

- YOUR WORSHIP, MEMBERS OF COUNCIL AND CITY STAFF

MY NAME IS NANCY BIGELOW AND I REPRESENT THE SPRINGWATER PARK FOUNDATION. OUR MEMBERS AND OUR MANY SUPPORTERS' MISSION IS TO RESTORE SPRINGWATER PARK TO OPERATIONAL STATUS WITH NOT ONE CENT OF ADDITIONAL COST TO THE TAXPAYERS.

SPRINGWATER PARK WAS DESIGNATED NON OPERATIONAL OVER 15 MONTHS AGO. AS TIME MARCHES ON WE HAVE NO TIME TO LOSE IN REOPENING THIS MAGNIFICENT PARKLAND WHILE IT IS STILL ABLE TO BE MAINTAINED.

THE CITY OF BARRIE IS IN THE PRIME CATCHMENT AREA FOR SPRINGWATER PARK VISITORS. YOUR RESIDENTS REGULARLY VISIT THIS PARK FOR THEIR REQUISITE DOSE OF NATURE AND TO SPEND QUALITY TIME WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS. CLEARLY, THE CITIZENS OF BARRIE CONSIDER SPRINGWATER PARK "THEIR PARK". THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 22 KM OF BIKE OR WALKING TRAILS WHICH ALSO SERVE AS SKI AND SNOWSHOE TRAILS IN THE WINTER. THERE ARE COVERED PAVILIONS AND NUMEROUS AREAS FOR FAMILY REUNIONS, SCHOOL PICNICS, OR SIMPLY SOME QUIET REFLECTION TIME. THERE ARE STREAMS AND PONDS AND WILDFLOWERS AND WILDLIFE – THE PERFECT GET-AWAY! SPRINGWATER IS UNDENIABLY A JEWEL IN THE CROWN OF SIMCOE COUNTY.

TO DATE THE MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES HAS ONLY HAD ONE SERIOUS GROUP STEP FORWARD TO NEGOTIATE A PARTNERSHIP PLAN WITH THEM – THAT BEING THE BEAUSOLEIL FIRST NATIONS BAND FROM CHRISTIAN ISLAND AND THEY POTENTIALLY PLAN TO DEVELOP A NATIVE LEARNING CENTRE ON THIS PROPERTY. PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT WE HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH A PORTION OF THE PARK BEING USED FOR THIS PURPOSE. IN FACT, WE ARE OPTIMISTIC THAT, PROPERLY ADMINSTRATED, THIS COULD BE A GREAT TOURISM DRAW FOR

THE AREA. HOWEVER, WE WOULD STRONGLY URGE THAT WE MAINTAIN THE STATUS OF THIS PARK AS OPERATIONAL FOR ALL PERSONS INTERESTED IN THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF THIS OPEN SPACE.

IN 2012, TEN ONTARIO PROVINCIAL PARKS WERE RENDERED NON OPERATIONAL BY THE MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN A COST SAVING EFFORT FOR THAT MINISTRY. TO DATE, FIVE OF THESE PARKS HAVE BEEN REOPENED BY AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THEIR LOCAL MUNICIPALITIES AND THE MNR CITING THAT THE OPERATION OF EACH PARK WAS VITAL TO THEIR REVENUE STREAM BY THE SPIN-OFF EFFECT OF BRINGING VACATIONERS/CONSUMERS INTO THE AREA. I SUGGEST THAT WITH THE PROPER MAINTENANCE, MANAGEMENT AND PROMOTION OF SPRINGWATER PARK, THE CITY OF BARRIE WILL ENCOUNTER THE SAME SITUATION. BUT WE NEED TO ACT QUICKLY. SPRINGWATER IS FAST BECOMING A WASTELAND. THE GRASS IN MANY AREAS HAS NOT BEEN CUT SO FAR THIS YEAR AND IT LOOKS LIKE A HAYFIELD. DUE TO A LACK OF REGULAR REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE OVER THE PAST 5 YEARS OR SO AND NO MONITORING OF THE GATE RECEIPTS, SPRINGWATER RAN A DEFICIT OF JUST OVER \$100,000.00 IN ITS FINAL YEAR OF OPERATION. THAT DEFICIT ALSO INCLUDED THE CARE AND FEEDING OF THE ANIMALS THAT WERE HOUSED IN ZOO-LIKE CONDITIONS THERE. THE ANIMALS HAVE BEEN REMOVED TO BETTER FACILITIES IN MUSKOKA SO THAT WILL GREATLY REDUCE THE FUNDS NEEDED TO RUN THE PARK.

