



JULY 2018

your update on what's happening in Wasaga Beach

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Transit service extending hours for six-month period

Town council approved a six-month extension of transit service hours, effective July 1, 2018.

The service enhancement is to facilitate the movement of workers between Wasaga Beach, The Blue Mountains, and Collingwood.

The extension of service hours involves filling the mid-day gap for the Blue Mountain link bus, adding one additional hour in the evening on the Wasaga-Collingwood Link, and implementation of additional service on the Colltrans service on weekends.

The town's share for the trial period is up to a maximum of \$35,000.

Work continues on downtown Wasaga Beach project

Council received an update report at the May 29 meeting on the Wasaga Beach community hub, which will be located at the corner of Main Street and Beck Street.

Council also approved starting the planning process for the new arena, indoor recreation facility, library, and other community space in a campus-style format, as outlined in the Needs Assessment Study.

As well, council authorized staff to hire a project management consultant to assist with the design and management of the project.

They also approved engaging a design professional to refine the preliminary concept design and site plan for the recreation, twin ice pad, community service and retail components. The aim will be to define the land requirements for these facilities.

As well, staff were directed to continue discussions about what will be required for the library and cultural components of the project.

Council also recently approved an Official Plan Amendment and Zoning Bylaw Amendment for the project, as well as urban design guidelines.

Message from the Mayor

I am delighted to have this opportunity to once again update you on my activities as your mayor.

On June 20, I had the privilege of attending our town's second annual Seniors Expo at the RecPlex. This was an informative and exciting day for seniors in our community. Presented by the town's Age-Friendly Community Advisory Committee, the expo featured several exhibitors as well as a series of guest speakers.

The highlight of the day was the presentation of the Senior of the Year Award to Janice Ware. Janice is a shining example of someone who has used her life to help people in our community. She has done so much to make our town a better place. We are grateful for her contributions to the Prime Time Seniors Club, the Waterside Retirement Lodge, Probus, and many other activities.

I want to thank everyone involved in making the expo possible and I look forward to it happening again next year.

It was my privilege to take part in the Heroes Festival at the beachfront on June 23 and 24. It was a true honour to pay tribute to our first responders and our military during the festival. As your mayor, I was humbled to welcome the Snowbirds to our great

community. I thank everyone for taking part in this event; it's one that will live on in our hearts and minds. I want to thank organizer Mike Dunphy for his vision and hard work.



I was also proud to attend our Canada Day weekend festivities. We had terrific musical entertainment, family-friendly activities, good fun, and fireworks; all making for a truly memorable celebration of our wonderful country.

Council continues to work hard on a number of fronts, including the creation of a new downtown, the building of a new high school, establishing a new community hub and library, as well as many other initiatives. I look forward to telling you more in the months ahead.

As always, it's my sincere privilege and honour to serve as your mayor.

Sincerely,

Brian Smith,
Mayor.

Accessibility outreach program makes a difference

The Wasaga Beach Accessibility Advisory Committee wishes to extend its gratitude to all of the volunteers who assisted in making the Public School Outreach Awareness Program a success.

The program ran in conjunction with National Access Awareness Week.

On May 28 and May 29, the Wasaga Beach Accessibility Advisory Committee, along with partners from the CNIB, South Georgian Bay

Community Health Centre, Beach Hearing, Breaking Down Barriers, and Cochlear Canada, visited St. Noel Chabanel Catholic School, Birchview Dunes Elementary School, and Worsley Elementary School. In total, 194 Grade 2 students took part in fun, hands-on educational presentations promoting accessibility awareness.

Congratulations goes out to colouring contest top three winners Carson Coker (Birchview), Ella Tennant (St. Noel), and Quinn MacDonald (Worsley) who created colourful works of art promoting accessibility in Wasaga Beach. The winners were presented with prizes donated by our generous community business partners.

Ransomware attack hits town computers

The Town of Wasaga Beach computer network was hit by a ransomware attack in the early morning hours of Monday, April 30.

The attack locked all of the files on the town's network, including back-up servers that were located off site.

Despite the incident, the town was able to continue delivering services to residents.

Due to the nature of the attack, the town advised the Ontario Provincial Police and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Information technology experts from agencies and companies outside the municipality were also contacted to assist with the recovery of the network and to determine next steps.

The town does not believe that personal data was accessed during the incident. If this view changes the municipality will advise the community.

In order to resolve the situation and access the data, the town paid a ransom to the perpetrators of the attack.

