

MEMORANDUM / OPEN LETTER

To: Residents of the Rural Municipality of St. Clements

From: Mayor Debbie Fiebelkorn, RM of St. Clements

Date: September 15, 2026

Subject: Clarification Regarding the East St. Paul Daycare Project and Municipal Governance

Dear Residents of St. Clements,

I am writing directly to you to address recent public statements regarding the unopened daycare facility in East St. Paul. While municipal election campaigns often bring political posturing, rhetoric, and attempts to generate public concern, our community deserves clear facts, full transparency, and accurate answers grounded in official records rather than campaign soundbites.

Below is a clear summary of the facts regarding this project, the questions raised, and the governance of our municipality:

1. Jurisdictional Reality and the East St. Paul Facility

First, it is important to clarify that the \$5.5 million daycare facility in question is located in the neighboring municipality of East St. Paul, not within the municipal boundaries of St. Clements. Physical construction of the building was completed in 2024. However, the facility has remained unopened due to an unresolved land-ownership and compliance dispute between the project owner, the Peguis First Nation Real Estate Trust, and the Province of Manitoba, stemming from a 2024 change in ownership of the land-holding company. Because of this dispute between the Trust and the provincial government, the Province withheld the final operational authorization and licensing required to open the building.

2. The Role of JohnQ Public and Board Oversight

Questions have been raised regarding municipal representation on the board of JohnQ Public, I can assure you that Council approved the CAO and myself as designates from the RM of St. Clements to serve as directors alongside representatives from other 11 member municipalities. Official agreements confirm that JohnQ Public was not a party to the Financial Assistance Agreement between the Province of Manitoba and the Trust, nor was it a party to the Design-Build contract with Pretium Projects Ltd. JohnQ Public was not the owner, designer,



St. Clements
The place to be

builder, or operator of the facility. While JQ Built Inc. administered the overarching request-for-proposal process for the multi-community daycare program and acted as program manager in public materials, that administrative role is entirely distinct from site ownership, property security, or operational liability for any specific facility.

3. Zero Financial or Legal Risk for St. Clements Taxpayers

Most importantly for our residents, JohnQ Public engaged outside legal counsel (DD West LLP) to formally review this matter. That legal review confirmed that JohnQ Public and its 11 member municipalities, including the RM of St. Clements, have zero financial, legal, or governance exposure or obligation arising from the East St. Paul facility or the dispute between the Trust and the Province.

4. Provincial Procurement and Wider Program Context

My understanding is that the OAG is not investigating the Peguis Daycare Project. These funding agreements and procurement decisions were executed directly by the provincial government and external vendors, not by the RM of St. Clements. Beyond this single disputed site in East St. Paul, the broader "Daycare in a Box" initiative partnered with Manitoba Early Learning and Child Care, using provincial data to select locations, to successfully complete 22 child care facilities that provided over 1,700 needed spaces across Manitoba.

My commitment as your Mayor and with your Council we remain firmly focused on delivering vital services, protecting local taxpayer dollars, and maintaining transparent, accountable governance for the people of St. Clements with integrity.

Sincerely,

Mayor Debbie Fiebelkorn
Rural Municipality of St. Clements

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