

Wollaston gets a clean audit

By Jim Eadie

Wollaston township council got some good news at their June 13 regular meeting from their annual financial audit. Joanna Park, partner in Collins Barrow Peterborough, told council they have received a clean auditor's opinion, and they remain in a financially sound position. Park congratulated township staff for their excellent work, and cooperation during the audit. Details of the presentation are available on the township web site.

Acting township roads superintendent Jack Ingram addressed council advancing their request for a new grader. Council has been aware over the past several years of expensive repairs to the current grader which is near or at the end of its working life.

"This is the third used grader in the past 32 years," said Ingram. "And there is lots of costs in there." The grader has broken down in several past projects and they have either had to stop construction or get [grader hire mackay](#) to be able to maintain their schedule.

"There has been considerable downtime this year and last year," noted township clerk Jennifer Cohen.

"Usually at the wrong time too," said Ingram.

Council was told that \$160,000 had been spent in the lifetime of the old grader, and much more shortly just to maintain the safety of the unit. It presently requires front end work and new tires, and the condition of the transmission is up in the air.

Kirk McCaw, roads superintendent is on sick leave but also attended the meeting. "There is a big cost to downtime," he said. "It is very expensive just to get a specialist through the door for repairs."

Ingram told council that there is currently an unused trade show 2017 John Deere model 770G grader that fits their requirements available for purchase in the next few weeks in Peterborough. Ordering a new suitable grader otherwise would mean a delivery time of possibly the end of the year.

Ingram recommended purchasing the currently available grader for the cost of \$319,925 plus taxes, to be financed internally by roads department reserves over 12 years.

After a lengthy discussion, council unanimously voted to approve Ingram's recommendation.

During the clerk's report, it was learned that the township community centre will not be available this summer during most of the month of August. The community centre was built in 1984 attached to the Coe Hill Public School using three grants obtained by the township totaling nearly \$180,000, and \$13,125 school board funding. A 20-year agreement between the school board and the municipality has since expired, but called for the need to obtain permits from the school board for the use of the community centre, which includes the gymnasium. The school board has maintained the structure, and paid the utilities and upkeep.

"The board has made it clear that they own the real estate," said Blair.

On May 26, a correspondence to Wollaston Township stated: "The board has established a plan for the summer (July and August) regarding access to the school buildings by staff and the community to realize a cost savings, and to minimize access to facilities that are undergoing renovations/cleaning. Coe Hill Public School, including the Community Centre will not be available for use from Monday, July 31 to Friday, Aug. 25."

This decision will have an impact on regular community events including Young Stewards Environmental Camp, and weekly community badminton club.

Council moved to establish a Communications Advisory Committee including three community volunteers. The committee appointed will be composed of Reeve Graham Blair, and community volunteers Lee Maidlow, Tere Stinchcomb, and Jane Johnson. More community members are invited to put their name forward if they are interested.

Council is currently also accepting volunteers for a new Economic Development Advisory Committee which will be established at the next regular council meeting.