

Town extends deadline for water line imaging

By Nate Smelle

Council engaged in a wide-ranging discussion pertaining to the town's water and wastewater system at their meeting on Sept. 12. CAO Hazel Lambe informed council that the deadline for the completion of the camera imaging underway to find the potential source of infiltration in the system's main lines had been extended from Aug. 31 to the end of September. The reason for the extension, she said, is because the contractors discovered a significantly larger amount of debris in the pipes than expected. Lambe indicated that the high volume of debris and extra labour needed to conduct the camera imaging and flush the lines will cost the municipality an additional \$9,843. Although the town's pipes are old, Lambe said the contractor told her that they are still in better condition than those in places such as Peterborough. After finding fist-sized rocks blocking the flow in some of the lines, she said they also mentioned that they had yet to see pipes so congested.

Despite the additional build up in the lines, Lambe said that no significant damage to the system has been discovered at this point. Once the flushing and the imaging of the remaining line has been completed, staff recommends working with the contractor to expand the project to include imaging of lateral lines and connections on private properties. According to Lambe, staff also recommended that dye testing be conducted and flow metres be installed at strategic locations. She said the dye testing could provide valuable information regarding whether the source of infiltration is coming from rooftop connections.

Referring to statistics for 2017, recently provided to the town by Ontario Clean Water Agency, Lambe acknowledged that flows entering the wastewater plant appear to be much higher this year than in years past. Having yet to find the source of the infiltration, council remains puzzled by the reason for the increased flow. Acting mayor Paul Jenkins said there is a four-dimensional matrix of variables at play which need to be investigated in the search for the origin of the problem. These include river height, pump run-time, precipitation and what's coming out of the water treatment plant. Jenkins is hopeful that the new water and wastewater committee including Councillor Bill Kilpatrick will be able to prevent these types of problems from costing the town in the future. "When we have our new contract in place we should be able to monitor these on a much more regular basis, as opposed to having to call and ask for information which could take a couple weeks to get," said Jenkins.

"I'm hoping through the committee we identify and develop a template we can draw expectations from through our recordings. Then we will have something to compare against month to month or quarter to quarter, and we won't have to keep shooting in the dark looking through the variables all the time."

In her report, Lambe also announced that the town had now received the final bids from the three companies competing for the contract to manage Bancroft's water and wastewater system. The companies still in the running include Peterborough Utility Services Inc., Veolia Environmental Services and OCWA - the company currently managing the town's water and sewer. By the end of the month, council will have reviewed each of the bids and received a recommendation from D.M. Wills and Associates regarding which company would be the best fit for the town moving forward. Council plans to announce which of the companies will be managing the town's water and sewer system at their next meeting in October.