

Mayor's Report – September 21, 2023

Since our last meeting on August 26th, a number of interesting developments have occurred.

Highlights from the August 30th COR Council meeting – a delegation from the Municipal Finance Manager from Watson's & Associates Economists Ltd. provided the findings from the COR Development Charges preliminary study. It is important to know there are 8 small municipalities in COR where no development charges would apply at this time – HCM is one of them. I expect more information to follow at the COR meeting next week. If interested, I would be glad to share any presentations I receive on this topic. Please let me know.

At this meeting, the County Council, staff and friends said farewell to Deputy Clerk/Executive Assistant Rose Gruntz who retired after 25 dedicated years with the County. She has earned a well-deserved retirement but certainly will be missed. Gwen Dombroski (formerly from the Township of Madawaska Valley) has been appointed as the new Deputy Clerk and officially taking over the role on September 1, 2023.

At the September 13th Health Committee Meeting, the Director of Emergency Services, Michael Nolan presented a proposal regarding creation of a Mental Health, Addiction and Homeless Hub that aligns with Strategic Directions for Community Wellness and Healthcare, and attainable Housing and Infrastructure. The goal is to establish an innovative model of care that ensures that all people have access to the full range of quality health services they need, when and where they are need them without financial hardship. The model leverages existing programs and services such as RC VTAC, Mental Health Services Renfrew County, Family and Childrens Services of Renfrew County, Renfrew County and District Health Unit, Community Services – housing and homelessness programs. I will certainly have more information to follow on this initiative in the future.

It was an honour to welcome Peter Kenyon to our municipality last Friday September 15th. "Small Community Sustainability and the Importance of Progressive Leadership" was the theme of the day and HCM was the final stop on his week long "Ontario Adventure". Peter is the founder and current Director of Bank of I.D.E.A.S and has worked with over 2000 communities throughout Australia and overseas seeking to facilitate fresh and creative ways that stimulate community and local economic renewal. Bank of I.D.E.A.S. has undertaken assignments in 59 countries.

Bank of I.D.E.A.S. is motivated by the desire to create caring, healthy, inclusive, sustainable and enterprising communities and local economies. BOI specialises in initiatives to strengthen community building, local economic development and youth empowerment. Peter Kenyon can be described as a community enthusiast. I am very pleased that our staff was able to attend the day. A special "shout out" to our Administrative Assistant Stephany who served as the technological guru for the day and provided excellent support for our visitor.

Yesterday, September 20th I attended the Town of Laurentian Hills - Committee of the Whole – Protection to Persons and Property meeting with Councillors Dowser and Kelly-Chamberlain. The committee was to respond to the correspondence sent to each member of Council from HCM regarding Highway 17 auto-extrication. I have attached that correspondence for the record.

Mayor Debbi Grills