

No water shut offs in 2018: town

By Jim Eadie

The following are brief reports of items discussed at the April 24 meeting of Bancroft's water and wastewater committee.

Arthur Smith, municipal interim treasurer presented his "Non-payment comparison report" for the first quarter of 2018.

"Short and sweet," he said. "To date during the first quarter, there was no disconnects. They are very rare."

Clerk Kim Fransky told council that after two billings, or four months of non-payment the landowner receives a letter from the town.

Discussion then takes place to arrange payment plan, or the outstanding water bill is transferred to the taxes. Fransky noted that it is very rare not to be able to work out a payment plan.

"If we always have a way of collecting through the tax rolls, then why do we have shut-offs?" asked Mayor Paul Jenkins.

"In the case of tenants the landlord asks for the water to be turned off, or the landlord can evict," said CAO Hazel Lambe. "The water bill for the landlord keeps accruing" larger and larger."

"But if we can always collect," said Councillor Wayne Wiggins.

"But, remember," said Lambe. "The old bylaw is written such that as soon as it goes to taxes, then we can disconnect."

"The landlord has a dilemma," said Councillor Mary Kavanaugh. "Both the landlord and tenant are notified" The landlord can ask to have the water shut off. The landlord is not subsidizing the tenant."

Committee considers new smart meter system for water consumption

Bancroft council's water and wastewater committee heard a pitch for a new smart meter system.

Al Hough from CORIX water products offered a system using data collection from current home water consumption meters via a cellular tower system, avoiding the costs of new towers, radio links, and all of the associated maintenance costs. According to Hough, his system involves no walking route meter reading, or drive by systems.

"A device placed in the home sends data at 15-minute intervals," said Hough, "The customer can look at their consumption stats in real time online. You have an immediate alarm built in that will detect leaks or inflow immediately. The company offered to install a few units as a demonstration for the municipality.

"It is a plug and play system," said Hough. Each home device plugs into already installed meters in the home, and data is collected and bills prepared by software at the municipal office.

The committee instructed staff to prepare and come back with a resolution for the next meeting.