



HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
Newfoundland and Labrador

Sheilagh O'Leary, M.H.A.
District of St. John's East – Quidi Vidi

*Tabled by the Member
for St. John's East -
Quidi - with leave
K. Haulley
May 29, 2026*

January 21, 2026

Bill Goulding, Board Chair
Pippy Park Commission
P.O. Box 8861
Mount Scio House
St. John's, NL A1B 3T2

Good day and I hope this letter finds you well.

As a former Pippy Park Commission Board representative in my previous role as Deputy Mayor for the City of St. John's, I would like to extend my congratulations and a warm welcome to the Commission's newest board members.

As a long-time and passionate supporter of Pippy Park, and now as the elected MHA for the District of St. John's East–Quidi Vidi, I now serve as the NDP Critic for Environment, Conservation and Climate Change. I am writing to introduce myself to the new board members and to bring forward a long-standing issue for the Board's consideration.

Specifically, I wish to draw your attention to the persistent problem of smoking and cigarette butt disposal along the Long Pond trail, particularly in the southwestern portion of the pond. For those who may not be aware, I have been advocating for a solution to this now systemic issue for over a decade.

The issue arose following the 2013 smoking ban on the former Eastern Health (now NLHS) property. While I fully support the health authority's mandate, the unintended consequence was that hospital workers who smoke were left with no designated alternative during breaks, resulting in smoking activity along the trail and in adjacent wooded areas. This has negatively impacted trail users through second-hand smoke exposure, but more significantly, through the accumulation of cigarette butts and other refuse left behind, posing a serious environmental concern.

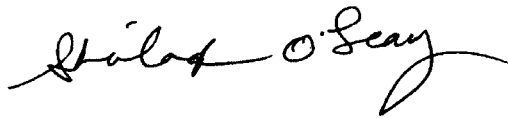
This situation contradicts the wellness and healthy living objectives of the Long Pond trail and threatens the delicate wetland ecosystem in the area. Moreover, this issue has evolved beyond inconvenience. In light of changing climate patterns, increasingly volatile weather systems, and recent wildfire events in Conception Bay North and elsewhere in the province, this has become a public safety concern due to the risk of fire ignition and spread.

Prior to my departure from the Board, there were ongoing discussions regarding potential mitigation options, including the consideration of a shelter and collaboration on adjacent MUN property along the route leading from the Health Sciences Centre to the Long Pond trail.

I respectfully ask that the Board revisit available options to address this ongoing health, environmental, and safety risk to Pippy Park and its surrounding environs.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sheilagh O'Leary". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Sheilagh O'Leary, M.H.A.
St. John's East-Quidi Vidi
P.O. Box 8700
St. John's. NL A1B 4J6

Cc: Sarah Stoodley, M.H.A. for Mount Scio