

10/28/2022

Candidate for Mayor Platform of Bonnie Swift

Welcome to Tantramar!

Fighting for Open Government

*"Those that have nothing to hide, hide nothing" ~
Phil McGraw*

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The Mayoral Candidate Platform of Bonnie Swift

Who is Bonnie Swift? My Story

I am a small-town girl that grew up in Dorchester in a working-class family of six kids. I went to high school in Sackville. When I turned 18 I left for Calgary and worked in the Banff Springs Hotel so I could raise money for college. My first college diploma was in Chemical Technology from the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, then 2 years later I attended the University of Calgary to get my degree in Civil engineering, where I specialized in water resources and environmental engineering. It's also where I met my husband, who is also an engineer. In 1999 after working for a large firm by the name of Stantec I decided it was time to develop my own engineering firm. I thus started Pioneer Land and Environmental. Over 8 years, my partners and I grew it to a \$25 million dollar land acquisition, environmental engineering, and geosciences consulting firm with 7 offices across western Canada. I achieved this while also obtaining my MBA from Royal Roads University.

In 2008, just after the housing market crash wreaked havoc on the markets and many businesses, we decided it was time to sell. After the sale I worked for a few years as VP Environment and Geosciences for a large geomatics engineering company called Focus Corporation. However, my goal was always to make it back home, so I moved back east to Sackville in 2010. I worked for the Town of Sackville as their Economic Director from 2010-2012. Shortly after I obtained my Chartered Professional Accounting (CPA) designation and operated my own Management Consulting firm, The Swift Group Inc.

I love volunteering in my community it provides a sense of belonging. One of my passions is wildlife rehabilitation. In 2004, I became a VP for the Calgary Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre. When I moved home I was excited to find the Atlantic Wildlife Institute where I also volunteered on proposals and grants. I am currently volunteering as the President of the Westmorland Historical Society (WHS). With the WHS I manage the local museums and historical properties in Dorchester, along with the society's Trust fund. Our local culture and history are very important to me.

In Calgary I also volunteered as Environmental Chairperson for the International Rights of Way Association (IRWA). This organization is a global organization of resolute professionals within the right of way industry. The IRWA's purpose is to improve people's quality of life through infrastructure development. My best experience with the IRWA was teaching the EIA development process to the people of Iqaluit.

Government Transparency

"Those that have nothing to hide, hide nothing" ~ Phil McGraw

A transparent government keeps nothing from the public but what they are legally required to. One of the biggest complaints I hear is there is a lack of transparency in our current municipal government of Sackville. Yet, the taxpayers continue to foot the bill for investigations, outside consulting firms and

lawyers. However, many times the citizens still don't know all the reasons, the issues that led up to it, or outcome or the recommendations or even the costs involved.

As Mayor, I promise to share with you any information I legally can share. However, hopefully you will not need it because the only people benefiting from this current closed off situation are the consultants and lawyers. I want that to stop.

The other thing I hear from the citizens is that there seems to be a lot of internal conflicts. There is always an investigation going on. This begs the question: What is the cause of these conflicts, a toxic culture, poor communication? These conflicts are a sign of dysfunction and any dysfunction in local government is a problem. Why? Because it's the citizens who suffer. They should not be paying for dysfunction or the lack of good conflict resolution. If the only answer to any conflict is to censure other council members, or silence whistle blowers, or to walk out during significant processes, the taxpayer's time and money is being wasted. I also believe if there is even the possible *appearance* of a conflict of interest, needs to be declared. The taxpayers will save a lot of money on investigations to clear your name and you yourself will avoid a whole lot of unnecessary humiliation.

As Mayor no whistleblowers will ever be silenced. I will not walk out on serious processes or negotiations. If I did those things as an experienced businesswoman in the private sector I know I'd be out of business pretty fast. I also believe the press should have adequate access to information.

Tantramar Moving Forward

I feel our future elected council members should not be focusing on the past and start focusing externally and outwardly to our future, as we have way bigger issues to face. The amalgamation will be a huge undertaking and will take strong negotiation skills, a steady hand, an open mind and most of all transparency. Grumbling about it, resenting it, walking out on it, and grandstanding is a waste of time. It's over and it's happening. Let's buckle up and get it done. Hopefully, the new council will bring in these qualities, but at the end of the day it is up to you. You as citizens must vote for those people. If the same old same old isn't working for you, well you now have a choice. Remember that.

