

EXHIBIT NO. H-046
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Received by: Deke Crow
(Commission Secretary)

CEC Hearing – Regarding Sio Silica Extraction Process License

March 20, 2023

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the CEC Commission, for this opportunity to present my thoughts concerning the Sio Silica Extraction Process and the issuing of the proposed 4-year license for this.

As I mentioned, my name is Rusty Gawluk and my wife and I live in East Braintree, MB. I will clearly state that I am neither an accredited engineer nor scientist.

We had our water well drilled in 2011 by Friesen Drillers and were fortunate to have a flowing (artesian) well with 5 GPM recovery and, after an analysis by ALS in Winnipeg, MB, learned that the water was clear and well within recommended levels for drinking and was soft enough that there has never been a need for a water softener.

I tell you this so you can understand that I have a real interest in the proposed extraction process and the stated risks regarding water quantity and quality. I, along with every “rational thinking person” do not want to jeopardise our water.

Over the past 2 weeks I have had the opportunity to attend each day of the CEC Hearings regarding this extraction process. During these days, I have heard:

1. Opening comments by proponent and the other various panels.
2. Presentation by Sio Silica describing:
 - a. Company overview
 - b. The extraction processes.
 - c. Who and how their evidence will be presented.

I have heard,

3. Presentations from each of the challenging panels
 - a. Their affiliations
 - b. Their questioning teams.

I have heard,

4. Sio Silica's presentation of Geotechnical and Hydrogeological data and evidence.

I have heard,

5. Each Participant panel's questions to these presentations

I have heard,

6. Each Participant panel's presentations
 - a. Their evidence of how this process should be done or not done.

I have heard,

7. Questions from the Sio Silica team regarding the challenging panel's presentation evidence.

I find it absolutely amazing how much thought, calculations and considerations has gone into this matter from both sides. This research is certainly extensive, and I believe, cover all of the topics and concerns of us residents who are looking for our water and environment to be protected.

Some of the similarities that I have heard during these days of testimony and questions are:

1. Participant scientists and engineers - have agreed to, or endorsed a significant amount of the Stantec and Aecom modeling data and processes.
2. I have heard - repeated recommendations for additional testing to confirm extraction process results. Specifically testing of the cluster of wells regarding:
 - a. Aquifer interaction and mixing
 - b. Cavity degradation or unexpected amount of collapse and side wall settling.
3. I have heard repeated recommendations for - Ongoing monitoring of the process:
 - a. watching for the process to go as planned.
 - i. Monitoring water quality
 - ii. Monitoring settling in the cavities (rooms)

4. I have heard recommendations for - Opportunity for independent input throughout the project.
5. I have heard recommendations for - Developing plans to deal with:
 - a. If something goes wrong – corrective measures.
 - b. Well abandonment (closed) plan.
 - c. Plans to deal with the waste rock.
 - d. Closure plan.

I want to note that, at different times during the testimonies, I have heard Sio Silica team talk about at least some of the intended plans such as the:

TARP – Targeted Action Response Plan. They advise that although it isn't completely developed, the TARP will be used to react to any situations that arise the are outside the planned process or normal levels.

1. I heard that Sio has Demonstrated a willingness to develop the plans suggested and identified that these types of plans are normally developed after the license is issued and is why they are not currently developed.
2. I heard that there is already a plan to have continuous monitoring of the water quantity and quality.
3. I heard that there is a plan to put the "STOP" button in the hands of an independent entity.
 - a. The ability to stop the project if something even appears to be wrong will be controlled by persons outside of Sio.

There has been much more testimony, other than what I have listed but I believe these points are a huge part of the consideration for the issuing of the license to Sio Silica.

I also consider the fact that in the past 2 weeks of testimony, **not one of the Participant groups or witnesses** (scientist or engineer or academic) has stated that this process will not work!

I have heard recommendations.

I have heard suggestions.

But I have not heard that **"THIS WILL NOT WORK"**.

In generations past there were times when HARD CHOICES had to be made for the good of the many.

Imagine the courage it took to sign up to cross the ocean and fight for freedom in a foreign land so that this type of battle or war didn't come to our country.

Imagine the courage it took to sit in the first rocket that carried a human into space. Also, the crossed fingers of the staff in the construction divisions and in the command center that were responsible for doing the tasks that could make this possible, or not.

Imagine the courage of the people that left their homeland to come to this country looking for a better life.

Imagine the courage of our Indigenous communities that have watched all this change come to their homes and must try to co-exist with so many different cultures and ways of life, and accelerated rate of progress that was not present before we came here.

Over the past 10 or 20 years I have heard a real increase of the term "It Is My Right". It seems that as a society each time we feel the need to justify our belief or actions, we say it is our right.

I also see that when one says "this is my right", it usually has a negative impact on another's rights.

I think that it is also important for each us to realize and agree that we are guilty of a level of HYPOCRACY. For those who oppose this process because of possible damage to the water and environment, I ask:

How did you get here today?

Did you drive?

Was the vehicle electric, gas, deisel?

How much energy was spent to build it.

How many of you have smart phones or lap tops or smart TVs?

I could go on, but you get my point.

The comedian George Carlin said in one of his monologues – If you drive faster than me – you are a maniac and if you drive slower than me – you are an idiot.

I suspect that the majority of people use this analysis in most things they consider.

My way is good, and all others are wrong.

How about **“Our Responsibility”**? I don’t seem to hear that near as often.

How about our responsibility to contribute to the success of our world and all that share it?

I mention this topic because I understand that the sand that is being sought will have a primary use in the solar industry - aimed at reducing **Greenhouse Gas** and **reducing the dependence on fossil fuels**.

To me that fact makes this a **Worldwide** issue and not just a Southeast Manitoba issue.

I am not saying we need to through caution to the wind and get the sand out of the ground post haste!

I am suggesting that in our decision we need to add the **health and future of our planet into the equation**.

Several have voiced concern for future generations and their ability to use this land and water.

To that belief, I will add that if we don’t do all we can “reasonably do” to reduce **Climate Change** and **Global Warming**, we may not have much of a future for those generations anyway.

Already many city communities have the wearing of mask as commonplace due to the air pollution.

While on trips to Los Angeles, I have experienced, that on a calm day you can actually see the air and feel the burning in your eyes.

Yes, I agree that there will be sacrifice connected to the mining of this sand, but is the **alternative** of not contributing **this sand** to the fight against the **destruction of our climate** not worth it?

With the consideration of the numerous recommendations and suggestions made to monitor and improve this process, I believe that Sio silica has put forth enough information and a case, that has earned the opportunity to start this project in a manner that will allow for reaction to any challenges that show themselves.

I suggest that, with conditions, the CEC recommend the issuing of the license for the first 4-year term.

Thank you,

Rusty Gawluk

East Braintree, MB

