



Council News & Notes

From Tuesday, March 12, 2024

Upcoming Meetings

Council Meeting
March 26

6 pm

Regular
Council Meeting

Council Meeting
April 9, 2024

9 am

Regular Council
Meeting

[View Calendar >>](#)

Mayors' Message

It is always wonderful to start a Council meeting on a happy note. Today we extend our congratulations to Tweed & Company Theatre for being one of the Top 100 Festival and Events in Ontario for the second year in a row. Tim Porter and Emily Mewett continue to make a difference in this community with their undying support and commitment to a thriving theatrical and musical arts program. We are grateful for all that you do to bring tourists to our community while keep us all entertained at the same time.

On March 29th I attended a Hastings County Council meeting followed by a Hastings Local Housing Corporation meeting. On March 1st the provincial Liberals via MPP Adil Shamji reached out to follow-up on our delegation with the Liberal Party at the ROMA Conference where we tabled our infrastructure concerns. That afternoon I attended the official grand opening of the "Its Your Time Fitness Centre" at our water tower. Terri-Lynn Storms has done a wonderful job equipping a fitness centre with weights, aerobic training equipment and an aerobics studio. It is open 24 hours a day and is accessible by a key entry code provided to all members.

On March 2nd I attended the Lions Club Open House celebrating their 33rd Charter Anniversary. On display was an archive of historical photos, news clippings, awards and other paraphernalia. Thank you Lions Club for all that you do for our community. That evening I attended the Children's Foundation Gala representing Hastings County.

On March 4th we held an Emergency Management Planning Group meeting to discuss our preparedness plans for the solar eclipse taking place on April 8th from 3:12-3:27. There is the possibility of large crowds and much traffic on that day since it is considered "a spectacular and rare celestial event". Earlier that morning I meet with a developer re their housing development plans. On the evening of the 5th I joined Deputy Mayor DeMarsh and Councillor Valiquette in a dodge ball tournament organized by staff. It was a great deal of fun and the entry fee was a food item(s) for our Food Bank.

On March 6th I represented the Warden at the official grand opening of Skinkle's Pet Supplies in Stirling. I was also there in my capacity as the Chair of the County's Small Business Development Program. Later that evening we attended the Land O'Lakes delicious roast beef dinner. On the 7th I had a meeting with Andrew Redden and Christine McClean from Hastings County Economic Development to discuss the evolving nature of the County Small Business Development Program. That evening I attended both the Kiwanis Executive and then General Club meetings.

On March 8th I attended a meeting with the OPP in Council Chambers. That afternoon I was interviewed by Paul Park from The Wire Report re the importance of CBC and its impact on rural communities. That evening I was accompanied by 11 women from our municipality, as my personal guests, as we attended the Bold & Brilliant Gala Celebrating Women on International

Women's Day. We are proud and grateful for the contributions made by women in our community. This is the second time I have had the privilege and honour to celebrate your accomplishments. Council would like to thank all women for making a difference in our community and around the world. These days the challenges you face are more concerning than ever. On the 11th I meet with Christine McClean the County's Small Business Facilitator.

At our last Council meeting I noted I wanted to talk about the Federal Government Housing Accelerator Fund, which is managed by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. This fund is intended to "remove barriers to encourage local initiatives to build more homes, faster. The program is helping increase housing supply – and supporting the development of communities that are more affordable, diverse and climate-resilient." To date the financial taps have been flowing freely with hundreds of millions of your tax dollars going to:

Toronto	\$471M	Ottawa	\$176M	Mississauga	\$113M
London	\$74M	Vaughan	\$59M	Guelph	\$21.4M
Windsor	\$40M	St. Catharines	\$25.7M	Whitby	\$25M
Milton	\$22M	Ajax	\$22M	Richmond Hill	\$31M
Hamilton	\$93.5M	Burlington	\$21M	Waterloo	\$22M
Kitchener	\$42.4M	Kingston	\$27.6M	Woolwich	\$6.7M

The only small rural municipality in Ontario to get some funding was Marathon with a population of 4400 in northern Ontario. They received \$1.9M. In Ontario alone the Federal Government spent \$1369.7M of which .001% went to small rural municipalities in Ontario. What is so frustrating is that our friends to the west, Centre Hastings, our friends to the north, Bancroft and our friends to the south, Prince Edward County, spent tens of thousands of dollars preparing their applications and ensuring the required studies were completed. Centre Hastings and Bancroft were called numerous times throughout the validation process for more information. We all thought this was a sign that they were going to be successful. Someone in Hastings County was finally going to get the financial recognition they deserved. And like the Ontario Government, the Federal Government says no to small rural Ontario. We can no longer continue operating in this environment.

The province has also come out swinging with its own \$1.2 billion housing initiative called Build Faster Fund; \$400M/year for three years. The program rewards municipalities that reach at least 80% of their annual housing target with funding, with bonus funding for municipalities that exceed their targets. Ten per cent of the fund (\$112M; 37.3M/year) has been reserved for small, rural and northern municipalities that have not been assigned a housing target. We know that Toronto recently received \$114M in year one, \$2M more than the total set aside for small rural municipalities. We are happy that our friends to the south, Belleville, received \$1.24M. Still nothing for the rest of Hastings County and I have not heard of any small rural municipality receiving any dollars. What I find particularly interesting about the whole provincial housing start program is that a nursing home new or updated long term bed is counted as a housing start...yes a housing start ...a new home! Not exactly what comes to mind when someone is talking about a housing start. If that is indeed the case, then Centre Hastings is well on their way to receiving their share with the building of their new long-term care facility.

