

Mayor's Report - Thursday May 16, 2019

Since our last Council meeting, 3 weeks ago I have represented Head, Clara & Maria Townships at the Renfrew County Health and Social Services committees yesterday May 16th. The developments that have been coming to the County table from the province continue to arrive daily. Many of the developments can only be described as “downloading”. I mentioned last month about the cuts to our library services. In my opinion the proposed changes in Health and Social Services sector will impact our most vulnerable residents. The majority of changes in these 2 sectors alone will affect this year's County budget (that has already been passed) to the amount of approximately \$1 million or more than 3.2% increase for Paramedic and Social Services. I will repeat a phrase that I have used many times “there is only one taxpayer”; the province may cut but if we need to deliver a certain level of service to our communities there is only one taxpayer. I would like to take a minute to describe the map we received yesterday on the proposed reduction of Health Regions from 52 to 10. We have copies if you are interested.

On Easter weekend our community was affected by the closure of the Trans-Canada highway at Bissett Creek, the problems that ensued have been described during our discussion of correspondence. We missed our connection to Deux Rivieres and upon the highway opening the deputy mayor and I both made separate trips to check on the water levels and culverts especially on Dunlop Crescent. My thanks to Deputy Mayor Villeneuve, former Mayor Gibson and many others for the daily updates on conditions around HCM.

The Ontario Renovates Program for 2019/2020 opened for applications on Tuesday May 14th. This program assists homeowners to make necessary upgrades to their homes and to improve their quality of life. Details of this program can be found on the HCM website and links to the application package. This is the 9th year for this program and to date HCM is the only municipality in Renfrew County that has not accessed this fund. Thirty-five applicants are accepted into this program on a first come, first served basis.

The Recreation Advisory Committee is in the process of reinventing itself with new Terms of Reference and new members to the group. We have welcomed Council representative and, by appointment Chairperson Chris Dowser, Deputy Mayor Ernie Villeneuve, Glenn Stewart, Judy Zilney and Bonnie Stewart. I would like to thank the ever faithful returning members Rosanne Boudreau, Betty Condie and support staff Stephany Rauche and Crystal Fischer. If you have talents to share we are always looking for volunteers to help the committee with various community events.

On a sad note, I must acknowledge and extend our sympathy on the passing of two long time HCM residents over the last month. Mr. Hank van der Horn, former councillor, supporter and friend of HCM died on April 27th. Mrs. Lucie (Heinrichs) Reid, the wife of former Mayor Bob Reid died on May 8th. Our condolences to family and friends, they will be missed in our community.

Mayor Debbi Grills