



Wasaga Beach Council Highlights

From the Jan. 22, 2019 meeting

Town Council priorities set for 2018-2022 term

Responding to the needs of residents, businesses, and visitors, and striving to continue the town's long and proud history of growth, council approved 11 goals for this term.

Members of council created the goals during a series of five meetings with town staff earlier this month. They discussed key issues raised during the campaign and integrated them with the priorities that staff were working on.

"This collaborative effort has led to the creation of realistic goals that will guide council in its decision making and assist staff in building achievable and affordable action plans that will reflect and advance council's priorities," Mayor Nina Bifulchi said.

The mayor noted the establishment of council's goals is the first step in the development of a comprehensive strategic plan for the town.

"Over the coming weeks, staff will bring forward the vision, mission, and values statements, along with the action plans for each of the priorities for council's consideration," Mayor Bifulchi said. "The plan will be monitored during the year and the goals updated heading into each budget cycle."

Council's priorities for this term:

- 1) Determine the town's role in the development of the downtown area and beachfront;
- 2) Determine the best location(s) and build a new twin pad arena and library;
- 3) Promote and facilitate the construction of affordable, attainable, and safe housing;
- 4) Support the private sector in growing and diversifying the tax base;
- 5) Continue to build a safer and healthier community, mindful of the needs of various neighbourhoods in town;

- 6) Implement changes to council's governance and structure to improve accountability and transparency;
- 7) Maintain the financial health of the town while meeting the service needs of the community;
- 8) Build relationships with outside organizations and stakeholders based on mutual respect for the different roles that are played in the development of a community;
- 9) Review the town's assets and determine a strategy to deal with them in the best interest of the municipality;
- 10) Build pride in the community through effective communication, events, and initiatives;
- 11) Build an efficient, well-functioning, customer-oriented organization to deliver on council's priorities.

"The trust residents have placed with council members is something each elected member around our table takes seriously. Working in partnership with town staff, we aim to fulfill each priority identified so that our town is a better place today and in the years to come," Mayor Bifulchi said.

Council receives letter on regional government review announcement

Council received a letter from the province about a recently announced review of regional governments in Ontario.

"Building on what's worked well, the review will identify improvements to make better use of taxpayer dollars while ensuring government works efficiently and effectively for the people," Municipal Affairs Minister Steve Clark said in the letter.

He noted that while "Simcoe County is not a regional municipality, the rate of growth in the county is similar to that of many regional municipalities," and added to "help ensure that local government can respond to future growth efficiently and effectively, Simcoe County and its member municipalities will be included in the regional government review."

Clark said the town can expect to hear from the two advisors; Michael Fenn and Ken Seiling, soon and that they will outline how the municipality will be engaged.

The town plans to participate fully in the review.

Town exploring options to help with snow removal

Councillor David Foster, chair of the Public Works Section of Coordinated Committee, advised council that committee directed staff to look at options to help residents experiencing trouble with driveway snow removal.

The direction came after a presentation by local resident Sasha-Rose Dileo.

She said some residents need assistance with snow removal after the town plow has gone by.

Kevin Lalonde, director of public works, will research options and report to committee.

Steady ridership for Wasaga Beach Transit

Council received the Wasaga Beach Transit Report for December 2018.

Ridership was down slightly in December. There were 7,554 rides taken in the last month of 2018, compared to 7,669 in November.

Ridership in December was up 855 rides when compared to the same period a year ago.

Learn more about Wasaga Beach Transit here: <http://bit.ly/2wEkghd>.

Council receives cemetery report for information

The Wasaga Beach Cemetery, established in 1995, continues to play an important part in the community.

Council received the 2018 Year End Cemetery Report for information.

Deputy Clerk Laura Borland, who serves as cemetery custodian, said in the report the focus for 2018 was maintaining the cemetery grounds.

She noted there were 33 interments at the cemetery last year, compared to 32 in 2017.

Now that Phase 3 of the cemetery is complete, the expansion of roads, lots, and

drainage work is required, Borland said. The work is a line item in the 2019 draft budget.

Read the full report here:

<http://bit.ly/2shzExU>.

Constant Contact e-mail program approved to enhance communications

Council approved establishing a Constant Contact account to enhance communications with the public.

Constant Contact is an e-mail communication tool.

The web-based service will allow the public to sign up to receive e-mails and e-newsletters from the town.

The town plans to roll out the new communications device later this year.

Town joining Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Organization

The Town of Wasaga Beach is planning to re-join the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Organization.

Council approved membership with the organization on Tuesday night.

The organization is a “coalition” of municipal officials who advocate for the “protection and restoration of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River.”

The organization has more than 130 members in the United States and Canada.

Mayor Nina Bifulchi will serve as the town's representative.

The annual membership fee is \$2,750. Membership is conditional on the approval of the town's 2019 budget as the membership fee is a budget line item.

Gross salary increase approved for council members

Town council approved an increase to its gross salary, effective Jan. 1, 2019.

The change ensures that council's "net remuneration is equivalent to the net remuneration that existed on Dec. 31, 2018," deputy treasurer Kathy Wilson said in a staff report.

For many years, the Ontario Municipal Act permitted elected members of council to receive one-third of their wage as a tax-free component related to expenses incurred carrying out their duties.

