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OPINION

OUR OPINION

Action needed on Talisman

Talisman Mountain Resort, once a major employer and economic driver, is fast becoming a liability and a huge headache for the Municipality of Grey Highlands.

The bankrupt resort with its ghost hotel sits in a weird sort of limbo, a twilight zone of unpaid taxes and prime real estate that no one really wants ownership of.

Since the company that ran the resort declared bankruptcy, the property has been left to deteriorate to the point where it is becoming a public health hazard.

Acting on a tip, reporters from our newspaper attended the site last week and found it open to the elements, animals and curious humans. Little wonder there were no offers on the hotel complex when it was offered up for tax sale recently. The buildings are probably more of a liability than an asset at this point.

Which puts the Municipality of Grey Highlands between a rock and a hard place.

They are already owed over \$2 million in unpaid property taxes. They don't technically own the property, so why would they want to throw good money after bad, securing the property.

But stepping in to secure the site, in the interest of public safety, is the right thing

to do. Talisman's main buildings sit open - doors ajar, windows smashed. Animals and people alike have been through the dark hallways of the defunct resort.

It's an accident waiting to happen. There's no fire warning system, no emergency lights to help navigate to the nearest exit, and the structure has been damaged by flooding and mold.

Anyone who enters this building is in danger. Though technically anyone entering the building is trespassing, there are no signs to indicate this, and the hotel is sitting open. It's a creepy sight, like something out of a Stephen King novel.

The owner is long gone, the banks and the receiver have shown they aren't interested in securing the property, let alone preserve its physical integrity, so it falls to the municipality to do the right thing. The first priority of Grey Highlands staff and council should be for public safety.

According to Grey Highlands' bylaws, the municipality's bylaw enforcement officer may order the site to be boarded up, or fenced off to prevent unauthorized entry.

This problem will not go away on its own. The longer the buck is passed and responsibility skirted, the worse things will become, and the liability will increase.

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