

Reuse days coming to Hastings Highlands

By Sarah Sobanski

Hastings Highlands is looking to hold reuse days after its operations manager recommended against a reuse centre.

Council directed staff to look into a reuse centre for one of its landfills after Councillor Tracy Hagar suggested there be a place residents can drop off items they don't need anymore (but isn't garbage) for other residents to reuse.

According to a report by operations manager Adrian Tomasini, "the operation of reuse centres at municipal waste disposal sites requires approval of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change." This process, he stated, would cost up to \$3,000. The cost of building a structure to hold re-use items, and the cost of training and staffing it, would also be added on top.

Councillor Nancy Matheson brought up a reuse system that she had used when she lived in the city.

"A couple of times a year, at an advertised time, residents can put their items out at the end of the driveway for others to pickup. That's the same system we had when we lived in Niagara Falls and it seemed to work quite well. It eliminates the liability and a lot of the costs [as opposed to the reuse centre]," she suggested.

Tomasini agreed that this was a better idea.

"It gives people the opportunity to pickup," said Hagar, noting the municipality could advertise the days and how long people would be able to pickup for. She suggested a couple of days in the summer.

What community members in need didn't pick up would be the responsibility of the property owner to put away in the end, said Mayor Vivian Bloom.

She also noted there were local organizations looking for gently used furniture and household for people to donate to.

"I could see having [a reuse centre] at one of our landfills if the people really wanted it but we already have four within a short circumference that are desperately looking for these things," said Bloom, noting Word of Life Outreach in Lake St. Peter and Highland Grove. "That's another thing I know that needs to be promoted a little bit more as well. I know at times they're crying for furniture for families that are in need."

Matheson said that companies such as those the mayor spoke of were making note of the reuse days in Niagara Falls.

"Say Madonna House would send out a couple of vans and they would take back what they need. The stuff is being picked up and the stuff is being used. People are making a point if it's well advertised to get out those days," she said.

Hagar motioned for staff to return with information on reuse days in the municipality.