

Reeve's Annual report to the McKellar Community –December, 2016

The 2016 Reeve's report will include excerpts from the 2015 Reeve's report, a review of what has been accomplished in our one year action plan for 2014-15, an update of the Reeve's report to the MLCA last July, 2016 and a look at suggested projects and plans for the next two years.

Introduction: Thank You

The last two years would not be possible without the support and effort of our excellent staff. You are appreciated. A simple thank you is never enough, but thank you.

On behalf of Council, I would like to thank all our council committee volunteers on the Recreation, Library and Historical committees for their involvement, programs, ideas and projects. You make McKellar the special place it is.

Finally, I would like to thank the many, many volunteers that enhance the quality of life in McKellar. You organize the much improved McKellar market, McKellar Fall Fair, card games, trips, run special events, plant trees, hold nature walks, deal with environmental and safety issues, raise funds for charities, fund raise through the collection of bottles, community breakfasts and yard sales, help the less fortunate, staff our excellent heritage room, test the water quality in the lakes, look at water safety issues, hold fish derbies, run dances and movie nights, run the Remembrance Day Service, give us much needed community input while our volunteer fire department keeps us safe. I cannot imagine what our municipality would be like without your involvement. Thank you.

Our committees and community groups are always in need of community volunteers. To get involved simply go to a committee meeting of your choice or join a community group and share your expertise. The more the community is involved, the healthier the community

I believe it is critically important that council is open, transparent, responsive and listens to ratepayers before a decision is made. Community development is a critical concept in engaging people in things that most affect them. The more citizens that you involve in the decision making, the better the decision. We must continue to find more ways to engage you, involve you, listen to you and communicate with you-not just to listen to your complaints or concerns but to your creative and forward thinking ideas to make McKellar a welcoming community. There is always a better way of doing something as long as you are open and looking for them.

A Summary of Highlights from previous reports:

The following is a summary of the highlights from the 2014-15 Reeve's report, Council's approved 2014-15 action plan and highlights from the July, 2016 Reeve's report to the Manitouwabing Lake Community Association (MLCA)

-i- New Staff:

We are fortunate to have added some excellent new staff members in the last year: Chris Bordeleau, our Chief Building Official; Greg Gostick, Public Works Superintendent, Robert Verstraten and Kirk Reid on our roads staff, Deputy Fire Chief Ron Harrison and Jeremy Moore our new intern. Our Market Manager, Janice Gibson did an excellent job and we are looking for even better results next year. We also renewed our By-law Officer and Custodial contracts.

-ii- Budget:

Even with the new imposed OPP costs, we kept our taxes as low as possible, close to inflation. We remain debt free, increased our reserves while accomplishing some new purchases, projects and builds along the way. A full accounting and pie chart is available on our website: www.township.mckellar.on.ca.

Everyone should have received their new four year MPAC assessments by now. Please note your appeal date if necessary.

-iii- Public Works Improvements:

We continue to upgrade our municipal roads – Projects in 2016 included slurry sealed centre road, resurfaced Hurdville Road, Blackwater and paved the four corners, paved Tait's island Road hill, bridge work and new culverts, new waste compactors installed at the Waste Transfer Site, and are revising our Asset Management Plan and tendering for the improvements to the Hemlock and St. Stephens church buildings.

-iv- Major projects and purchases:

The Township purchased a new grader, new trucks for our CBO and Public works Superintendent and have tendered for the replacement of Fire Hall #1, which will be completed early this summer. These projects were accomplished through the use of accumulated reserves and current revenues.

-v- Building permits:

The Township issued 252 building permits in 2015, up 20% over 2014 with a construction value of \$6,422,727 and over \$90,000 in permit fees which is an all-time high for McKellar. Our CBO anticipates that 2016 will exceed these numbers. The CBO's annual report is due in January 2017.

-vi- OPA No. 8:

For over two years we have had many public meetings regarding OPA No. 8 which deals exclusively with non-waterfront planning issues. There are still several outstanding issues that Council raised that are scheduled to be resolved at the Ontario Municipal Board. Stay tuned.

-vii- Community Improvements:

Numerous smaller community improvement projects have been accomplished over the last year or so: paving of the parking lot at the Community Centre; maintaining a re-use centre at our waste site; new signs for the Community Centre; new welcoming signs for our smaller communities and new benches in Minerva Park. New special historical plaques have been received and will be put up in the near future. The Township has signed a lease contract with Rogers Wireless to install a new 35 metre mono-pine tower in 2018.