So let's recap:

1. \$1.5 billion from the province to Toronto to help with their operating deficit spread over three years.
2. The province repatriates the Don Valley Parkway and the Gardner Expressway - equivalent to providing Toronto with \$7.6 billion in capital relief.
3. The province provides Toronto with \$114 million bonus funding for having exceeded housing starts target – how many were long term beds????
4. The province has given \$3 million to Quinte West because the federal government cut its CFB municipal allocation.
5. The federal government has doled out \$1370M of which .001% went to small rural municipalities in Ontario.

Therefore \$10,685M of your tax dollars are being spent in Ontario alone with not a dime coming to small rural Ontario.

Nothing for “Small Rural Ontario”. And then the billions of dollars provided by the federal and provincial government for the construction of battery plants. Everybody is doling out money but not to small rural communities.

I would like everyone to step back and think about it...many of you pay federal and provincial taxes. Taxes that likely exceed your municipal taxes. Why are your tax dollars only going to support large urban centers? Where is your share of those dollars to help your community? Why are governments reluctant to acknowledge that small rural municipalities are facing an unmitigated disaster with unprecedented looming infrastructure costs? Why do governments think we don't have a housing crisis? Why is that all we get are platitudes from government's with major attitudes? Enough is enough. If your goal is to kill small rural Ontario well then you are both well on your way to accomplishing your mission.

Frankly it all boils down to one thing and that we will explore at our next Council meeting.

And it's not all doom and gloom. It is also important to celebrate our successes. We started on a happy note so let's finish with a couple.

Happy Note 1: We are sure to get some money as a result of all the development we are incurring especially if you consider a new apartment unit as a housing start. Here in the Municipality of Tweed:

1. The Janet McGhee 24 one bedroom unit Actinolite apartment building
2. The Rashotte old school site development – Phase 1: 9 townhomes, 2 semi-detached (4 units), 2 six unit plex, 1 single family home
3. The Cassidy old Anglican Church site development – 8 units
4. Cassidy Funeral Home retrofit – 6 one bedroom units and 1 studio
5. McGillivray old convent retrofit – 6 one bedroom units, 2 two bedroom units, 3 studio units

A total of 75 new units on their way at this time and that doesn't include infill development.

Happy Note 2: I received a lovely letter from Minister Surma yesterday thanking us for the delegation and addressing our five asks. We will be digesting its content over the next couple of days and will include it as an information item at our next Council meeting.

Happy Note 3: Mayo Hawco, Executive Director at our Gateway Community Health Centre, announced at our February 13th meeting that a new young female Doctor is heading our way with a June start. And at the end of February she announced that a young male Doctor is joining Gateway in July. This is absolutely wonderful news for health care in our municipality. However, following the notice of the recent hire, Dr. Mustard announced his retirement. His goal was to ensure that he had someone to take care of his patients before he moved on. Dr. Mustard will be working full-time until the new Doctor starts and then part-time until mid-September. There will be no change in his commitment to providing care for his patients at Moira Place.

Happy Note 4: I work with the best team going...all of you sitting around this table and to the team out here that keeps our municipality going. Blessed indeed!

Notice of Motion - Councillor Valiquette - Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
Call for Support Resolution for Provincial Social and Economic Prosperity Review.

WHEREAS current provincial-municipal fiscal arrangements are undermining Ontario's economic prosperity and quality of life;
AND WHEREAS nearly a third of municipal spending in Ontario is for services in areas of provincial responsibility and expenditures are outpacing provincial contributions by nearly \$4 billion a year;
AND WHEREAS municipal revenues, such as property taxes, do not grow with the economy or inflation;
AND WHEREAS unprecedented population and housing growth will require significant investments in municipal infrastructure;
AND WHEREAS municipalities are being asked to take on complex health and social challenges – like homelessness, supporting asylum seekers and addressing the mental health and addictions crises;
AND WHEREAS inflation, rising interest rates, and provincial policy decisions are sharply constraining municipal fiscal capacity;
AND WHEREAS property taxpayers – including people on fixed incomes and small businesses – can't afford to subsidize income re-distribution programs for those most in need;

AND WHEREAS the province can, and should, invest more in the prosperity of rural communities; AND WHEREAS municipalities and the provincial government have a strong history of collaboration;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Province of Ontario commit to undertaking with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario a comprehensive social and economic prosperity review to promote the stability and sustainability of municipal finances across Ontario; AND FURTHER, that a copy of this motion be sent to the Premier of Ontario (premier@ontario.ca); the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (minister.mah@ontario.ca); the Minister of Finance (minister.fin@ontario.ca); the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (amo@amo.on.ca); and all sitting political party leaders.

Ellen Williams - Request for Authorization to Plant a Peace Pole in Tweed Memorial Park.

Ellen Williams of On Beacon Ridge Academy for Conscious Living, attended the Meeting to request authorization to plant a Peace Pole in Tweed Memorial Park. She also requested permission to use the downtown parkette for a pop-up event on June 15, 2024 to raise awareness of her organization and to look for volunteers for the Peace Pole project. Council approved the request to plant a Peace Pole in Tweed Memorial Park in principle with final details to follow and Council approved the use of the downtown parkette for a pop-up event on June 15, 2024 as requested.