My Working Style and Culture

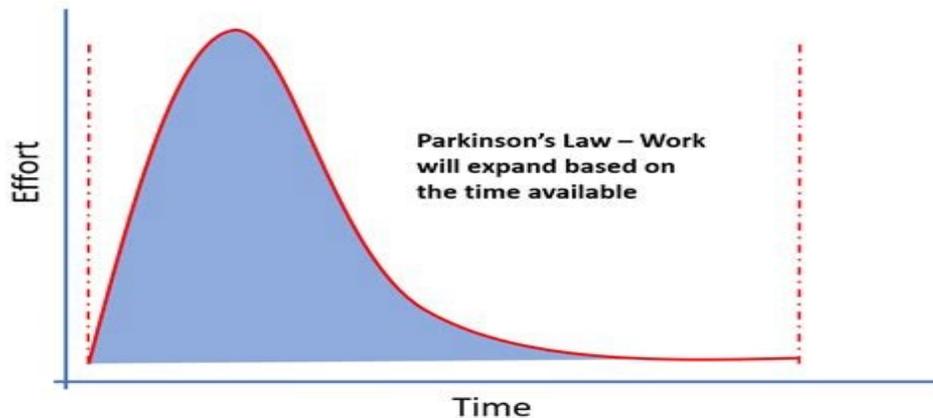
I have a ENTJ Myers Briggs personality. This type is referred to as "The Commander." My type is rare, only 3% of the population has it and it is exceedingly rare in women (1.5%). This type makes me notoriously strategic, blunt, honest but also tactful. I like finding problems and fixing them. I am a "give me all the facts so we can make a wise decision" type of person. I do lack the sugar coating of most politicians but that has made me a strategic and honest leader. I do not really see myself as a politician. I am an engineer; I am a problem solver. Give me a problem and I will try to solve it. I was just born that way. Maybe this is what we need in our politicians! For more on ENTJ personalities, please see the notes at the end of this platform.

I am vehemently against cancel culture. It is pure meanness in the guise of virtue but there is no virtue in cancelling someone's paycheck or medical benefits because of something they said that you deemed

inappropriate. “Oh, they broke the code let’s crucify them,” would never happen with me. Over the years several council members have said things that others may have deemed inappropriate or even outside of the code of conduct, but there are better ways to resolve this. Cancel culture is dangerous. Why? because it costs taxpayers money, lots of money, as there are always outside investigations and outside consultants needed, as every accusation requires them. So, accuse wisely please. Here is a suggestion: any time you think of accusing, ask yourself first” Is it necessary, and could that consulting money go to better use in our community?”

I also think there nothing worse than groupthink. Groupthink eliminates individuality and creativeness from the decision-making process. It can also undermine the ethics of the group resulting in substandard decisions with long-ranging poor outcomes for those citizens impacted by it.

I am a firm believer in Parkinson’s Law. It is all about efficiency. It is the concept that work expands with the time allotted. That extra time costs money. You get can more done when given less time and money to complete a project.



I also believe in diversity of thought, and I believe in free speech...So please speak freely!

Citizen Engagement

“When you want to help the people, you tell them the truth. When you want to help yourself, you tell them only what they want to hear.” ~ Thomas Sowell.

I believe in telling people the truth and I believe the citizens should be engaged in in the development process. I also believe their representatives should be well informed. It’s important to find out the details yourself, since you as an elected municipal body are the first line of defense when it comes protecting the environment, welfare and safety of the community. Relying on other levels of government does not always work, they don’t know your community as well as you do. I believe in finding out everything you can about a project. Remember that we are always representatives of the people, not the developer. They are trusting you to care for their best interests. If they ask for

information, get it for them: that is what they elected you to do. If you do not have it, find someone else who does or ask the developer yourself. In the end they still may not like the project, or the final council decision. However, if you do it right they can't complain about the process or their lack of engagement in it.

I am a big proponent of development when it's done right. Living in Calgary I worked on more large development projects than most. However, no development should gravely impact the citizens' quality of life. Noise, air pollution, dust, visual impacts, excessive traffic can seriously impact a community. They must have a chance to be involved so that solutions can be found to mitigate these issues. A major development project should be a win-win for everyone. Good jobs, and healthy communities should be the goal.

I also want to improve the zoning and zoning by-law notification practices. No citizens should have their property rezoned from residential to industrial without a proper written notice. However, this has happened in this town. I want that to stop. The same should also apply to any other major zoning changes. One of the largest developments, if not the largest development, is currently happening in our town, yet almost none of the citizens in the region knew about it until the massive 18-acre clear cut took place. This is a particularly good example of how poor the citizen engagement process is. The notification for this project was extremely poor. At least some of the councillors were brave enough to admit that and want to make it better. Poor engagement creates a lot of distrust with both the Council and the developer and who needs that? These types of inadequate practices will stop with me.

