

Mayor's Report – Thursday April 20, 2023

I am pleased to open today's report with the news that the Ottawa River ice disappeared from Driftwood Bay this past Tuesday. I want to share my happiness that spring may have finally arrived and sincere hopes that it is here to stay!

Wednesday March 29th was a busy day that began at the COR monthly meeting. We heard from a delegation working to end violence against women in the Ottawa Valley. Joanne Brooks, a spokesperson for End Violence Against Women (EVA) and Lisa Oegema, Human Trafficking Program Manager for Victim Crisis, and Referral Service (VCARS) delivered a very powerful presentation to council. Later that afternoon the COR council acted on the first recommendation (of 86 recommendations) from the Culleton, Kuzyk & Warmerdam Inquest and unanimously supported the resolution declaring Intimate Partner violence (IPV) a pandemic in Renfrew County. Mayor Giardini (Chair) and I (Vice-Chair) work on the Community Services Committee. We have met with the Warden and the Director of Community Services and staff to gain a better understanding of the "behind the scenes" efforts that are in place to serve in cases of Intimate Partner violence (IPV) in our communities.

In the afternoon, I joined our Municipal Administrator and the Deputy Mayor for Emergency Management Training at Horton Township's Community Centre. The workshop was focussed on the 5 Components of EM (Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, Recovery). It was noted that Response and Recovery are the two components that most people will remember. I have been to many EM training sessions and always find them to be a great refresher and always something new to take away. The news for me this time was that a "declaration" of an emergency is no longer required to activate programs such as financial assistance or Red Cross.

At 7:00 pm that evening I attended a webinar with CNL/AECL as part of outreach into the community to update the neighbours about the growth of the campus. There will be many new jobs coming with the continued expansion. They are growing their workforce – with 4000 employed at present, and 500 more positions to hire.

At the April 6th DRDH Community Health Partners Group, I received welcome news from Director Shelley Yantha of the North Renfrew LTC centre in Deep River. She is hoping to restart the monthly luncheons in Stonecliffe. Both the office staff and I have been asked many times when or if this program would be reinstated. I will see what I can do about coordinating a COR Paramedics visit at the same time.

On the morning of April 11th, I attended the public meeting concerning Amendment No. 35 to the Official Plan of the County of Renfrew held in the council chambers. It was a short meeting that heard from two members of the Landowners Association (ON) expressing concerns of private property rights.

The highlight of the Health Committee on April 12 was the welcome news you may heard by now that our MPP John Yakabuski has announced the RCVTAC will become a permanent program in our county with funding from the Ontario government. That day's good news also came with a farewell to Emergency Services Deputy Chief Brian Leahey - he is headed to a well-deserved retirement! We wish him all the best.

Mayor Debbi Grills