

## Wollaston council strongly supports firefighters

It is sometimes said that no good deed goes unpunished. Recently volunteer firefighters in Wollaston Township have come in for social media criticism about their efficiency and effectiveness. However, the town council does not share these negative views. Last week, they put their support for their fire department front and centre in a remarkably blunt resolution. To quote:

“Whereas Wollaston Township's Volunteer Fire Department has suffered criticism in recent weeks in public social media posts and in other ways involving gossip and general negative conversation among some members of our local community, and that most of the criticism has been aimed at the leadership of our fire department.

Therefore, be it resolved Wollaston Township Council thanks, supports, and has every confidence in all of our firefighting volunteers including its leadership. Wollaston Township Council recognizes that the duties performed by our Fire Department are vital to our community and that all these volunteers are doing the very best job they can with the resources they have.”

That wasn't the only volunteer problem they addressed. Councillors were surprised to hear that the local Optimist Club was disbanding “due to present circumstances in our community,” including a lack of people willing to serve on the new club executive. Town clerk Jennifer Owen was given a letter to this effect, also stating that the unused portion of the town's grant for community events was being returned. The Optimists made clear that they would not be organizing the planned Canada Day program and fireworks, and were returning their \$1,500 grant from Celebrate Canada.

Former president Linda Patterson expressed regrets, noting how the Optimists Club, in its short year since forming, had organized many community events “not just Canada Day, but Family Day, an Easter celebration, the soap box derby and a Halloween celebration, plus numerous summer activities for kids, including safe biking sessions. However, she said, members were now over-stressed and leery of taking risks putting on events, given the potential for criticism. She did suggest that the club might return after “a break.”

Wollaston council also passed a motion of support for volunteers, as follows:

“Whereas Wollaston Township has at most times in the past been blessed with volunteers on all levels who do wonderful things for our community at large “Some examples are to be found at events in the Legion, in Christmas and Canada Day parades, Friends of the Library, and our local Optimist club to name a few. We know that there are many more instances of volunteerism in our community as well.

Be it resolved that the Council of the Township of Wollaston is very thankful for and greatly appreciates the efforts of all of our community volunteers.”

Owen passed along the motions with the added note: “A Township cannot say thank you enough to those that bring safety, security, spirit and friendship to our communities.”