



April 2021

General Report to Council

As directed by Council we continue to look for efficiencies and savings in the Township.

We have eliminated the fee for Fire Permits and we have the ability on our website for residents to get their fire permits at their convenience. The money earned by the fire permit fee was minimal and it had obviously discouraged people from getting them. Based on our population we issued very few permits. When we factored in the staffing time to process permits and get them back out to the residents there was no revenue earned. Additionally, more residents are receiving considerably more fire prevention and education information, as each new 'free' permit is issued.

A special note, our Treasurer has taken on the task of preparing the financial reports necessary for the License Renewal for the Water Taking Permit. In the past this report has been tendered out and the quote this year to have it done by outside sources was \$8,200.00. We have saved that cost by doing it in house.

We have been reviewing the operations of the Water and Sewer and will be implementing some new practices that hopefully will generate a savings. One is to change the current sewer pump outs from a 4-year rotating basis to a 5-year rotation on most tanks, based on usage and this will provide a substantial cost savings.

In preparing the license renewal for the Water Permit, we have discovered that the plant appears to be producing an excessive amount of water. At this time, we have to assume we have a leak but it isn't apparent where that might be. We will continue to investigate. Additionally, we have come to understand recently there are some long standing meter issues and those will be addressed now.

We have applied for funding to assist with the renovations and expansion of the Municipal Office. To date we have received what we anticipate to be about half the cost of the project. We are waiting to hear on an additional Grant application for the remaining costs.

An application had been submitted for funding to rehabilitate the Lagoons. However, we have been denied and I am currently appealing that decision. At the current time the Lagoons are near capacity leaving virtually no room for any Economic Growth and development for the Hamlet. As stated previously, the Hamlet needs to be promoted and grown to be truly self-sufficient. The more it grows and the more properties are improved the greater the tax base and consequently the Hamlet may not need future support from the rural area. If it doesn't grow and is not supported it will need general tax dollars to maintain it.

I am working with Tullochs to investigate the possibility of establishing 'drying' beds at our Landfill site. The Drying Beds are necessary for disposing of the sludge from the Lagoons when they are cleaned out. If we were to rehabilitate the lagoons this year the sludge would need to be disposed of at a

landfill that has Ministry of the Environment approval to accept that type of waste. Our own landfill should have been prepared over the years for this exact situation with drying beds installed. Having our own drying beds at our own landfill will greatly reduce the costs of trucking and would eliminate tipping fees. If we are unsuccessful at getting finance to rehabilitate the Lagoons this year we should concentrate on establishing the drying beds.

We applied for Accessibility Funding to ramp the access to the sidewalks within the Hamlet, along with several other ideas around the Hamlet and at the Cemeteries. Unfortunately, we were not successful with that application, but will continue to look for funding opportunities and consider these improvements during the budget process.

The final reconciliation of the ODRAP funds received in 2012/2013 to pay for repairs from the major flood at that time, had never been reconciled with the Ministry. We have concluded that reconciliation and sent the final report into the Ministry. Initially when we looked at the file it appeared we might have to return about 50K dollars that could not be verified as having been spent to mitigate the flood damage. It has taken an exceptional amount of work by our staff and we have been able to reduce the potential repayment to approximately 9K dollars. Currently we are awaiting a response from the Ministry.

Facility assessment is near completion and the report should be available to council at our May meeting.

We are having a free assessment of the lighting in our buildings completed. The assessment provides cost to have lighting converted over to LED. The report will provide information on cost, grant rebates and the length of time to recover fully our portion of costs through savings.

Our Fire Chief has been trimming his budget. He has successfully applied for \$4,700.00 in training funds and has implemented a program with these funds for training and education. He has also reduced the cost of dispatch by 50%. Currently we are on automatic aide with Bruce Mines, so that, when one of the Townships gets called out, the other one automatically also gets called. Both Townships were paying separate dispatch fees. The Fire Chiefs worked together and have renegotiated the contract for dispatch and there will be one dispatching fee that will now be split between the two townships. In addition, Johnson Twp. will invoice a small portion of the cost of our tower to Bruce Mines.

We have been working on how best to do the Asset Management Plans. The deadline to have this plan in place has been moved, due to the current Covid situation, giving us more time. Roads and office staff continue to work on gathering the data and ranking the conditions. We may be required to purchase some software for capturing required data and storing it.

Roads crews are well into brushing and soon will be switching over to ditching. All work currently has been done in house. Public Works is currently grading all of Puddingstone for Tarbutt while their road Super is off on personal leave.

Upon inspection, the stove in the kitchen upstairs in the arena has been tagged out of service until it can be fully cleaned. I have requested quotes on cleaning, any additional repairs that may be needed and can be completed at this time. Also, considering the age of the stove I have also requested a quote for a new stove so that council can make an informed decision.

Glenn