

## **2017 Reeve's Annual Report to Council and McKellar Ratepayers: Mon Dec 18, 2017**

### **Introduction:**

This year's Annual Report is a compilation from previous reports, presentations, electronic spring newsletter, report to the MLCA last July and a summary of council, community and area happenings in the last six months. It will outline some items to look forward to in 2018 and some thoughts for the future of McKellar.

It is crucial that you are always kept informed and involved in the business of McKellar. Openness and transparency are fundamental values of a working council. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 1 705 389 2228 or at ( [pdhopkins@lycos.com](mailto:pdhopkins@lycos.com)).

### **Thank you: Staff**

Thank you is easy to say but more importantly to say it with conviction and meaning. We are extremely fortunate to have an excellent and hard - working staff to support council, provide needed services and share their expertise. We have made some major staff changes that are working out well. Thank you for all that you do.

### **Thank you to Volunteers, Committees and Community Organizations:**

2017 was the year of community volunteers. We are fortunate to have excellent community organizations and council committees who work hard to improve the quality of life in McKellar. 2017 was special in that there were many celebrations involving hundreds of volunteers that are too numerous to thank. You know who you are - thank you. You host card events, arrange bus tours, concerts, plant trees, raise funds for charitable events, test our water, organize many year around activities and events, prepare snow mobile trails, host heritage house tours and pageants and Christmas tree lighting evening, Hunters suppers, pancake breakfasts, stock our lakes and more. Give yourself a pat on the back for everything you do to make McKellar a special place. All community organizations and committees are in need of volunteers. Simply attend your area of interest and decide if you want to help. Your involvement would be appreciated.

### **Key Happenings in 2017:**

#### **-i- New Staff:**

Please welcome some excellent new staff in the office and public works areas. Please welcome, Ina Watkinson- Administration Assistant; Tammy Wylie, Treasurer and Gye Nelson, Transfer Station. We have continued the contract of our By Law Officer, Gary Joice; Market Manager- Janice Gibson and contracted new custodial services with Filiatrault Janitorial Service

#### **-ii- Budget- and Major Projects:**

2017 was the implementation of the fourth of a large five year new OPP levy. We have managed to absorb a 290% increase or \$350,000 over four years without any increase in service.

In 2016, we were again in the black, debt free, while building reserves for future projects. Our 2017 budget represented a 2.12% increase - below inflation - which included the building, opening and full payment of a new Fire Hall #1; a major over haul to Burnett's area roads due to a large grant; new large culvert on Centre Rd near Brownley Road, micro - sealing parts of Centre Road, improvements to parts of Hurdville road, paving the hill and smoothing the Tait's Island Rd; new guard rails and a grant to build a new culvert bridge on Blackwater Road and major improvements to Minerva Park. We continue to revise and update our long term Asset Management Plan.

It is anticipated that we will be in the black, be debt free and have some left over for reserves for the 2017 year end- See McKellar's website - [www.Township.McKellar.on.ca](http://www.Township.McKellar.on.ca) - for details. We are well - managed financially.

**-iii- OPA 8:**

On November 22, 17 there was an Ontario Municipal Board hearing on Official Plan No. 8. All outstanding matters have now been settled and the Council is awaiting the final decision. Once received, the Township's Zoning By - Law will need to be reviewed and revised.

**-iv- New Fire Hall #1:**

On November 18, 2017 the Township officially opened Fire Hall No.1 on Sharon Park Drive. This modern design built facility came in on budget and on time.

**-v- Canada 150 Festivities**

We held many new and unique events this year with the Canada 150 celebrations, including National Flag Day, Canada Day Celebrations and volunteer recognition, Business luncheon, Stroud dinner, Sri Lankan Dinner, Orillia Silver Band, Fall Fair parade and dance; unveiling of Welcoming signs and Historical plaques and a special Remembrance Flag day ceremony. Thanks to Mr. David Moore for coordinating these events

**-vi- Other Special Events:**

There were many other successful events fulfilling a very active year: St Patrick's Day Dance, Two children's fish derbies; inaugural canoe, paddle board, kayak tour and brochure of Lake Manitouwabing, Ontario 150 Heritage Regatta involving over 120 volunteers, Christmas Historical Home tour and Pageant; historical plaques at St Stephens, the United Church and Minerva Park, movie nights, which complement our normal programs - slo-pitch, fitness, euchre and bid euchre card games, badminton, swimming, t ball, skating, Harry Potter day in the library, pancake breakfasts, hunters suppers, supervise our excellent Heritage Museum, lead nature hikes on the Balsam trail and more. Again many thanks to all our committees and volunteers who make these events happen which improve the quality of life in McKellar. You know who you are.

