

TRIBUNE- PHONOGRAPH

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We welcome letters to the editor for free publication but, as a result of the rancor arising from the 2020 U.S. presidential election, we will observe a moratorium on printing letters concerned with national partisan themes that would inflame community ill-will. Letters on local topics are fine. All letters should be signed and a telephone number included for verification. National and state campaign endorsements will be run as paid advertisements, not as free letters. No letters with campaign accusations without chance of rebuttal will be run the week prior to an election.

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This Edition of the Tribune-Phonograph (Vol. 62, No. 16 dated Wednesday, April 19, 2023) was mailed at the Post Office at Abbotsford, WI 54405 for all residents Wednesday, April 19, 2023.

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Perspectives

School boards should stick to school board topics

The Abbotsford School Board allowed a topic to be discussed that didn't belong at its monthly meeting on April 17.

The wind turbine discussion has made its rounds throughout local government as members and supporters of Farmland First, the activist group that is trying to stop the turbines from being built, have shown up to encourage town boards, villages, cities and now school boards to denounce the turbines and take action.

The first and obvious issue is that this topic has nothing to do with the school district, yet it appeared in the board's most recent meeting as an agenda item. A map distributed by Farmland First member Fred Schindler noted that a landowner close to the school might be signed up for a potential turbine to be placed on their land.

Schindler failed to explain to school board members why this might be a bad thing for the school. Instead, he hit the talking points of why he and Farmland First members believe the turbines are bad for this area.

We believe the discussion is a valid one, however, we do not condone the insertion of discussions that should be reserved for other avenues of government in school board proceedings.

Schindler asked the board to recommend to the Abbotsford City Council that a resolution be passed by the city to exercise extraterritorial zoning, thus creating a potential 1.5-mile buffer around the city where turbines would have to contend with city and village laws instead of township laws. Again, there was a city of Abbotsford meeting the very next night. That's where this discussion belongs.

Schindler appeared in front of a school board consisting of three of his relatives and at least one other member who has been at Farmland First meetings and asked them to make a recommendation to the city. The conflict of interest here is glaring.

Schindler implying that the turbine would be close to school property and board member Kraig Schindler putting in his motion, "For the health, safety and well-being of our students..." is misleading.

The turbine could not be closer than 1.1 times the height of the turbine to an adjacent, "non-participating" landowner's property. In this case, the parcel being discussed would have a hard time fitting a taller turbine on it. Next to the school are a few houses that would force a potential turbine to be built farther away from school property, if at all.

Schindler briefly touched on the loss of property value and how that might affect the school's tax levy. However, school tax levies are based off of assessed property value. That would mean the turbines would be included in said value and would provide an influx of assessed property value to the district. If the tax levy stayed the same after turbines were built, people living in the district would see their taxes drop as RWE Renewables or Invenergy, the companies looking at installing the turbines, would be picking up the tax bill on their turbines.

The discussion had at the school board meeting and subsequent motion to place a recommendation to the city was unwarranted and did not belong at the meeting. The item was listed as an information item on the school's BoardDocs system and although the board can vote on a recommendation for an information item, it was misleading as well.

People scoping out the agenda would have thought someone was going to say their piece on whether or not wind turbines should be in our area. There was no indication a recommendation would come from the board until Fred Schindler had asked the board for one, and his son, Kraig Schindler, obliged.

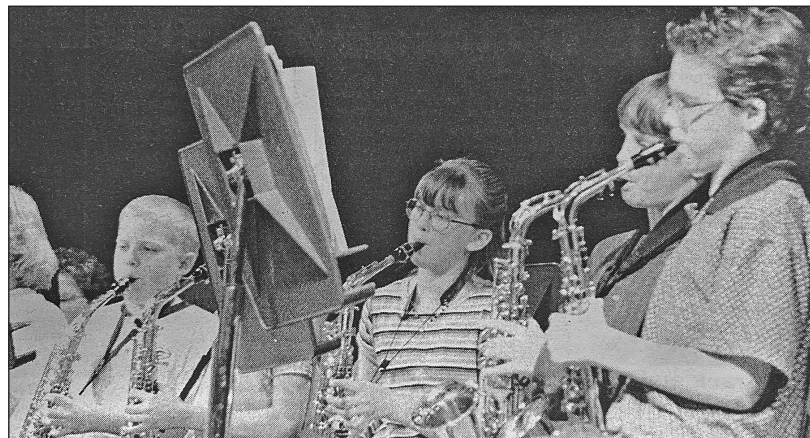
We call for the Abbotsford School Board to focus on topics that directly affect the children and families they serve instead of dipping their toes in matters that belong at the city, village and town board level of government.

We also say thanks to Yvone Vazquez who was the lone school board member who decided to vote against the recommendation.

The Tribune-Phonograph editorial board consists of publisher Kris O'Leary, editor Neal Hogden and reporter Nathaniel Underwood.



PAGING THROUGH HISTORY: A Treasury of Weekly Newspapers



MEMBERS OF THE COLBY FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADE BAND PERFORMED AT THEIR SPRING CONCERT IN THE THEATER. - 1998

ABBOTSFORD TRIBUNE
PUBLISHED IN ABBOTSFORD - 70 YEARS AGO
APRIL 23, 1953

Fire department has three calls since Sunday

The Abbotsford Volunteer Fire Department assisted at three calls, this past week. A general alarm was not sent out for a fire in the compressor room at Duke's Bowl, early Sunday evening.

Junior Prom is success

The Junior Prom, held last Friday evening at the high school gymnasium, is now a bright memory of a successful event.

George Schreiber wins legion auxiliary award

George Schreiber's 500 word essay, on the subject "Keep America American" was selected the first place winner by a committee of the American Legion Auxiliary.

TRIBUNE-PHONOGRAPH
PUBLISHED IN ABBOTSFORD AND COLBY - 50 YEARS AGO
APRIL 19, 1973

Abby teacher contract is reached

The Abbotsford Board of Education and Abbotsford Teachers Association have reached an agreement regarding salaries and fringe benefits for the 1973-74 year.

Seven to retire in Colby school system

R. Reeves Schwartz, Anita Hibbard, Evelyn Fahrenbach, Catherine Bielfuss, Kenneth Drier, Viola Bohte and Ernest Westrich will all be retiring upon the end of the school year.

Trinity Lutheran hosts students

The eighth grade of Trinity Lutheran School, Athens, was host to the eighth grade of Hope Lutheran School, Chicago, last week. The class from Chicago spent Friday touring various activities common to the area.

TRIBUNE-PHONOGRAPH
PUBLISHED IN ABBOTSFORD AND COLBY - 25 YEARS AGO
APRIL 22, 1998

Abby School Board approves computer leasing

The Abbotsford Board of Education agreed Monday night to lease computers for the next three years rather than purchasing new machines.

Suder announces candidacy for 69th Assembly seat

Scott Suder, an alderman and small businessman from Abbotsford announced his intentions to run for the 69th Assembly seat.

Abby Booster Club focusing on north field needs

The club, in its eighth year, is focusing on covering costs for the development of the new football field. The club presented a \$2,500 check to the school board.