The Healthcare Crisis and Our Hospital

It's a problem. The biggest problem for hospitals in rural communities and small towns is the lack of nurses. This is not just a local problem; it is a national problem that has seen many emergency rooms close. Towns all over Canada are in the same position. How did we get here? It's multifactorial, but here are some of the reasons.

- When Covid19 hit there was a significant stress put on the nursing and medical community. As a result, many nurses decided to leave their jobs. Adding to that others were removed from their jobs for not having the vaccine. The sad fact is many never returned to those jobs. They moved out of the profession entirely or moved to the US.¹ Topping this, 13 per cent of Canadian RNs aged 26-35 reported they were highly likely to leave the profession after the pandemic.²
- There is currently a shortage of nurse educators as PhD level nurse educators are retiring and the number of nurse placement seats in university programs are capped too low.³
- While we have thousands of highly trained foreign nurses and doctors moving into Canada, they are getting sidelined by regulations. Some believe it's the professional medical groups causing

¹ https://www.medindia.net/education/cgfns/cgfns_about.asp

² <https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2021/04/13/nurses-across-canada-are-quitting-their-jobs-and-leaving-because-of-pandemic-stress.html>

³ <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-feb-22-2021-1.5922712/canada-is-facing-a-nursing-shortage-here-s-why-it-s-hard-to-fill-the-gap-1.5923251>

housing development. Contamination is always a big concern in the development process. But as all contaminated sites are flagged by the province, it is easy to find out where the issues are.

Climate Change

What can we do about it? Many climate change solutions will involve adaptation. Engineers are great at that. We have modified our environment for centuries to adapt to a variety of needs whether that's sanitation, stormwater management, transportation, flood mitigation or infrastructure upgrading.

What we are seeing are more extreme events, longer periods of drought, more significant storms and floods at greater frequencies. Can't we stop this? Well, it is not easy, as it is a global issue, and if we can't get all the highest emitting nations on board, locally it will be difficult, but we can adapt.

For example, rather than designing a typical bridge or storm sewer for a 100-year storm event engineers can modify that infrastructure for a 200-year storm event. We can also put in functional storm ponds. In Calgary I used to build sunken dry ponds that during normal conditions could be parks, playgrounds, soccer fields or baseball diamonds but during major flooding acted like storm water retention ponds. The dry ponds would typically take 24-48 hours to dry out, but once dry the pond dries the pond goes back to its original function. Engineers have innovative ideas to mitigate unexpected weather, they can also create a community asset in the process.



Figure 1. A Dry Pond design in Calgary⁶

⁶ <https://www.calgary.ca/water/stormwater/storm-ponds.html>

Drought will also be an issue. Groundwater protection will be huge. Surface waters can be recharged quickly, but after an extended drought it could take weeks or months to fully recover our ground water. It would be exceedingly difficult to live without water for that period of time.

I am concerned about the use of groundwater for industrial purposes in general. Too many communities are suffering from well draw down and the cumulative effects over time of these changing conditions are not well known. Other options for the future could be to have a public-private partnership to get water into our industrial park. Scoudouc's industrial park has built its own separate water reservoir for industrial use and that reservoir is separate from the municipal water supply.

In the end If you really are concerned about climate change also, look at your own footprint. The end user is a crucial factor, oil companies are only pulling oil out of the ground because we demand it. It is not enough to point the finger at others and tell them to fix this mess.

Climate Change - The Double Standard

I have another issue with climate change in this municipality that is more pressing. It's the climate lens through which this town is evaluating projects. It is confusing at best and seems to only apply to specific situations and the current polices are far too restrictive for small businesses.

I don't think it is fair to prevent a small business from expanding or having a drive-thru due to idling cars if you are going to have large manufacturing facilities go in without questioning their environmental footprint. For example, the plastic plant at Walker Road - it is well known now that plastic is considered the new coal in the climate change equation.⁷ The manufacturing of plastics cradle to grave has issues, from extraction of the hydrocarbons to make it, from the processing into the end products, and while it is sitting in some landfill the plastics emit greenhouse gases. MIT did a study on the emissions from the plastics manufacturing industry. See Table 1. For example, High Density Polyethylene (HDPE): CO₂, SOX, NOX, Methane and VOCs. These are similar emissions found in the coal industry. Based on our current climate trajectory, plastic production will be responsible for climate-warming pollution equivalent to 295 coal-fired power plants by 2030.⁸ In the near future we may need clean plastic technology similar to clean coal technologies.

Surprisingly, there were never any questions asked about what the plant's climate footprint from either our current council or our climate change committee. Why did no one ask?