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**-vii-Environmental Improvements:**

We continue to do everything we can to protect and preserve our #1 priority- the quality of our lakes and the beauty of our surroundings. We have had numerous presentations, studies, public meetings and reports related to ensuring the sustainability of our beautiful environment. These include the Ridge's water testing and pesticide presentation, dock issues at the Ridge, concerns over water levels with Bracebridge Power, disallowing Hydro pesticide control in McKellar, solar farm possibilities, water testing by the MLCA and Health Unit, MNR's fish habitat studies and stocking of Armstrong Lake. We introduced new compactors at the Transfer station and have made arrangements with Belvedere to raise funds through "Bottles for Belvedere" which has raised over \$8000 for Belvedere Heights and continued our REUSE centre. The MLCA is looking at ways to improve lake stewardship by controlling speed and wakes on our lakes.

**-viii- McKellar Market-**

2017 was a huge success this year thanks to the hard work of the manager, Jan Gibson. The Thanksgiving and Christmas markets were full of vendors and patrons which augers well for 2018. Her annual report is on file

**-ix- Openness and Transparency:**

Council has held numerous presentations, depositions and public meetings dealing with various issues to ensure that our rate payers are well-informed and involved in council business: from the WPS Health Centre, MNR's lakes fish report, Ridge at Manitou's water and pesticide reports, Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, Smart Community, docking for the Ridge, Water levels, official plan amendment , MPP Norm Miller, Budget, solar farms, regular reports from the Fire Chief and Roads superintendent, a spring electronic newsletter and Reeve and council reports at each council meeting. As well, the Reeve makes annual reports to our ratepayers in December and an annual report to the MLCA in July. We published our first electronic newsletter in the spring and a new two year Municipal and Business Directory thanks to Phil Boyd and Julia Archer

**-x-Beautification of McKellar:**

The Township made several improvements and beautifications at Minerva Park and around the Township; from parking, new docks, signage, historic plaques, benches, bathroom improvements and the foundation for a new pavilion and kiosk; welcome signs to each of our small villages which comprise McKellar - In Holmes, Broadbent, Hemlock, Hurdville and McKellar. A restored historical walking bridge at Minerva Park was deemed too expensive to build

**-xi- CBO's preliminary report on building projects:**

112 building permits were issued to date generating approx. \$72,000 income. Full report in January, 18

**-xii- Grants:**

We were fortunate to have received various grants to hire an intern, summer students for public works, a swimming instructor, a new bridge on Blackwater Road , complete improvement to Burnett`s Road and area and our Ontario 150 celebration. We were not successful in obtaining grants for the improvements to St Stephens and Hemlock churches. A special thank you to staff for drafting these proposals.

**-xiii- In Memoriam:**

McKellar has lost a lot of its historical memory with the sudden passing of Evelyn Watkins Moore and John Moffat. Evelyn was our resident historian and authored "McKellar Memories", an authoritative text on the history of McKellar while John Moffat was the long standing president of the Agricultural Society and author of many colourful stories about McKellar in the early days

**xiv- Economic Development:**

We continue to create a welcoming environment for future development. The Ridge is in the process of being sold. The Four Winds Cottage Resort has new owners who want to maintain it as a year around resort. Glenwood Cottages and Marina has been sold. Jimmy`s has expanded his offerings to breakfasts, catered and special events and Friday cribbage lunches. Manitouwabing Outpost opened in Hurdville. We have new owners of the General Store. We are awaiting the final word about the new Rogers Tower in Maplewood. Our rejuvenated McKellar Market brought many visitors and vendors to McKellar. The OPP incident reports indicate that McKellar is a safe, low incident community. There have been many property sales. new residents and new builds. A full CBO report will be made in January. As part of our Canada 150 celebrations a successful McKellar special business luncheon was enjoyed by all. The many special events - Canada 150, Ontario 150 welcomed many visitors to McKellar. The Township also approved a three year logging operation on Crown land under the management of Westwind Forest Stewardship Inc. The MLCA negotiated a group rate with Superior Propane

