

Mayor's Report - Thursday April 25, 2019

Welcome to all in the public gallery. Thank you for taking the time to join us this evening. It is my hope that you had the opportunity to speak to council members before the meeting. I will also be available after the meeting if you have any questions or concerns.

Since our last Council meeting I have represented Head, Clara & Maria Townships at the Renfrew County Health and Social Services committees on April 10th; as well as the County council meetings on March 27th and yesterday April 24th.

My overall message is that daily and sometimes hourly announcements are coming from Queens Park since the April 11th budget with scant details as to how our services in Renfrew County will be affected. Discussions continue on many subjects.

Background - Excerpt from County Resolution NO. HH-19-04-35

“Following the Provincial budget, it was further announced that the Province of Ontario is considering a restructuring of paramedic services across the province, as part of the People’s Health Care Act, Bill 74. The proposed initiative would see 59 paramedic services (52 land ambulance services, 6 Indigenous services and, ORNGE) move to 10 services through restructuring, as well as the 22 dispatch centres in the province reduce to 10.

There is very little detail on what restructuring will specifically look like, when it may begin, and how the proposed changes may affect the current 50/50 cost sharing between the province and municipalities.” The entire resolution and background will be posted on our website.

As we continue our own service delivery review in HCM using MMAH Grant Funding, a report has been tabled from the Township of Bonnechere Valley to suggest that a working group of all 17 lower tier municipalities be struck to find greater efficiency within the county as a whole. The goal of the committee would be to modernize service delivery and reduce future long term costs. It has been suggested by this report and AMO that the funding received from MMAH for service review be spent on only that. If not used on service review at this time the balance put into reserves. This BV report will be filed for information and consideration by municipalities. It is my hope that we could benefit from this collaboration with our neighbours and upper tier, although we have not been too successful up to this point.

Funding cuts to Northern and Southern library systems of about 50% will have a significant impact on small rural libraries such as ours. The agencies that provide information services and resource sharing must re-evaluate service to communities like HCM. Our hard working Library volunteers have spent the last weeks planning, preparing and executing a major fundraiser that took place today in our hall. The Spring Card Party and luncheon is a labour of love for these volunteers and we thank them for their efforts. Their next fundraiser “June Jazaar” is upcoming on Saturday June 1st. Remember to support the cause. We will have to find a way to help them if we want our library to continue to be a vibrant and vital part of our community.

Mayor Debbi Grills