locating out of town thereby “saving on the headaches” of having to buy development and building permits.

“Do you really think Valley Bakery or Grainger’s Flower shop will move to Fort San or B-Say-Tah because of a business license? Where are they going to go?” Councillor Connie Wowchuk scoffed at the suggestion.

Geremia arrived after Thursday’s council meeting was already underway, but Mayor Lagace allowed him to speak.

His allotted 15 minutes were, however, often interrupted by him having to answer questions from council even before his presentation was over. Although Mayor Lagace extended the submission for an extra 5 or 6 minutes, Geremia complained afterwards, “They threw curve balls at me, so I never got to finish what I had to say”. He summed up his concerns by saying the consequences of the revised bylaw as written could still mean



Noel Geremia addresses Fort Qu’Appelle council at a recent meeting.

a tax on business activities.

“A business is a business, is a business. How they go about selling their products or what industry they are in should have nothing to do with how their fees or license is calculated. Council still needs to decide whether it is licensing businesses or charging fees based on business activity.”

**Community Plan Amended**

Council has given third reading to two related bylaws that amend Fort Qu’Appelle’s Official Community Plan and Zoning Bylaw. The amendments to Bylaw (17-2022) clarify the requirements for building on hazardous land and regulates the development of any property in

the flood plain. It also requires the town to consult with the Prairie Valley School Division before it selects sites for any new schools that may be built.

Changes to the Zoning Bylaw (18-2022) maps out more clearly environmentally sensitive property along the flood plain of any “watercourse or waterbody”

**Mission Bay Clean-up Tabled**

Council has tabled a request from Mission Bay residents to clean up the debris and level the beach area in their neighbourhood along the west shore of Mission Lake. The residents had applied to the Water Security Agency for an aquatic habitat protection permit in order to level the beach and install docks.

However, the Calling Lakes Planning Commission wants the area maintained as an environmental preserve. “It appears that residents have gone ahead and installed docks without a permit or permission from the town,” says Chief Administration Officer Cheryl Martens. “The area is being inspected by an environmental officer with the water security agency and we are waiting for an update on the agency’s findings before we approve or deny any request.”

**Audit Delayed**

Because the town has engaged a new auditor which is still reviewing the 2021 financial statements, they have asked for an extension to complete the 2022 audit. The work should be available as early as September.

## “QUIET ON THE SET” - Movie filmed in Qu’Appelle

By Sarah Pacio  
Grasslands News

“Emma! Look out!” shouted actor Douglas Smith while a man dressed as a zombie approached the Domo gas station in Qu’Appelle on Monday morning. Shots were heard, followed by the director’s voice saying, “Cut! That was really good.”

Principal photography for a big budget film Die Alone is underway in the Qu’Appelle valley area. It is set in an apocalyptic time and depicts the experiences of Ethan (Douglas Smith) as he searches for his girlfriend, played by Kimberly-Sue Murray. The cast also includes familiar individuals like Carrie-Anne Moss, famous for her role as Trinity in The Matrix, and Frank Grillo, who played Brock Rumlow in Captain America: The Winter Soldier.

The film is written and directed by Saskatoon native Lowell Dean, described as the master of “over the top schlock cinema,” such as Wolfcop.

“I was inspired by the idea of telling a love story about how far people will go for the people they care about, especially in really, really tough times,” Dean told Grasslands News. “This film really forces people to confront how hard it is to survive and stay together.” Dean has shot four films in Saskatchewan, but says this movie “being well over \$5-million, couldn’t have been made here two years ago. “We’re here because the government restored its film production grant money and contributed \$2.1 million.” he says.

The grant covers Saskatchewan labour, goods and services which has helped cover production costs. About 100 people who work in Saskatchewan’s film industry are employed in the shoot.

Although much of the recording and other work will be completed in Regina, Dean is excited for an opportunity to showcase the Qu’Appelle Valley area interna-

tionally since it is not a region typically seen on the big screen. “We were looking for some nice cabin country and some lakes, and we found one cabin in particular near Fort Qu’Appelle that had a perfect rustic look,” Dean explained.

Filming will continue until mid-July, followed by post-work such as editing, sound mixing, visual effects, and other necessary production aspects, which will all be completed in Saskatchewan. A release date for Die Alone is expected in 2024.

**Director’s idea**

An actor aims a gun while director Lowell Dean (centre) explains his vision for a scene being filmed in front of the gas station in Qu’Appelle.



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**Our team will be on vacation from July 24 to August 7, 2023**

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**July 21 Edition**  
Tuesday, July 15 at 12 noon

**August 11 Edition**  
Tuesday, Aug. 8 at 12 noon

The Melville Advance, Fort Qu’Appelle Times, Whitewood-Grenfell Herald-Sun, Kipling Clipper and Indian Head-Wolseley News