**-xv- Area Happenings:**

Smart Co has put in a funding request for high speed fibre internet in the WPS area but to date there is no confirmation of the ask. There has been no agreement amongst area municipalities on an area organizational structure to promote and deliver Tourism to the area. We have been informed that the shoulders on Hwy #124 are going to be expanded to accommodate cyclists from Parry Sound to McKellar. The new K-12 school will be built on the existing Parry Sound High School site. Council supported a letter to the powers that be regarding the chronic underfunding of Belvedere Heights. As well, the Township has approved a resolution raising a concern about a potential 1% tax and its effect on the tourism area. There is a new proposal to reorganise the REDAC (Regional Economic Development Advisory Committee) and the CiiNO group that six municipalities participated in. The new proposed area

economic delivery organization is called : “the WPS Economic Development Cooperative”. They will be asking for support from all seven area municipalities.

It is critical that we move forward collectively and be at the table with our neighbours on area projects that are meaningful, create jobs and are affordable

**-xvi-Celebration of Community:**

We celebrated many well - deserved accomplishments from our citizens. Our Provincial Senior of the Year was Mildred Tait of Hurdville. We handed out our first bursaries to graduating high school students-Jeremy Crawford, Cassidy Vowels and Laura Little who are continuing their education this fall. Two fire fighters- Chief Ed Bier and Melissa Filion received provincial awards for their attempts to save lives. Special certificates and pins were presented to our community volunteers on July 1. A special luncheon for our local businesses was enjoyed by all. There have been several shows of our renowned artist Burt Weir and colourful cards of early McKellar are for sale

**-xvii- By Laws:**

We approved a snow removal by law

**-xviii- Fund raising:**

There is a need to raise funds for the structural improvement of both the St Stephens and Hemlock Church buildings. Money is being raised by the Historical committee and donations can be made at the Township Office

**-xix-Fire Insurance:**

Our Fire Department Water Tanker Accreditation has been re - accredited and renewed in 2015 which could lower home owner’s house insurance rate. If interested simply pick up a copy of the accreditation form in the office or download it from our website and submit it to your Insurance Company.

**-xx- Welcome package:**

If you are new to McKellar, please drop in to the Township Office to pick up a “Welcome Package”

**Proposed projects for 2018**

-a- Election year: This is the final year of the current term of council. Nominations for the 2018 Municipal election may be submitted beginning on May 1, 2018. Election Day is October 22, 2018 and voting will take place by internet/telephone.

-b- New McKellar community signs on 124 and destination signs at all key intersections in the Township.

-c- a new truck for Public Works-d- accessibility improvements for Council Chambers

-e- More road improvements- completion of Burnett's and related roads; Continue to follow our Asset Management Plan for roads, culverts and guard rails as approved by Council

-f- Spring electronic newsletter with attached to our spring tax bill

-g- finalization of OPA 8

-h- revising our Zoning By - Law

-i- new electronic sign near the Community Centre and Office

-j- completion of a high speed Roger's tower in Maplewood

-k- passing of Bill 68 revising various procedural regulations for Councils

-l- fifth and final year of new OPP costs

-m- the widening of Hwy – 124 from Parry Sound to McKellar

-n- the stocking of Armstrong Lake with pickerel

-o- the completion of the pavilion and kiosk in Minerva Park

-p- new signage on the Balsam Trail

-q- discussion and resolution of various issues: rentals, building fees, noise, clean yards and legal issues

-r- new staff

-s- a new area economic development organizational model

-t- work toward a balanced, debt - free, in the black budget for 2018

-u- continuation of our successful McKellar Market

In the long term we need to start thinking and planning how to best celebrate our 150 anniversary of McKellar in 2023

On behalf of Council, may I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a healthy prosperous and enjoyable New Year.

Respectfully,

Peter Hopkins, Reeve, McKellar