

Alberta PCs still not getting the message

By [Michael Di Massa](#), Sherwood Park News
Thursday, March 20, 2014 11:00:00 MDT PM

Well, this is a column that had to be completely re-written Wednesday night, but the point largely remains the same despite Alberta Premier Alison Redford's resignation.

Like many people, I have been glued to the #ableg hashtag on Twitter over the last week, as the whole Progressive Conservative regime began to crumble under the weight of public and MLA dismay.

What initiated the first of many drafts of this column is a statement that was issued by PC Association of Alberta (PCAA) president Jim McCormick earlier this week:

"One thing I can say with certainty — we remain committed to the long-term success of the Progressive Conservative Party in this province, and are confident the party will continue to represent Albertans far into the future."

Attempts to make McCormick's vision a reality unfolded Wednesday night when Redford announced her resignation, effective this Sunday.

The Tories now have two years to conduct major damage control ahead of the 2016 provincial election. Funny, considering that Redford was supposed to be that breath of fresh air when she won the leadership race in 2011 before her approval rating plummeted below 20 per cent earlier this week.

Despite Redford's proud speech of accomplishments in the lead-up to her resignation, her legacy in Strathcona County will be one of overhead power lines and the not-quite hospital.

Yes, there are other projects happening right now, but they were mostly funded before Redford became premier (the Bethel Transit terminal, ring road) or as a result of something else (Fultonvale Elementary's necessary renovations as parents pulled their kids from Colchester due to the aforementioned power line's proximity).

Career PC politician Dave Hancock was selected as interim premier Thursday, which brings me back to McCormick's comment above.

McCormick didn't say he's committed to the long-term success of the province. He said he's committed to the long-term success of the PCs. OK, he's the PCAA president, but that can't be the primary thought right now.

What happened Wednesday night, a premier resigning, feels akin to swapping out ministers when a ministry comes under fire. Usually the figurehead takes the fall while things go largely unchanged.

This whole situation has been warped into a sideshow to distract from the bigger issue. This isn't about the PC party surviving (it will) or Redford taking the fall for ill-advised decisions to save the PCAA's face.

What this should be about is the prosperity of Alberta. The only way the PC party can save itself is by putting the province — not itself — first. Otherwise the PCAA's four-decade reign in this province will strike midnight two years from now.