Once the ransom was paid, the town received decryption keys allowing it to access the material on town servers.

The decision to pay the ransom was made by CAO George Vadeboncoeur with input from staff. To re-create the data would have cost more than \$150,000 and it would have taken months for the municipality to return to normal.

To protect the municipality from future attacks, the town has engaged specialists to assist with necessary changes. Best security practices have been added to the network that provide layers of protection.

While preventing a virus attack is never 100 percent possible, with layered security there is a higher probability that a future attack will not be successful.

We have also added security that will protect our backup server, allowing the town to recover quickly from an infection if one occurs.

A detailed report about the incident will be made to council.

Municipal Election 2018

This is a municipal election year. Nominations for the position of mayor, deputy mayor, and councillors will be accepted until 2 p.m. on July 27, 2018. Election Day will be held Oct. 22, 2018. The new council will serve a four-year term. The election will utilize the same methods as in 2014 – Internet and telephone voting.

For more information, call deputy clerk Laura Borland at 705-429-3844, ext. 2224 or e-mail deputyclerk@wasagabeach.com.

Town finances in great shape: auditor

The Town of Wasaga Beach's finances are in very good condition, the town's auditors from the firm Collins Barrow report.

The town auditor presented the town's 2017 audited financial statements at the May 22, 2018 Committee of the Whole meeting. Also presented at the meeting was a Financial Indicator Report based on provincial benchmarks.

Speaking to committee, auditor Jay Anstey said the town is in a strong financial position.

"This is good news for our community as it means council members have shown strong financial stewardship," said Jocelyn Lee, the town's director of finance and treasurer. "The town's financial position is sound and as a result the town is in a good position for long-term strategic planning."

In a report to committee, Lee noted the adjusted annual surplus for the municipality is \$311,498, which was transferred to reserves. She added that reserves increased by \$9.9-million overall in 2017 for a total of \$57.7-million. Since council took office in 2014, reserves have increased \$17-million.

The town's cash and short-term investments for 2017 increased by \$5.2 million for a total of \$22.9-million.

Portfolio investments, made up of various bond portfolios, increased \$3.5-million for a total of \$32.6-million.

Taxes receivable sits at \$2.2-million, a decrease of \$227,000. This is due to a strong collection process.

"The town has continued to deliver great services while administering fiscal responsibility within the budget framework," Lee said in her report to council members.

Lee said after the meeting that all indicators paint a healthy financial picture for the Town of Wasaga Beach. Municipal debt is low, utilizing only 27 percent of allowable carrying costs, and cash and investments are strong with \$55-million available, along with healthy reserves of almost \$60-million.

"We are one of the best financially positioned municipalities in the County of Simcoe and that is something residents can take great satisfaction in," Lee said.

The financial future is bright for Wasaga Beach.

"Going forward we will take a balanced approach to address immediate needs while planning for the future," Lee said, explaining "we'll focus on capital assessment replacement funding, ensuring it remains healthy, while leveraging reserves and grants to help maintain existing service levels and accommodate future growth."

E-Billing

E-billing is available for your tax bill, as well as your water/sewer bill.

To sign up for this option, please e-mail: e-billing@wasagabeach.com. Please include the following information:

- 1) Your municipal address;
- 2) Your name and telephone number;
- 3) Your e-mail must come from the e-mail address that you would like the bill sent to.

Paying your bill

Payments can be made the following ways:

- 1) In person at town hall, 30 Lewis St., Monday to Friday, between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.
- 2) Use our drop box beside the front door (cheques only).
- 3) Payments can be mailed to the address indicated on your bill.
- 4) At most financial institutions.
- 5) Through online banking.
- 6) Pre-authorized payment plan.

Tax bills

If your tax bill indicates a balance forward, interest has been calculated to the current billing date. Interest will be applied at 1.25% on the first day of each month thereafter. If you have questions regarding your tax bill, please contact the town's Treasury Department at 705-429-3844.

Mayor for a Day winners open town council meeting

Winners of the town's first-ever Mayor for a Day contest opened the May 29 council meeting.

Grade 5 student Valentina Marincola and Grade 3 student Brooke Astolfi were chosen as the contest winners by an independent panel of municipal staff.

The two girls were judged on the drawings they submitted and on the ideas they put forward about what they would do if Mayor of Wasaga Beach.

More than 15 youth from across Wasaga Beach entered the contest.

Throughout the day on May 29, the two winners spent time with Mayor Brian Smith. They helped the mayor with paperwork and toured municipal facilities, such as the fire hall.