

Iqaluit ORIGINAL



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OPEN MEETING AGENDA ITEM

Arizona Corporation Commission 47
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August 10, 2004

AUG 23 2004

DOCKETED BY

Mark Spitzer
Chairman of Arizona Corporation Commission
1200 West Washington
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

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Dear Sir:

I was somewhat surprised to read that MR. TREVOR HILL has an application under consideration at this time to service 1,400 more homes with water and sewer services in Arizona. After two unsuccessful attempts to construct "state of the art, new cutting edge technology" sewage treatment plants in Canada at a combined cost in excess of \$13 million (Canadian) I am amazed that he is still involved in this field. I hope that sufficient checks and balances are in place to ensure that the end product justifies the expense, as this was not the Canadian experience in either case. Although the system in Powell River is running, it has twice the infrastructure than what was originally specified in the contract and still only servicing a portion of the city as there was no tankage space left in the existing facility. The original specifications showed excess tankage which would have been used to address projected population growth patterns over the next 15-20 years.

I will not comment on the engineering aspects as I am not an engineer, but much of the mechanical, air filtration, trash removal and screen filtering systems were grossly undersized and had to be modified or expanded.

The Iqaluit plant is a building with the mechanical infrastructure installed, but it has never been powered up as the concrete tanks failed and had to be strengthened. The project effectively stopped at this point due to financial constraints.

As the former Chief Administrative Officer in Powell River, I do have some in-depth knowledge of the Powell River project and no, this project did not affect my career as the Contract was signed prior to my being hired by the District.

Hopefully you will have a more successful end result south of the border.

Should you need to contact me, my e-mail address and phone number is attached.

Respectfully,

Ian Fremantle
Chief Administrative Officer
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Nunavut

August 6, 2004

Iqaluit sewage plant works, designer claims

"I bet you could do it for under \$100,000 and it would run fine"

GREG YOUNGER-LEWIS

The businessman who designed and built an unused sewage treatment plant in Iqaluit claims the \$7-million facility can work, despite a recent report indicating the abandoned project was worse than city hall ever imagined.



The man who designed it still says Iqaluit's botched-up sewage plant could be made to work for \$100,000. (FILE PHOTO)

An American state agency that screens businesses for dubious deals in their past found last month that the former company owner who built Iqaluit's malfunctioning sewage treatment plant stood accused of constructing a facility that violated safety and environmental regulations.

Trevor Hill, the former president of the company that built Iqaluit's plant, now wants to expand his business in Arizona, where his new company provides sewage and water services for 14,000 homes. A public utilities watchdog, called the Arizona Corporation Commission, is weighing whether his past dealings in Iqaluit will affect his application to serve 1,400 more homes.

After a recent court appearance, Hill told *Nunatsiaq News* that he "understands" why Iqaluit residents want him to compensate the city for the \$7-million boondoggle. But he said blame for the mismanaged project lies with the

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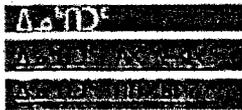
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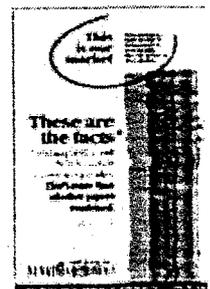
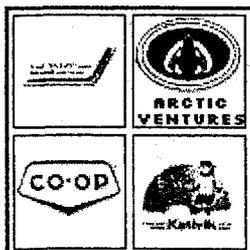
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company that criticized his work.

Hill said engineers for the company Earth Tech, who wrote the scathing report on his work in Iqaluit, ended up in a conflict of interest, trashing the quality of his work, then winning a contract to fix the problems. Iqaluit city council now plans to spend a further \$5 million to get the plant up and running, depending on Earth Tech's new design.

Earth Tech representatives refused to comment on Hill's new claims.

Hill claims Iqaluit doesn't need to spend nearly as much as Earth Tech suggests.

"The word needs to get to the city that they need to start that plant," Hill said on July 27. "The plant is ready to commission today. I bet you could do it for under \$100,000 and it would run fine."

However, Iqaluit's head engineer Brad Sokach doubts Hill can put his words into action.

"We're more than willing to pay for his plane ticket to come up here if he can make the plant work for \$100,000," Sokach said.

Sokach said he's reviewed three reports detailing millions of dollars in problems with Hill's work in Iqaluit.

Earth Tech's 2002 report suggests the plant is far from operational. Few people outside Iqaluit city council and administration saw the report because of a contract gag-order that forbid them from speaking about it in public. A confidentiality clause in the contract said the City of Iqaluit could not discuss "all matters respecting technical, commercial, and legal issues relating to or arising out of the work."

Hill's now-defunct company, called Hill, Murray & Associates, ran into trouble in November, 1999, when an engineering firm, Dillon Consulting, found that concrete sewage containers in the Iqaluit plant were leaking in test runs.

According to Hill, Iqaluit council broke their contract with him shortly after his company offered to fix the concrete problem for less than another contractor. City officials say Hill abandoned the project, leaving them with bills for unfinished work.

What should become the new Nunavut government's most urgent priority?

- Economic development and job creation
- Housing and homelessness
- Crime, corrections and the justice system
- Inuit language and culture
- Education and training
- Mental health services and suicide

Vote

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According to research by the Arizona Corporation Commission, Earth Tech's report indicated Hill had violated numerous construction codes. The report shows a list of deficiencies, including "impractical layout of plant piping and mechanical equipment," "poor selection of processing equipment", and overall "questionable engineering."

The Earth Tech engineers also pointed to inadequate heating, and poor ventilation in the plant that they believed might lead to an explosion or a fire.

After the concrete tanks were fixed, Hill said he only had a few minor items left to finish, such as putting in exit signs and painting handrails, before the plant would be up and running.

But last December, consultant Barry Rabinowitz told council again that the plant's problems amounted to much more than finishing touches.

He said the chosen technology, known as highly automated membranes, was inappropriate for Nunavut because it required a large supply of woodchips. Before council approved Rabinowitz's recommendations for a new design, he added that the plant's current design also couldn't handle pressures from the city's booming population.

Rabinowitz, who was working at the time for an engineering firm called CH2M HILL, also worked for Hill's alleged adversaries, Reid Crowther & Partners, according to investigators at the Arizona Corporate Commission.

Upon completion of the new Arizona plant, Earth Tech will be paid approximately \$800,000. This includes design, tendering, construction supervision and contract administration.

Construction is scheduled to begin next summer.

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