

## **Waldhof Recreation Committee**

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August 13, 2024

Mr. Greg Rickford  
Constituency Office  
Unit 2 – 439 Government St.  
Dryden, ON P8N 2P4

Dear Mr. Rickford,

We are writing this letter on behalf of the Hamlet of Waldhof in the township of Mutrie, Ontario in regards to the Waldhof Community Hall.

Our Hamlet is located 33 km west of Dryden and 8 km east of Vermilion Bay.

The original hall was built by the Settlers on land donated from the Euler family in 1920.

The present Hall was built in 1940 after the original hall burned down. The Hall has always been a large part of our community. For many years it was used for dances, showing movies, dinners, weddings, funerals and community events and is still used to this day.

The reason we are writing this letter is because we as a community want to have ownership of the hall turned over to the Community of Waldhof and the Waldhof Recreation Committee be the caretaker of the hall with the committee being made up of members of the community, which is what is being done right now.

Somehow in 1927 the property and the hall became patent land to the Public School Board of School Section Number One. In 1969 the land title, which included the hall and the property, was changed to the Dryden District School Board (DDSB). When it was part of the DDSB the Waldhof Hall was part of the school board's budget, and it was financially supported through a portion of the school taxes collected to be sent to the school board of the time. At that time the Waldhof Ladies Guild were the caretakers, and they would make a budget for the upkeep of the hall. When Keewatin Patricia District School Board (KPDSB) was formed the Waldhof Hall was still part of the school board's budget. It seems that the KPDSB discontinued financially supporting the Waldhof Hall in and around 2001. That seems to be the last correspondence received.

When the financial assistance received from KPDSB was discontinued it became the sole responsibility of the Waldhof Ladies Guild to financially support the upkeep and maintenance of the building including purchasing insurance for the building.

Through the years the Waldhof Ladies Guild has continued to financially maintain the hall including upgrades to the building and all the utilities. The Waldhof Ladies Guild has replaced the roof, the windows, a new propane furnace and maintenance and some upgrades to the water system which we were able to do with generous donations from community members.

In 2022 a seasonal resident approached the Waldhof Ladies Guild to donate money to help do substantial renovations to the hall to help modernize it. So, a title search was done to find out who the registered owners were before we put any more money into the hall. That is when we found out that it was registered to the Dryden District School Board, and the KPDSB never changed the title to reflect the correct school board. So, the Waldhof Ladies Guild wrote a letter to KPDSB to inquire about purchasing the property for \$1.00 seeing as they have not had any contact with the property in years. We received a letter back from KPDSB about the property, that they did not realize that they owned, which also included correspondence from KPDSB's lawyers, Cheadles Lawyers and Trademark Agents, and we were told that we would not be able to purchase it for a \$1.00, that there was a process that had to be followed based on the Ontario Regulation 444/98. We were told that it would have to be declared as a surplus property first and then it would have to go through all the steps in ON 444/98 and if none of the Agencies listed in the regulation decided not to purchase the property then KPDSB would be able to put it up for sale at Fair Market Value. At that time, we were in contact with Richard Finley, Superintendent of Business for KPDSB.

On May 30, 2023 our community members had a meeting with KPDSB representatives in regards to the Hall and we were told that their hands were tied to what they are able to do with surplus property due to ON 444/98 and suggested that we approach you as our MPP so we are reaching out to you Mr. Rickford hoping that there is a way that you and your office would be able to help our community become the legal owners of Our Community Hall and have it continue to be a part of our community without any restrictions on what we can do with it and how we use it.

For your information, if you take a drive around the area, within a 50km radius of Waldhof there are ten small communities with a built-up population. Of those ten communities eight of them had their own community halls through the years. Now in the year 2024 out of those ten communities there are only five with ownership and operation of their community halls.

Community Halls are an integral part of communities, they are the hub and focal point of their community where members hold events and meetings and are used as gathering spots for community emergencies. We feel that we as a community are already maintaining the hall, so

it is only fair that the KPDSB find a way to officially transfer ownership of the hall to the Community of Waldhof without cost as we as a community have already put in thousands of dollars into it to keep the doors open without any financial help from KPDSB in more than 20 years.

We would be interested in setting up a meeting with you to be able to discuss how we can proceed to make the Waldhof Community Hall a permanent asset to our community without any hindrances on what we can do to maintain it.

Sincerely,

**Laurie Huffman**

On Behalf of the  
Waldhof Recreation Committee