However, new federal tax regulations that went into effect on Jan. 1, 2019 eliminated the tax exemption.

The adjustment to council's gross salary ensures that despite the new federal regulations members of town council continue to receive the same net pay as in the past.

Read the full report here:
<http://bit.ly/2shzExU>.

Additional days for Wasaga Beach After-Hours Clinic

Council OK'd two additional days for the Wasaga Beach After-Hours Clinic.

Currently, the clinic is open Monday and Thursday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at 12 Ramblewood Dr., Unit 202.

Starting the week of Jan. 28, the clinic will also be open Wednesday from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Saturday hours will roll out once staffing for the day is determined. The clinic will be open on Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon.

For more on the clinic, see here:
<http://bit.ly/2qzwEfw>.

Town participating in the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail

The Town of Wasaga Beach will take part in the extension of the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail through the municipality.

As well, the town will supply hardware and labour for the installation of the trail signage on roads that are under municipal jurisdiction.

Council approved taking part in the trail project on Tuesday night.

The trail is an initiative of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust, a registered charity, established by a Royal Commission in 1988.

The trail is a continuous multi-use route along the Canadian shoreline of the Great Lakes. Currently it spans 3,000 kilometres.

The proposed trail route through Wasaga Beach generally follows the Shore Lane Trail.

Completion of the trail through town will involve collaboration between the town and the town's Healthy Community Network advisory committee. The County of Simcoe will be covering the annual cost. The town will contribute through staff time in determining the final route alignment, and the cost of hardware and installation of signage in 2019/2020.

For more on the project, see the staff report here: <http://bit.ly/2shzExU>.

Calls for service up in 2018: Fire Department Report

Town council received the January 2019 Fire Department report for information.

The report showed that calls for service were up. There were 1,562 calls in 2018, compared to 1,478 in 2017.

Calls included six structure fires, five vehicle fires, 88 motor vehicle crashes, as well as 1,016 medical calls.

Put your bib on! Ribfest lined up for Civic Holiday weekend in August 2019

Town council approved hosting the second annual Ribfest Aug. 2 to 5.

The event will take place in the Third Street Parking lot next to the main beach.

Organized by BWG Events Group, the event first took place in Wasaga Beach in 2018.

The four-day culinary festival will feature specialty food and beverage vendors, as well as family entertainment, including bands and activities for all ages.

BWG Events Group is a registered Not for Profit. They will donate the proceeds from the event to a local cause.

Work continues on the draft 2019 municipal budget

Mayor Nina Bifulchi advised council that earlier in the day a Committee of the Whole budget meeting took place.

It marked the second budget meeting held by Committee of the Whole.

Residents can watch the meeting here: <http://bit.ly/2T7V8cB>.

During the session, staff presented additional information requested by council during the first budget meeting on Dec. 18.

The additional information included the following:

- 1) A full summary of all costs associated with the beachfront operations since the commercial properties were purchased in 2015;
- 2) A full update on all of the commercial property leases;

- 3) A consolidated summary of the advertising account;
- 4) Funds spent on the Downtown Master Plan to date;
- 5) A comparison between 2014 and 2018 of: the amount of reserves, debt-debenture and reserve borrowings, and staffing levels;
- 6) An explanation of what was spent in the corporate initiatives budget over the last four years.

To review the information presented, see the meeting agenda for Jan. 22 and the supporting documents here:

<http://bit.ly/2MnoEbA>.

Treasurer Jocelyn Lee, towards the end of yesterday's budget meeting, presented council with a "decision chart" that gives an overview of the proposed additions to the budget.

The chart includes information about the cost of each item.

The chart also includes columns that allow council members to indicate if they would like to include a particular item in the budget, exclude, or if they would like to include or exclude but first need more information.

Council was asked to review the information presented and speak to departments about any matters they have questions on.

The Senior Leadership Team will be reviewing the chart as well, and any new

information that has arisen, and will bring forward recommendations for council's consideration at the next budget meeting.

The public can review the chart here:

<http://bit.ly/2RHRUzY>.

Council will hold its next budget meeting at 4 p.m. on Feb. 5. Draft 2 of the budget will be presented at the meeting. The draft will incorporate changes determined through discussion by council and staff to date.

Important **facts** to keep in mind about the proposed 2019 Operating and Capital budget at this point:

- The proposed 2019 budget is in its early stages and is subject to further changes;
- The draft operating budget sits at **\$39.7-million**;
- The draft capital budget – money used for infrastructure investments – sits at **\$26.6-million**;
- At this point in the process, the budget sits at a **5.71** percent municipal tax rate increase. It is anticipated that this number will **decrease** as council goes through the budget review process and settles on **final** numbers for 2019.
- Before council approves the budget, the town will hold a public meeting to allow for input from the community. The town will publish notice of the meeting in The Sun, the town website, and on the municipality's social media channels.

The town will provide further updates on the draft budget as the process moves ahead.

-Wasaga Beach Council Highlights is produced monthly by the town's Communications Department.

-For the official record of council's meeting, please see the minutes at www.wasagabeach.com.

-You can watch the meeting here: <https://www.rogerstv.com/show?lid=12&rid=72&sid=5800>

-Follow the Town of Wasaga Beach on Facebook and Twitter.