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**From:** Dave Welch [REDACTED] >

**Sent:** Tuesday, December 5, 2023 11:05 PM

**To:** Councillor Vaughan <[mvaughan@southhuron.ca](mailto:mvaughan@southhuron.ca)>; Councillor Neeb <[aneeb@southhuron.ca](mailto:aneeb@southhuron.ca)>; Councillor McLeod-Haggitt <[wmcleod-haggitt@southhuron.ca](mailto:wmcleod-haggitt@southhuron.ca)>; Councillor Oke <[toke@southhuron.ca](mailto:toke@southhuron.ca)>; Deputy Mayor Dietrich <[jdietrich@southhuron.ca](mailto:jdietrich@southhuron.ca)>; Councillor Dietrich <[mdietrich@southhuron.ca](mailto:mdietrich@southhuron.ca)>; Mayor Finch <[gfinch@southhuron.ca](mailto:gfinch@southhuron.ca)>

**Subject:** Re: Committee of the Whole concerning Grand Bend area Sewer Trunk proposal

Hello Councillors,

In advance of your upcoming Committee of the Whole Meeting December 6, which I plan to attend, I would like to remind councillors and staff that residents of South Huron have been subjected to a large increase in our quarterly utilities bills over the last several years. On average, since moving to South Huron in 2020, our own two-person household bill has increased by approximately 30 percent. The water and sewer consumption in our household has remained the same. Those are costs that we are able to control, by practicing responsible water conservation methods. But in this case, we are dealing with cost increases that, as residents, we seem to have no control over: increased charges for water and sewage base rates, and infrastructure debt charges. In my opinion, these increases have never been adequately explained to residents, especially those of us who have moved to this community since the beginning of the Covid pandemic. And thanks to a bylaw that was passed in September 2021, we are amid a three-year schedule of payment increases, the next one to take place in January 2024. I believe it is a reasonable opinion to say we have reached the limit of these financial increases.

In general, I am not a citizen who is opposed to infrastructure improvements, if warranted. In the case of our corner of South Huron, we have been fed a confusing series of scenarios about whether the water and sewage infrastructure is able to handle an increase in housing in the Port Blake planning area. Thanks to a dubious business decision made by the owners of Oakwood Resort, we are faced with dealing with a developer, Tridon, who has been given permission to purchase land that was zoned for recreational use, intending to build a substantial housing project. If the developer has the need for water and sewer infrastructure improvements, then they must pay for it. I have not seen any documentation presented by the municipality that says Tridon requires, or has requested, any participation by South Huron in the financing of such improvements. Seeing as they are marketing houses in the range of \$900,000, it would not take long for them to raise the funding for water and sewage improvements as required. In the words of a few South Huron councillors, "development pays for the development".

As for future developments in the Port Blake Planning area, there appears to be nothing definite on the horizon, and there is no evidence of even an official plan for the area, a fact

that our Ward 1 councillor, Marissa Vaughn has said on several occasions. And please keep in mind, any increase in population to this part of South Huron, will primarily benefit the businesses of Lambton Shores and Lambton County. It is my opinion that South Huron council should be focused on developing the Exeter area, to increase its importance as a regional commercial and residential hub.

In conclusion, I join many of my fellow residents of South Huron, particularly the Grand Cove community, in requesting that council make a responsible decision in your Committee of the Whole meeting and subsequent discussions on this important matter.

Thank you for your time,

**David Welch**

**Concord Drive, South Huron**

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**Concord Drive, South Huron**