



# REGRETS I'VE HAD A FEW

BY BRIAN SHEDDEN

Do you remember that old Cher song from a few years ago...“If I Could Turn Back Time...”

One of the biggest challenges facing a Board of Directors at any condominium corporation is how to save money on the big repair projects that regularly have to be done. Whether it is roofing, the parkade, windows & doors, balconies or the entire cladding, the urge to figure out a way to do it for less is one of nature’s strongest forces.

Unfortunately, all too frequently, decisions are taken to negotiate directly with a contractor.

Here is the problem: While it may seem to be a simple project of replacing roofing at first, it is never simple. Here are some of the typical things that need to be considered for the “simple” roofing project:

- *Does the Contractor have Workers Compensation?*
- *What insurance should be required? What are the insurance limits? Who is covered under the insurance?*
- *Should the project be bonded? What bonding should be required?*
- *Who is the Prime Contractor? (OH&S Requirement)*
- *What is the full agreed upon scope of work and how is it documented?*
- *Are tender documents required?*
- *What references should the contractor provide?*
- *What is the total cost or Labour & Material rates + Mark-up %?*
- *What are the start & finish dates?*
- *Is there a signed and dated letter of agreement (signed by both parties)?*

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- Will torches be used or allowed on the roof and by extension, what are the fire watch requirements if used?
- Who supplies the materials, the contractor or the condominium?
- How is the preparation work to be done?
- Is the roofing manufacturer required to inspect and provide a written guarantee?
- What length of time is the contractor to warrant the labour and the materials components?
- Against what perils is the warranty provided? By whom?
- Under what conditions can the contract be terminated?
- Is preparation work to be inspected and approved before the contractor may proceed to start roofing?
- How, when and who will inspect the work in progress?
- Who will cover the damages of a leak during the roofing project?
- Is removal of debris to be at the end of the job or daily?
- Are there to be progress payments? If so how much?
- Is there to be a hold back? If so, how much?
- On what conditions may the hold back be released?
- Will a statutory declaration be required to state that all wages and material costs have been paid prior to releasing funds?
- Will a clearance letter be required from the Workers Compensation Board prior to the final release of funds?

When a Board decides to save some money by not retaining a qualified professional to design and lead the project on their behalf, the risk of problems with the project and sub-standard work is great...and then so is the risk to the Board and the Corporation. As we all know too well, hell hath no fury like a resident scorned or special assessed!

All too often we are called to a condominium to look at a project that a previous Board had undertaken. Let's say it was new membranes that had been put on the balconies of a wood framed build-

ing, say five years ago. The Board had hired a contractor and paid in full, but now, we find that the columns supporting the balconies have decayed...all because the membranes were not installed correctly and now the damages caused by water infiltration are worth hundreds of thousands.

The pity of it all is that it doesn't cost more for the contractor to do the work correctly... they just need a proper scope of work, contract and the adult supervision afforded by and experienced consultant.

Yes, the consultant costs are real. They may add 5-7% to the cost of the project, but that is really cheap peace of mind.

*Brian Shedden, BSSO is a Principal at Entuitive.*



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