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Bancroft council supports Alzheimer awareness



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By Kristena Schutt-Moore

During their first meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 11 the new Bancroft council took on road work, Alzheimer's disease, and reorganized committees of council and council itself.
Mayor Paul Jenkins announced a new framework to conduct meetings and new community engagement. Meeting times will be changed to afternoons at 3 p.m. to encourage people to come out and council will be asking for public participation at each committee.
Council will be allowing community members to sit on committees of council. The council and committees will be looking into cost effective solutions and productive ways to support Bancroft.
Council then heard a delegation from Sarah Krieger, the co-ordinator of the Alzheimer Society Hastings-Prince Edward who came to council to ask them to officially designate January 2019 as Alzheimer awareness month.
Each year roughly 25,000 Canadians are diagnosed with dementia.
For the health-care system this means a higher demand for services. Canada spends almost $10.4 billion annually supporting those with dementia. However, that is not the biggest concern for the Alzheimer Society.
Those suffering from mental illnesses like Alzheimer's disease and dementia can be stigmatized, feared and excluded from everyday life. The members of the Alzheimer Society would like to change that.
Stigma is still one of the biggest barriers to living well with dementia. Krieger said that ?Communities need to know that it is not just their disease, it's our disease as well.?
Each year the Alzheimer awareness month is a chance for Alzheimer Societies across the country to bring awareness to Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia and make a call for action. During January 2019 they will be looking at stigma and how it affects those living with dementia, their families and caregivers.
Krieger says that those with dementia can often live a healthy and active life in their communities. Yet over 40 per cent of people with the disease feel like they are excluded from everyday life.
One of the ways the Alzheimer Society is raising awareness is through the annual Walk for Alzheimer's on Saturday, Jan. 26 and several information booths that will be put up at supporting businesses throughout Alzheimer awareness month.
The council supported Krieger's request and officially made January 2019 Alzheimer awareness month.
Looking at budgets
During the North Hastings Public Library board minutes Jenkins announced that the library will be experiencing issues in the budget this year. One of the items needed will up to $10,000 to cover pay equity.
The North Hastings Community Centre is also looking at a budget shortfall, but that will be determined by the amount of ice rentals

the arena can pull in. Councillor Barry McGibbon said by the end of the year the board will know more.
The Bancroft North Hastings Heritage Museum however was successful in pulling in another grant. This time it is from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and will be going toward the creation of local history curriculum for area schools.
The Bancroft Business Improvement Area reported a need for more board members from local businesses as the volunteers and representation on the board is getting ?pretty small.?
Mullett becomes deputy mayor
Council voted in the new deputy mayor. Councillor Charles Mullett was the only applicant.
The new term for a deputy mayor is for two years and then council will vote for a second time and appoint another deputy mayor for the second half of council's term.
The newly appointed Deputy Mayor Mullett thanked council for supporting him, but said he was also looking forward to the end of his term when someone else with the interest in the position will take over.
Councillors adjust remuneration
Council's remuneration was a big topic of discussion. All councillors get a one-third tax exemption. However in 2019 that exemption will be gone due to a change in federal legislation.
Staff presented a tax report and council made a resolution to increase council members' income to help cover the income lost.
The federal government changed the legislation in 2017 so that all councillors would no longer have the tax exemption by 2019. This was met with lobbying by municipalities over the past year, however it did not affect the federal government's decision.
There were two choices, according to acting clerk Lianne Sauter, and that was to either keep the gross pay the same and the take-home pay would be less, or increase the gross pay so that the take-home pay would be the same as what council members receive now.
Sauter said the County of Hastings and other municipalities in the area have adopted the increase in gross pay so Bancroft would be following the example of the county.
Councillor Val Miles had another idea and suggested that council did not take an increase and pay taxes just like they would for any other job. This would mean the take-home pay would be less than what council members had previously been receiving.
Jenkins said council was not getting a pay raise but instead the increase in gross pay was a way to keep council even in finances compared to last year.
Councillor Wayne Wiggins supported taking the increase, saying that he didn't think any of the citizens would want council to take a cut in pay.
Mullett did the math and explained the increase would be roughly $9,570 for the whole council for a year which is about a 0.2 per cent increase in council wages. He continued on, saying ?I don't like the idea of it, but there are people who do a lot of work. And I think the ratepayers will understand.?
When it came to the voting for the final decision only one councillor voted against taking the increase and that was Miles.
Other business
As of the start of 2019 the Bancroft council meetings will now start at 3 p.m. while the committee meetings will start at 5 p.m. Council decided to make these changes to encourage the public to attend and participate in meetings and committees. Every committee of council will now allow members of the community to sit on the board. Every meeting is scheduled to be only two hours long.
The new council then supported the 2019 capital road work plan for Chemaushgon road. The plan is to grind and pave the road from Station Street to the new section by the airport as well as the hill at the boundary of Faraday Township and the Town of Bancroft. The past council had listed Chemaushgon as a priority but could not tie the new council's hands to make the decision of fixing the road, so the final decision was up to the new council.
Councillor Andra Kauffeldt wanted to know if the plans for the road were part of the strategic and capital plans for the town. Jenkins confirmed it was and the plan was passed.
Council also supported the annual Christmas Eve Community Dinner that will be happening at the Royal Canadian Legion Bancroft Branch 181 at 5 p.m. Every year the roads and works departments help with the cleaning of waste and recycling and assists the OPP auxiliary with the delivery of meals to those who cannot travel to town.
The council continued with their supportive mood till the end of the meeting by giving the Bancroft legion a 100 per cent municipal tax exemption for up to 10 years. Bancroft was one of the few municipalities in Ontario that was not giving a tax exemption to a local legion.
Now with the legion losing their commercial renters the council thought it would be a good time to bring the exemption into play.

The bylaw is to exempt those lands that operate as a memorial, clubhouse or athletic grounds for those who served in the armed forces of his or her majesty's or of an ally. However, if the building were to be sold the bylaw would be voided and the new property owner would have to pay taxes.