

Highlands East to help curling club get running again

By Angelica Ingram

The following are brief reports of items discussed at the Jan. 11 meeting of Highlands East council.

The executive of the Wilberforce Curling Club is asking for the municipality's help in getting the club up and running following a brine leak that forced its closure on Christmas Eve.

Club vice-president Darrell McQuigge made a delegation to councillors asking that Highlands East help them repair and upgrade the piping and replace the existing floor so that the club can be operating by this coming fall.

McQuigge outlined the value of the club to the community, including benefits to local business, recreation opportunities and much more, highlighting its importance to not just the village but the municipality and county as a whole.

According to the vice-president, the overall scope of the project would include upgrading the ice plant equipment, which the club has already been working on prior to the brine leak.

“Additional revenue and support is now required to cover the replacement of the curling rink floor and piping at the same time as the purchase and installation of the new mechanical ice plant and new mechanical room,” he said in a letter to council.

Through the municipality, the club has been successful in receiving a \$150,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for the replacement of the ice plant (see page 1 for story).

McQuigge said if Highlands East is supportive of moving forward with the repairs, the club will try to raise between \$35,000 to \$50,000 for the overall cost of the project.

Councillors were very supportive of moving forward with plans to get the club operating again.

“I would very much like to see us continue doing good work with the club,” said Councillor Joan Barton.

Next steps for the partnership would be to work out a detailed plan for the club and the municipality, put together cost estimates and fundraise.

Council did not make a financial decision about the repairs, but deferred the item to budget deliberations, which begin on Jan. 25.

Smokin' Jake's BBQ truck heading back to Gooderham

Those who love pulled pork and southern delicacies will have to redirect their route back to Gooderham this summer.

Local chef Shane Leach has decided to take his popular eatery Smokin Jake's BBQ Shack back to Gooderham from his previous location of Eagle Lake.

Leach told councillors he should have never moved his food truck and would like to move it back permanently to his previous Gooderham location, which was at 10752 County Road 503.

The owner of the property is submitting a zoning application to rezone a portion of the lot from rural to general commercial. The same property was granted a temporary use permit in 2010 for a take-out food establishment.

“This three-year permission has now expired and the applicant has applied to re-establish legal permission to operate a take-out food establishment,” wrote clerk Irene Cook.

Leach requested the application fee be waived for the rezoning request, which was already established in 2010 with the temporary use permission, and honoured.

The municipality has received no letters of objection and no one attended the public meeting regarding the planning item.

“Welcome back,” said Reeve Dave Burton.

A draft bylaw for the zoning change will be prepared by the municipality's planner.

Harcourt events to relocate to Lloyd Watson Memorial Centre

Highlands East is helping out the neighbouring township of Harcourt by lending them a facility following a devastating fire that destroyed the Harcourt Community Centre.

Representative of the Friends of the Harcourt Community Centre, Barb Robertson made a request to council to use the Lloyd Watson Memorial Centre on Feb. 27 for a benefit dance and for the rental fee to be waived for the event.

Robertson also asked if Harcourt's weekly bingo could be held at the hall for a reduced weekly rental fee.

Deputy-reeve Suzanne Partridge said the decision was a “no brainer,” as council should help out their neighbour in need.

Reeve Dave Burton agreed and said it would be up to the Friends to pay for insurance, however they could get a break on the rental

fees.