



Council News & Notes

From Wednesday, January 24, 2024

Upcoming Meetings

Council Meeting
February 13

9 am

Regular Council Meeting

Council Meeting
February 27

6 pm

Regular Council Meeting

[View Calendar >>](#)

Mayors' Message

Thank you to everyone who participated in today's 2024 Public Budget Presentation including all staff who worked tirelessly at paring back costs and cutting programming. More on the budget process towards the end of my remarks.

Council has also committed to reviewing Zoning Bylaws to promote housing densification along with affordable housing development. We are looking at tiny homes (400-600 sq. ft.) and smaller homes (900-1200 sq. ft.). At our recent delegation with the Ministry of Infrastructure, Minister Surma, we tabled some creative options to help small rural developers build. We noted that small rural developers do not have the financial clout associated with big city developers. They have neither their financial investors nor their deep pockets. Small rural developers must go it alone and it is extremely difficult to front subdivision infrastructure costs at these interest rates. I will provide a more detailed briefing on the provincial government's response at our next Council Meeting.

On January 10th I attended the Hastings County Community & Human Services Committee.

On January 11th I facilitated a meeting with a local developer and Quinte Conservation.

On January 12th we hosted our first Developers Forum. This closed session was an opportunity to hear from four developers on their municipal subdivision plans. Each presented privately touching upon housing types, challenges, green initiatives and infrastructure costs. Developers tabled some pretty amazing and exciting plans but as might be expected we are strapped with having to fund infrastructure costs at today's interest rates. Not sure if residents are aware that all infrastructure costs for new developments must be borne by the developer. This includes water and sewer costs, sidewalks, street lighting and road paving.

On January 16th I chaired the Hastings County Planning & Development Meeting. I also attended the County Finance, Property & Personnel meeting that same day. On January 17th I participated in the Central Hastings Support Network Transit Committee meeting following which I met with Mayor Joanne Albert. She remains a great sounding board to bounce off ideas. I always appreciate her counsel.

On January 18th I had a Zoom meeting with Adam Greche our latest contact at Emergency Preparedness. In May 2023 MP Kramp-Neuman arranged a meeting for me with Pavan Sapra and Andrew Green as I was trying to solicit federal financial support for our residents impacted by the 2022 tornado. By June 2023 I convinced them to have a serious look to see what they could do regarding financial assistance. At their request I had residents and businesses assemble their out-of-pocket costs along with receipts, which we in turn forwarded to the Ministry. Every one month I would follow-up as to the status of our inquiry. In December I noted that it had been six months without an answer. Adam Greche, new to the issue, got saddled with telling us that there

would be no money. The story went like this...it really is a Provincial matter and the Province said there was nothing they can do so there was nothing the federal government could do. We already knew from the get go, as did Emergency Preparedness, that the province was not going to help with such costs. The intent was for them to bend the rules and help us. They seem to have lost sight of their original intent which is not surprising with how inefficient they were in getting back to us. I am reaching out to MP Kramp-Neuman to help me continue the fight.

On January 18th I attended a Kiwanis meeting. On January 19th I was joined by Deputy Mayor DeMarsh and Councillor Flieler as we raised a flag commemorating January as Alzheimer's Awareness month. The tie I am wearing this evening was gifted to me by the Prince Edward Hastings Alzheimer's Society. It is a blue tie with forget me not flowers. I wear it proudly.

On January 20th I headed to the ROMA conference accompanied by Deputy Mayor DeMarsh, Councillor Palmateer, CAO Raybone and Community & Economic Development Manager Hardesty. On the 21st I had a lengthy interview with CBC re what we were hoping to achieve at the ROMA conference and what are some of the issues we have been facing. Thank you Megan Abraham from Redbrick Communications for arranging the interview. Shortly after we had a delegation with Minister Surma from Infrastructure. Councillor Valiquette made a special trip to join us for that meeting. On the 22nd we had infrastructure delegations with Marit Stiles, NDP and Leader of the opposition and with Bonnie Crombie, Leader of the Liberal Party. Also that day we had a delegation with Parliamentary Assistant Byers re a commercial vacancy tax. On the 23rd we had a delegation with Parliamentary Assistant Smith re increased funding for libraries. Also on the 23rd I meet with Green Party leader Mike Schreiner. All of our delegation speeches will be included as an information item in our February 13th Council package. Personal reflections on those meetings will be shared at a later date as I make my way through the highs and the lows, with moments of success and moments of complete frustration and anger.

Prior to this Meeting we had our 2024 Public Budget Presentation. Thank you to all who attended and for your questions. We share your concerns about the impact of this budget on our residents. This Council has struggled at great length to table a budget with a 17.8% tax increase. The fact that we originally faced an increase of 54.4% is indeed beyond alarming. We have done everything in our power to reduce this tax burden. We literally are sickened by it. In fact, it pains me and my fellow Councilors to know that 25% of the youth in our schools are food insecure, and even though I have enlisted the help of many to address this problem by creating the Food for All Committee, I stand before you today and say I am raising your taxes by 17.8%. We recognize that there are those in our community who are already hanging on by a thread and yet I am raising your tickets by 17.8%. And we have no choice. I want those who will be greatly impacted to know that no one will lose their home. We will be working with Hastings County Community and Human Services to provide tax relief assistance where needed. Furthermore, we have been lobbying the provincial government including all three parties. And although we did not get the support we expected from the provincial government we were assured that others, the NDP and Liberals, would fight on our behalf. This Council will continue its fight for you. The battle has just begun. We are prepared to take on both the federal and provincial government. It is okay for the province to give Toronto \$1.5 billion to cover their deficit, \$500 million/year for the next three years; and take back the Don Valley and Gardner Expressway. But we don't have a dime for you Municipality of Tweed. We want our share and come hell or high water we are going to get it.

I will be tabling more on how our delegations went at our next Council Meeting.

I want to thank each member of Council and all Staff...the best Team going.....for all that you do for this community through good times and bad. It is a privilege and honour to work with you.

Sidewalk Plow

Council approved the purchase of a used trackless sidewalk plow and approved the sale of current assets to offset the costs of the plow.

Asset Retirement Obligations Policy

Council received the Asset Retirement Obligations Policy Report. Council approved the Asset Retirement Obligations Policy as presented and authorized staff to prepare a By-law to adopt the Asset Retirement Obligations Policy for passing at the next Regular Council Meeting.

Budget By-law

Council passed By-law 2024-04 a By-law to adopt a budget of all sums required for the Municipality of Tweed for the year 2024.

User Fees By-law

Council passed By-law 2024-05 a By-law to impose fees and charges on persons for services and activities carried out by the Municipality. [You can find user fees at this link.](#)

Water & Sewer Rates By-law

Council passed By-law 2024-06, a By-law to provide for the billing and collecting of water and sewer charges in the Municipality of Tweed.

National Wall of Remembrance

Council approved a request from the National Wall of Remembrance Association for support of the National Wall of Remembrance Project in the amount of \$349.00 plus tax.

Annual Violence Awareness & Random Acts of Kindness Week

Council proclaimed the week of March 4th - March 10th, 2024 as the 28th Annual Violence Awareness and Random Acts of Kindness Week in the Municipality of Tweed.