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## Nemcek, Redick broke Municipal Conflict of Interest Act

Heather Wright  
The Independent

Two Brooke-Alvinston council members who are also members of a local service club were in conflict when they voted on the club's lease with the municipality.

That from the Integrity Commissioner who investigated a complaint against Deputy Mayor Frank Nemcek and Councillor Jenny Redick - both members of the Alvinston Optimists. They voted in favour of a rental agreement before council in April prompting the complaint to the Integrity Commissioner.

Redick said in June she read a decision from the municipality's former Integrity Commissioner, Robert Swayze, who ruled in 2021 that Nemcek and former councillor Jamie Armstrong didn't have a conflict under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act in a vote to approve the pavilion at the community centre. "In my opinion, the two members do not have a pecuniary interest in the construction of the building and therefore do not contravene the MCIA. It is not required that they declare a conflict on any related matter coming before council," Swayze wrote then.

Redick felt it was the same situation in April and decided cast a vote at council.

But Swayze is no longer Brooke-Alvinston's Integrity Commissioner and the new IC - Laura Dean of Aird Berlis - says while Nemcek and Redick clearly did not benefit at all financially from the contract which gives the Optimists rights to the pavilion, Swayze's opinion was wrong. John Mascarin, who spoke on behalf of Dean, told council Swayze should have advised the councillors they did have an indirect interest in the matter because of their ties to the service club.

"It appeared that the Integrity Commissioner took the position that integrity that the peculiar interests have to be direct. That is just not the case," he said Thursday.

SEE COUNCILLORS PG 3

## A TASTE OF SUMMER



HEATHER WRIGHT PHOTO

Rowan DeGroot, 3, was doing her part to water the lawn at McKay Park in Wyoming Tuesday by getting a drink at the splash pad near the pool and then walking over to water the nearby grass.

## Petrolia Legion facing thousands in extra reno costs

Blake Ellis  
Local Journalism Initiative

The Petrolia Legion has been dealt a financial blow in the middle of an \$800,000 renovation campaign.

The effort to make the Legion hall more accessible began last year and so far \$22,000 has been raised.

The Legion has partnered with the Petrolia Community Foundation and the Town of Petrolia to allow the project to take in donation and give tax receipts to any donation over \$25 to the Petrolia Legion's building fund.

The work, which needs to be completed by the summer of 2025, includes updating the washrooms on both levels to make them accessible, installing an elevator which will be able to move powered wheelchairs and refreshing the exterior of the building. Members painted portions of the outside of the building in June, with also some areas inside the building seeing a new coat of paint.

But in January, officials from the Petrolia/North Enniskillen Fire Department conducted a routine inspection and found the sprinkler system wasn't adequate for the building. The inspectors said the Legion

needs a complete pull station fire alarm system with a \$60,000 price tag.

Because the system can't be purchased immediately, the department reduced the capacity of the building from 390 to 150 people until it is installed.

President Robert White is frustrated, saying not only does it add another thing to the list to fix, the building can't function to its full potential as one of the largest spaces in Petrolia for gatherings. That will make it difficult to raise both the \$60,000 needed for the alarm system as well as the \$800,000 for renovations.

SEE LEGION PG 3

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