THERE IS A CLEAR NEED FOR SOME CAPITAL EXPENDITURES AT THE PARK AS THE BUILDINGS ARE SHOWING THE TEST OF TIME. THIS CAN BE RESOLVED IN A 10 TO 20 YEAR PLAN BUT NEEDS TO BE STARTED IMMEDIATELY BEFORE THERE IS ANY MORE DECAY OR VANDALISM IN THIS UNSUPERVISED AREA.

- THE SPRINGWATER PARK FOUNDATION HAS THE MORAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF MANY HIGH PROFILE BUSINESS OWNERS IN AND AROUND BARRIE.
- WE HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE MANY SERVICE CLUBS IN BARRIE AND SPRINGWATER TOWNSHIP.
- WE HAVE MANY “IN KIND” DONATIONS, i.e. THE BARRIE AND DISTRICT HUNTERS AND ANGLERS HAVE COMMITTED THEIR MEMBERSHIP TO REJUVENATING THE MAIN POND AND RESTORING THE WATER WHEEL THAT WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE.
- WE HAVE OVER \$100,000.00 IN A BANK ACCOUNT READY TO COVER ANY OPERATING DEFICITS THAT MAY BE INCURRED WHILE RE-ESTABLISHING SPRINGWATER AS OPERATIONAL. WE STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT THE PARK WILL BE SELF-SUSTAINING WITHIN THREE YEARS OF RESTORED OPERATION. IF NOT, A PROMINENT LOCAL BUSINESS OWNER HAS STEPPED FORWARD TO GUARANTEE THAT HE WILL COVER ANY RESIDUAL SHORTFALL.
- THE COUNTY OF SIMCOE AND SPRINGWATER TOWNSHIP HAVE BEEN AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE IN CONTACT WITH THE MNR TO SHOW THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE RE-OPENING OF THE PARK. THE TOWNSHIP OF SPRINGWATER HAS SET ASIDE \$10,000.00 IN THE EVENT THAT IT IS NEEDED TO OPEN SPRINGWATER PARK.
- **THE SPRINGWATER PARK FOUNDATION IS COMMITTED TO SEEING THIS PARK OPERATED WITHOUT COSTING THE TAXPAYERS ONE CENT!!!!**

### **WHAT CAN THE CITY OF BARRIE DO?**

THE CITY OF BARRIE NEEDS TO STEP FORWARD AND WRITE TO THE MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES **IMMEDIATELY** TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR THE RE-OPENING OF SPRINGWATER PARK. BARRIE NEEDS TO HAVE A REPRESENTATIVE AT THE TABLE TO HAVE INPUT INTO THE FUTURE OF THIS PARKLAND. THERE IS SOME URGENCY TO THIS, AS WITHOUT SHOWING YOUR SUPPORT TO THE MINISTER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, I AM AFRAID THAT THE CITY OF BARRIE WILL BE LEFT OUT OF

THE NEGOTIATION PROCESS AS THE MNR CONTINUES THEIR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PEOPLE OF THE FIRST NATIONS.

ULTIMATELY IT COULD BE A CONSIDERATION FOR THE CITY TO ACT UPON A PROPOSAL MADE BY THE CITY TO PROVIDE “IN KIND” SUPPORT FOR THE SUMMER AND WINTER GROUNDS’ MAINTENANCE OF THE PARK IN RETURN FOR STORAGE FACILITIES FOR THEIR MAINTENANCE EQUIPMENT ON PARK PROPERTY. OF COURSE, THIS IS A WIN – WIN SITUATION WITH THE JUXTAPOSITION OF THE SOCCER/BASEBALL FIELDS ACROSS THE HIGHWAY.

FIRST THINGS FIRST! THE MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES NEEDS TO KNOW IMMEDIATELY THAT THE CITY OF BARRIE SUPPORTS THE RE-OPENING OF SPRINGWATER PARK AND THAT YOU HAVE AN INTEREST IN BEING A PART OF THE NEGOTIATIONS SURROUNDING THE FUTURE OF THIS GREAT LOCAL RESOURCE.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.