

Did you also know

To the Editor,

The recent Did You Know...article prompted a gentleman to phone and thank me for writing it. He said the article encouraged him to submit a proposal to collect garbage in Hastings Highlands (HH). I am informed that his proposal has been received by HH office. That's what I call 'Good News.'

Someone obviously sidetracked you into believing I made a Motion at the final meeting of the last Council to cease garbage collection 'permanently' in HH. Did you know that news of 'no response to our tenders for garbage proposals' was only reported to us at the end of the last meeting of that Council's term? The information may have arrived too late to include on the agenda, however, if the mayor had prior knowledge of the situation she did not communicate it to her Council. Consequently, most members were shocked to hear this news. At this late date, with no other alternatives to pursue, we were advised that a Motion was needed to notify residents of the current situation, since Moore's contract ended Dec.31, 2014.

As an out-going Councillor, I was asked by other Members to make the Motion--needed to notify residents of the last day of garbage pick-up--with the explanation quoted by Mr. McPherson: 'due to the fact that we did not receive any response to our request for proposals.'

The Motion was never intended by me or other Councillors to mean the end of garbage collection in HH. We considered it an interim necessity. After all, garbage collection had been entrenched within amalgamation since the year 2000.

Therefore, I did not add the extra words as quoted, 'and other options were considered too costly.' Nor was I responsible for the wording that followed regarding hiring extra staff etc as that was left up to office staff to determine.

Without warning, news of the 'no response to tenders' landed on Council like a bombshell at the eleventh hour of the end of their term. Members at that time will confirm--we were given no other options to consider, much less to decide they were 'too costly' to implement. It simply did not happen. This could/should have been corrected when the Minutes were ratified at the next meeting of the new Council. Of course, I was not present, thus I never saw the Minutes, so, thank you Mr. McPherson for pointing out this discrepancy.

Actually it's rather humorous, but somewhat far-fetched to suggest that my Motion last year caused HH residents to be without garbage pick-up for all these months. Maybe Bono should be sending me his garbage bills.

Mr. MacPherson prefers to downplay the effect of increased vehicle traffic on our roads. The estimated 3,500 extra vehicles on the roads each week to dispose of household garbage seems a reasonable estimate for a municipality with over 7,000 voters (not 4,100). I think ratepayers get the drift: every part-time or full time resident has to dispose of their own garbage, say once a week. You don't see them hiking it down the road with garbage on their backs; ergo, it's reasonable to assume they must be driving a vehicle to dump it. Of course, some residents are burning it, others reportedly are just dumping it in the bush somewhere. Let's be clear, no-one knows the overall cumulative effect of getting our own garbage to a dump site; we do know we are creating an increasingly greater amount of needless pollution to our environment. Plus, more than half of our garbage is now recyclable, if handled properly, generating substantial income for HH. With new packaging individual household garbage appears to be on the rise. If handled correctly at the dump sites, there should be an increase in revenue this year. The important 'iffs' in the above scenarios need to be seriously considered.

If any of the above appears to be a 'jab at the mayor' so be it. She was elected Leader of this Council, yet has little or no contact with her Council. In the past 8 months no positive steps have been taken to resolve the garbage issue.

Nevertheless, hope is on the horizon. Council now has a real option to consider in the recent proposal submitted. Plus, kudos to Councillor Matheson's Motion, Council voted to invite Mr. Moore to attend the Sept.9 Council meeting (9 a.m.) I'm told those who cannot attend may submit questions or comments to the township office--one week before the meeting, or send your comments to a Council member. FYI: A Petition is being circulated for residents to sign if they want garbage pick-up restored.

If this meeting achieves a positive result -then- I will find a good book to read. I suggest you do the same sir - then you can run for the 'hot' seat on Council.

Lorraine Fell
Hastings Highlands