

## Update on potential ratepayers committee

### **To the Editor,**

I want to thank everyone who took their time to come out on a snowy Tuesday evening because they are concerned about our communities and our people. The passion and conviction in the room was very inspiring. We all love Bancroft and we want it to be the town we know it can be. We want it affordable for all. We want everyone to feel like they have a voice in what is happening and that they are encouraged to give their ideas and input into the process.

From the amazing people who showed up, we did a quick check in with people to see what their major concerns were. Since we had about 26 people we decided that we could probably break into four groups to start addressing some of the issues that were identified. Communications between the people and all levels of government were something that could/needs to be improved upon. At times there seems to be a real disconnect between the people and their elected representatives. We are looking for ways to make this better for all.

Taxes were another major concern. We know that we have one of the highest mill rates in the county and with about 17 per cent of our tax bills not being paid we need to find ways to improve the situation for all.

Water and sewer rates are a real concern for many. We know that about 10 per cent of our people are struggling to pay their bi-monthly bills and that three properties were disconnected in 2017.

We also know that around \$24,000 in water and sewer bills were rolled onto people's tax bills so we know that some of our people are really struggling with this issue. We need to make clean, safe water and sewers affordable for all.

Employment/economic development and our dump were also identified as concerns for many attending the meeting. Without jobs and employment opportunities we are fighting a losing battle to keep Bancroft affordable for all. We believe that there are opportunities that we as a community can help create. As our last major liquid asset, the dump is of major concern for many because we do not want to have it used for short-term gain and then end up with long-term pain. We need to keep this important asset for all.

There were also discussions regarding candidates for the municipal election this fall. If you are considering running for council this fall please plan to attend a Candidate Information Workshop at Dungannon Recreation Centre on Tuesday April 24, at 6:30 p.m.

This is being hosted by Hastings County Clerks and Treasurers' Association. No registration required.

If you are interested in joining our committees or have ideas or suggestions to help move our communities forward please connect with us. You can call or text Wilma at 613-334-7724 or email ? [wbrethour@hotmail.com](mailto:wbrethour@hotmail.com). We are also on Facebook ? Concerned Citizens of Bancroft & Dungannon.

*Wilma Brethour*