

Dan Cunin responses

Candidate for Cochrane Town Council

P3's

I believe that the government narrative on this subject has always been false, and that is being kind. These agreements only serve to allow large corporate interests to hold the government hostage with high-cost leases that will eventually put basic service delivery at risk. Is it any wonder then that education curriculum changes are now reflecting big corporate messaging/indoctrination, I think not.

The fact is that there are certain responsibilities that all governments have to its citizens; it is NOT the other way around. These responsibilities are NOT better served through privatization. Areas like the environment, health, education and social services should NEVER be privatized where a properly funded/staffed/resourced public delivery system is available. At no time should anyone in these systems have to choose between patient/client care and shareholder interests which all too often are focused on cost cutting initiatives. Mr. Kenney and his government continue a full assault on our basic services. They have not only broken the public's trust but have also failed to act in the best interest of Albertans.

Yes I will oppose privatization of municipal services and infrastructure, including Public-Private Partnerships aka P3's. Yes I will support bringing previously privatized services back to the public sector.

MUNICIPALITIES AS EMPLOYERS

It has not gone unnoticed by me that the Covid – 19 pandemic has created an opportunity for those who seek to 'divide and conquer' in their agenda of privatization. It is not 'us vs. them' and I believe that attempts to try to pit publicly delivered and funded services against private services is not only misguided but amoral as well. It is a 'slap in the face' to the men and women who have kept this province functioning to now be labeled as greedy or 'the problem'.

This government has also passed labor legislation that is regressive, unconstitutional and will ultimately fail in the supreme court. I am disgusted to think that this government will use my own taxpayer money to fight costly legal battles, paid to patronage service providers, to fight a losing battle.

Yes I will support employees and communities by ensuring the municipality employs staff with a living wage, full-time hours where desired, job security and collective bargaining rights.

Yes I will oppose attempts from the provincial government to legislate against municipal staff which includes cuts to the Local Authorities Pension plan or restrictions to their right to strike.

FUNDING

There is a saying, 'put your money where your mouth is' if you are serious about supporting what you are saying. This government has done none of this and most of the recent funding announcements during the Covid-19 pandemic have not even been their funding but rather a re-purposing of Federal assistance payments.

The first solution is to stop blaming public sector workers and to stop comparing 'apples to oranges' to find information to support your ideologically driven agenda. This would include the full accounting and dismantling of the 'war room'.

What I can do while in council is using my vote to say no to funding cutbacks and to challenge cuts and/or downloading of responsibilities from the provinces onto the municipalities.

One of the primary tools that outlines the duties and obligations between the provincial and municipal level of government is the Municipal Governance Act. This act needs to be reviewed with more autonomy, and less institutionalized favoritism to corporate interests. I will ask council to ask the provincial government to review this act to give greater balance and autonomy for municipalities. I will also ask for rationale for any reported funding rollbacks for services. I favor a balanced approach to problem solving so cost cutting or increasing taxes depends on the circumstances at the time. I am opposed to short term cost cutting. I am not opposed to tax increases if they are warranted with appropriate rationale.

COVID-19 SAFETY

I feel that Mr. Kenney and his government have tried to 'play politics' during a health emergency. This has brought needless chaos and economic suffering to the province and the municipality. Science, not politics, is what was needed but science was ignored. The 'Best Summer Ever' campaign is a tragic example of government short sightedness and wishful thinking.

I personally do not view the wearing of masks to be an infringement of my rights to such an extent that I refuse to wear them. I also feel that a Covid Passport is a potentially very useful tool in assisting people to make safer choices while at the same time respecting an individual's choice regarding vaccines.

However, as an elected official, it is not my role to impose my personal beliefs. I feel the government does a disservice to people when it ignores people's beliefs/concerns/hesitancies. I also respect people's personal feelings about sharing medical information. I do believe that government policy needs to be transparent about the purpose of the vaccine passports, about the circumstances for demanding the use of vaccine passports and list a definitive start/stop/review date(s) for vaccine passports now that they are being implemented.

On a local level I will be seeking to form a nonpartisan committee to look at the science used in dealing with the Covid pandemic thus far. The science is meant to look at all aspects of the prevention and implementation of Covid management strategies used throughout the world with no predetermined bias. The goal would be to then provide council with a science-based analysis from which to base a set of strategies/policies that can be implemented in the future, either alone or in conjunction with Federal and/or provincial jurisdictions. We must learn from our success as well as our failures to move forward in the current Covid Pandemic. If Council fails to take on this challenge, then we are putting Albertan's futures at risk.

AFFORDABILITY

I believe that this government is knowingly and willingly choosing to ignore more equitable based taxation strategies such as the removal of a flat tax and implementation of a sales tax. Not only would these measures be a more fair and equitable method of taxation, but they would also benefit from being easily implemented, would be more effective and would provide increased taxation revenue. Once again, the government is more interested in politics than it is in science and common sense at the detriment of workers.

Not only has this government missed out on a fairer tax system but it is leaving billions of dollars of uncollected taxes for profitable companies. Lowering the corporate tax rate is a failed tax incentive strategy. I would be happy to recant those words if I could be shown that this strategy worked to attract more business and that the effects on workers were not as detrimental as they have been proven to be. It is an absolute injustice to the common Albertan to be asked to pay more and more for less and less. This 'Death by a thousand cuts' needs to stop but the

Kenney government shows no abatement in their wish to download costs onto municipalities.

The Kenney Government has failed to recognize the science and the everyday implications of climate change. This leaves us at risk for having a product that no one wants to buy (our bitumen) while at the same time missing out on economic growth opportunities for a growing demand for environmental products/services. This government's decision to lose over 1 billion dollars in venture capital for an oil pipeline that no other lender would sponsor is just one example of this government's failure to be 'in tune' with new realities.

Yes I believe in supporting measures to reduce municipal reliance on additional fees' but I don't believe the reversal of downloading costs like transit fees will be an easy trend to reverse.