

Messenger – August 2019

COUNCIL NEWS:

The severe rainfall and flooding on July 9 & 10th caused significant damage to a large number of roads in the Municipality. Vermilion Bay recorded 192mm of rain which washed out roads and flooded basements. No normal amount of preparedness can withstand this severe a deluge. As a result, Mayor Gord Griffiths declared our Municipality in a State of Emergency at 12:44 p.m. on July 10th. Within two hours the Municipality had activated its Emergency Operations Centre with participation from the provincial EM Field Operations staff (Office of the Fire Marshal & Emergency Management), as well as the Ontario Provincial Police and Machin Volunteer Fire & First Response Department. Priority was to ensure the safety and wellbeing of residents and travellers. Emergency contingency plans were developed for those residents of our Municipality and adjacent Unorganized areas that are covered by the Municipal Fire Department where road access may no longer exist. The Emergency Centre considered access options in the event of emergency 911 calls (i.e. fire, medical, vehicle) for areas with limited or no road access for fire trucks, ambulance and other light vehicles.

With water levels receding and a major washout repaired on July 11th all homes in the Municipality were again accessible by road. Repairs of major washouts continued on the 12th and 13th when the last large washout was repaired. Most roads still had significant erosion on the road edges and hills that was the next focus area to repair.

The heavy flooding caused damage and road closures on Highway 17 and 594 as well. Highway 594 had major washouts south of Highway 17 that were repaired by Emcon Services Inc. Travellers had limited road options for a few days with many road links not connected.

Overall the activation of the Municipal Emergency Operations Centre worked very well with only a few minor issues that will be reviewed and adjusted in the Emergency Plan for the future. Thanks to our residents and travelling public for their patience and support during this State of Emergency. A big thank you as well to our Municipal office and public works staff for their efforts during this emergency situation.

Council will soon be approving the updated Municipal “Energy Conservation & Demand Management Plan” in accordance with Ontario Regulations under the Green Energy Act, 2009. The plan covers the Municipality’s goals and objectives to conserve and reduce energy consumption within its infrastructure. As part of this plan Council has approved the upgrading of the lighting in the Woodland Arena and Eagle River Recreation Centre to energy efficient LED lights under a Hydro One savings incentive. The program offers approximately a 40% rebate off the retail price of the lights. The lights in these two buildings are scheduled to be changed in 2019 by a local contractor. It is estimated that cost recovery from reduced energy use with the new LED lights will pay for themselves in approximately the next two- and one-half years. The new lights will help greatly in future energy savings while enhancing illumination at the two facilities.

The Public Works Department has hired six seasonal staff including three Summer Parks Crew for six-months (May – Oct 31) and three students (July - August 31). The seasonal staff provide needed support for the busy summer season.

Mayor and Council