

Mayor's Report – Thursday February 20, 2020

Since our last council meeting, I have had the opportunity to represent HCM Townships at a number of meetings and events.

The DRDH Community Health Partners Group met on January 22nd. Many of my comments today may mirror the presentation we have just heard. Our local hospital has received “exemplary” standing in the Accreditation program. As with the entire health care system in Ontario, the DRDH is seeking RNs and PSWs for casual work. There are many opportunities available. The Family Health Team is moving forward with its building application. Non urgent patient transfer continues to be a concern with our health partners, as well as at the County level.

I am happy to report that I had a meeting with our provincial member of parliament and Minister of MNRF, Mr. John Yakabuski on January 23rd at his Pembroke Constituency office. As the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, I wanted thank him for the excellent wildfire service that our municipality has received from his department especially during the summers of 2017 and 2018. Our discussion touched on many topics of concern for our small municipality, most especially the limited emergency services in our 80 km stretch of Trans Canada Highway 17.

I attended the County Budget Workshop on January 27th. The 2020 Budget document (with details and my notes) is in our office for Council's or residents' interest. I am sure it can also be found online at the County of Renfrew website. The monthly County Council meeting on January 29th is the time when all the committee work of that month comes to the entire Council. Of particular interest to our municipality is the inclusion of a culvert replacement in Deux Rivieres by the CoR Public Works department.

Deputy Mayor Villeneuve and I attended an OPG Information Session on February 6th at Des Joachims Generating Station in Rolphton. It was an excellent opportunity for us to receive information from the Ottawa River Regulation Planning Board concerning in particular our part of the Ottawa River system. The Ottawa River Regulation Board website can be found at www.ottawariver.ca. It is an excellent resource for Ottawa River information – including current water flow and elevation readings for the last 10 days. Deputy Mayor Villeneuve and I were also treated to a tour of the GS from the top of the dam at the head works, to the scroll case that contains the turbine, to outflow of water at the tailrace.

Also, on February 6th, I attended the monthly meeting of the RAC committee chaired by Councillor Dowser. I am happy to report that the RAC's Trailside Cafés to date have been a great success with snowmobilers and residents alike. This would not be possible without our generous volunteers. Many thanks to an unbeatable team: Glenn Stewart, Judy Zilney, Ernie Villeneuve, Cathy Sutherland, Betty Condie, Bev & Charlie Renhke, Bruce & Penny Farnell, Gay Baribeau and Gerry Ryan. The Trailside Café runs every Saturday in February.

On February 11th, I went to the PWAC meeting chaired by Councillor Villeneuve. As today's meeting minutes have shown, this committee has been assisting council with their recommendations for upcoming Request for Tender for boat launch repairs in Mackey, Stonecliffe and Deux Rivieres. The committee has researched the cost of street lights (hydro approx. \$6000 per light) at locations throughout the municipality. Consideration is also being given to bring power into OMP; mobile generator vs. underground power. All of these initiatives are of course are dependent on cost and possible grant opportunities.

At the February 12 County of Renfrew Health and Social Services Committees the CoR Chief of Paramedic Services, Michael Nolan directed Council to an article in the Canadian Paramedicine magazine that relates directly to this afternoon's deputation. It is titled "Responding to the Challenge: Rural and Remote Paramedics". The author is Dave Libby, a Commander and Advanced Care Paramedic in Renfrew County.

"...stable patients are transferred for routine appointments or procedures; critically ill patients are transferred at a priority. Increasing demands for service has forced many Paramedic Services to restrict the number of low priority transfers and have worked at a regional level with healthcare facilities to implement more effective and efficient means of transporting patients."

He goes on to describe a night time call from dispatch.

"My issue tonight is that I have two trucks headed to the city on transfers, one additional "city" transfer waiting to go and additional emergency calls that are ongoing in the community. It is not lost on me that only two paramedic units are available in a county of over 7,000 square kms."

Something for us to remember in the conversation – *"For rural services it's not always the population and associated call volume that is the challenge, it's the sheer distance that the paramedics must travel to reach those in need..."*

Mayor Debbi Grills