-viii- Celebrating our Community:

Although we did not hold a volunteer dinner this year, we did acknowledge Doug Weber and Margaret Hutchison with the Senior of the Year Award in 2015 and 2016 respectively. A special plaque was placed on one of the new benches in Minerva Park by the MLCA in honour of Doug's many contributions to McKellar.

-ix- Fire Department Water Tanker Shuttle Accreditation:

The Township Volunteer Fire Department was reaccredited with the Water Tanker Shuttle Accreditation. This accreditation may result in an insurance saving for our citizens. Simply go to our website under Fire Department and click on the accreditation forms and send to your insurance company. I saved over \$350 a year from State Farm. I encourage everyone to look into this possibility.

-x- 2014-15 Action Plan:

1. Official Plan- is in the hands of the Ontario Municipal Board for a hearing to be scheduled.
2. Environment- supported the MLCA's water-testing program; monitored the Ridge's at Manitou's water testing and pesticide use; raised concerns about water levels with Lakeland Holdings and encouraged the MLCA to review a new boaters code; asked the Ridge at Manitou and the Ministry of Natural Resources to make a report to council on their recent findings.
3. Budget - continue to be fiscally responsible and prudent, have a balanced debt free budget, build capital reserves while keeping taxes within the cost of living. An improved explanation of the budget is available on the Township's website.
4. Roads - have established a roads committee, gone on roads tours with our new supervisors, who now give regular reports to council.
5. Fire Department- improved the training, area cooperation and equipment for our volunteer fire department. We held a ground breaking ceremony for our new fire hall-which is being built as we speak and hopefully will be completed before July of 2017. Our Fire Chief now gives Council periodic reports on fire calls and issues. We are now involved with the area emergency response team and are training staff in this regard.
6. Communication - to continue to find ways to improve the openness and transparency of council and informing our citizens. We have added a q and a session at the end of the council agenda, continued our annual newsletter, had numerous depositions and visitors, held numerous public meetings on a variety of topics-opa-8, budget, clean yards, solar farms, logging and boat launches to name a few.
7. Staffing - new hires and contract renewals have already been outlined. New department heads are now giving regular reports to Council.
8. Facilities - we are revising and updating our asset management plan, approved a tender for the construction of fire hall #1, updating a list of Community Centre upgrades, tendering for the restoration of the Hemlock and St Stephen's church buildings, turned over the Brownley Cabin to a McKellar conservation group, developing a signage plan and a plan for the improvement of Minerva Park.
9. Community Groups - we continue to support community groups that enhance the quality of life in McKellar, Hurdville and Broadbent.
10. Signage - we have accomplished a new sign for Minerva Park, welcome signs to McKellar, Broadbent and Hurdville, new signage for the Community Centre and three new historic plaques.
11. Trails - agreed that the Balsam Trail will be one 3.1 km loop and the recreation committee is looking at improving the trail.

12. By-law and policy reviews - we have revised the procedural by-law, the police check by-law, determined there was no need for a municipal alcohol policy. This is an on-going process.

13. Council committees - we have created a Roads Committee and disbanded the Economic Development Committee. We continue to support the market, fall fair, historical, library and recreation programs, projects and events.

14. Area collaboration - we continue to work closely with our municipal neighbours on projects that are financially viable, add value, create local jobs and improve services. We supported a tourism study, the smart community project and the new area emergency training organization. We withdrew from redac and did not support the ciino project.

The next two years - what can we expect over the next two years: needs to be finalized and approved.

-a- Minerva Park improvements - we are close to finalizing a two-year plan for Minerva Park. We are looking at putting in a walking bridge, a pavilion, improved washrooms, an information kiosk and new docking. Once we have some more concrete cost estimates and a public input meeting, we can finalise the plan.

-b- have an official opening of our new fire hall #1- summer of 2017

-c- follow up reports on MNR's fish habitat studies, the Ridge at Manitou's water testing and pesticide programs and a meeting with our MPP, Norm Miller.

-d- finalize Official Plan Amendment No. 8.

-e- to update our community and business directory

-f- complete our signage plan with a new electronic sign near the Community Centre, an information kiosk at Minerva Park, new and improved "directional" signs at key junctions in the Township.

-g- improve our website

-h- develop a plan to improve marketing of McKellar programs and services and use of the Community Centre

-i- to continue to find efficiencies to keep our taxes low, be debt free while dealing with new builds, road improvements, new projects like Minerva Park improvements and ongoing high OPP costs.

-j- to celebrate the 150th year of the founding of Canada next July

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at any time at 705 389 2228 or at: pdhopkins@lycos.com

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Hopkins, Reeve