Regardless, of this issue the reality is we still need plastics, they are used everywhere. Maybe In the near future we may can develop clean plastic technology like clean coal technology.

⁷ <https://environmentamerica.org/georgia/center/articles/plastic-is-the-new-coal-and-its-coming-to-stores-near-you-2/>

⁸ <https://environmentamerica.org/georgia/center/articles/plastic-is-the-new-coal-and-its-coming-to-stores-near-you-2/>

Emission	g							
	HDPE	PP	LDPE	LLDPE	GPPS	S. PVC	PC	PET
Dust	0.85	0.76	0.92	1.42	1.52	3.22	6.69	5.04
CO	11.58	5.79	2.44	2.25	1.62	1.37	3.61	5.96
CO2	1618.00	1687.40	1704.57	1665.92	2560.89	1889.73	4964.48	3130.85
SOX	4.05	3.59	4.96	3.90	9.46	9.65	12.42	23.35
NOX	2.82	2.72	3.41	2.76	11.27	9.69	19.28	16.06
HCl	0.07	0.05	0.07	0.06	-----	-----	-----	0.18
HC	3.46	2.73	2.69	1.78	-----	-----	-----	-----
Organics	0.07	0.07	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Hydrocarbons	-----	-----	-----	-----	2.63	2.26	5.08	11.52
HCl	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.03	0.14	0.13	-----
Metals	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.06
Hg	2.53E-05	1.87E-05	4.53E-06	2.25E-06	6.15E-05	4.99E-04	4.99E-04	1.02E-04
CFC/HCFC	-----	0.02	-----	-----	-----	0.03	-----	-----
Organics	-----	-----	0.11	0.24	-----	0.02	0.34	0.19
H2	-----	-----	0.02	0.01	0.04	1.58	0.90	0.46
Organo-Cl	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.01	0.33	-----
CH4	9.08	7.73	9.20	7.39	8.99	8.88	18.28	10.25
Aromatic HC	0.08	0.09	0.03	0.02	0.21	-----	0.09	0.36
VOC	0.16	0.02	0.49	0.07	-----	-----	-----	1.32
Ammonia (NH3)	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.08	-----	-----
DCE	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.08	-----	-----
VCM	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.09	-----	-----
Aldehydes (CHO)	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	0.06	-----

Table 1. An Environmental Analysis of Injection Molding. Institute of Technology, 2006

Does it seem right to you that no climate lens was applied to this large project? I think our municipality needs a new climate lens. If we don't have consistent evaluation strategies, why do we have any strategies at all? I don't think small businesses wanting drive-thrus should be cancelled due to idling cars when large businesses are ignored without question. Or is it time to remove the idling condition on small businesses who want drive- thrus? Regardless, we need to fix this double standard.

Closing Remarks

I think that the new town of Tantramar needs a new cast, or at least a cast with a new attitude. We could make this community of Tantramar the best community going. I am excited to see that the other rural areas will have their own representatives. If I am your elected Mayor, I look forward to working with all of you.

Cheers,

Bonnie Swift, P.Eng, MBA, CPA/CMA

Candidate for Mayor

ENTJ - The Commander

ENTJS ARE STRATEGIC LEADERS, MOTIVATED TO ORGANIZE CHANGE. THEY ARE QUICK TO SEE INEFFICIENCY AND CONCEPTUALIZE NEW SOLUTIONS AND ENJOY DEVELOPING LONG-RANGE PLANS TO ACCOMPLISH THEIR VISION. THEY EXCEL AT LOGICAL REASONING AND ARE USUALLY ARTICULATE AND QUICK-WITTED.

ENTJS ARE ANALYTICAL AND OBJECTIVE, AND LIKE BRINGING ORDER TO THE WORLD AROUND THEM. WHEN THERE ARE FLAWS IN A SYSTEM, THE ENTJ SEES THEM, AND ENJOYS THE PROCESS OF DISCOVERING AND IMPLEMENTING A BETTER WAY. ENTJS ARE ASSERTIVE AND ENJOY TAKING CHARGE; THEY SEE THEIR ROLE AS THAT OF LEADER AND MANAGER, ORGANIZING PEOPLE AND PROCESSES TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS. [HTTPS://WWW.TRUITY.COM/PERSONALITY-TYPE/ENTJ](https://www.truity.com/personality-type/entj)

It is usually futile to try to talk facts and analysis to people who are enjoying a sense of moral superiority in their own ignorance. Hydro-fracking is a common engineering practice environmental engineers use remediated contaminated sites when contaminants are bound to heavy soils, water well drillers will use it to increase the flow rate of a water well. They use it in numerous industries. It is a necessary engineering tool for many types of projects. To clean up contamination we use this tool