

## **2019 Newsletter**

### ***Greetings to All Residents and Businesses***

Happy to New Year to everyone! We hope you and your families enjoyed a wonderful holiday season and that 2019 brings health and happiness to you and your loved ones.

### ***Looking Back on 2018***

At the start of 2018, many of our Councillors and Staff were new. I'm happy to say that we navigated the learning curve together and we can all be proud of what's been accomplished. Here are just a few highlights:

- The Upper Jenkins Cove Lift Station was retrofitted through Municipal Capital Works Funding, at a total cost of \$110,000.
- A grant of \$22,500 was received to replace 3 new pumps for sewer lift stations.
- At a cost of \$11,000, the stadium was retrofitted with LED lights, reducing our power bill by up to \$500/month.
- A grant of \$30,000 was received to have an assessment done on our hiking trails which will lay the groundwork for future improvements to our trail system.
- We purchased a new John Deere Loader improving our snow clearing capacity.
- We received approval to proceed with two Municipal Capital Works Projects, namely: an extension of our water & sewer services and road paving. The value of these projects is just shy of \$500,000. Work on both of these projects should commence in the Spring.
- Through the Displaced Fish Plant Worker Program, we employed 27 former plant workers for a combined total of 13,911 hours. These workers completed 21 projects in our community benefiting 7 non-profit organizations as well as various Town owned properties. The quality of work was excellent, as was their professionalism.
- We ran a Community Enhancement Employment Program, which employed 10 people for a total of 2,674 hours. This group braved the cold and repaired the slipways at Tickle Point and Lower Jenkins' Cove, making them both safer and more accessible to the community.
- On the administrative side, a number of modernization initiatives were achieved including the acceptance of debit cards, an upgraded financial management system, and online banking to name a few. These initiatives help to increase our operational efficiency.
- We increased outward communication with residents and businesses by regularly posting on the Town's Facebook page.

### ***The Year Ahead***

Council worked diligently throughout the Fall to put together a budget for 2019 that will keep us on track to achieving both our short-term and long-term goals, while remaining fiscally conservative. We're pleased to announce that we are entering 2019 with a balanced budget of \$2,636,743. This represents an increase of 3% over the 2018 budget. This increase is largely due to an overall increase in property assessment values in our community.

The overarching goals for 2019 are to build capacity to service the Town's evolving needs, upgrade our equipment and infrastructure, develop a new municipal plan, support economic development,

increase our operational efficiency through modernization and increase overall communication and transparency. And, of course, to accomplish this as best we can within our financial constraints.

Here are some highlights from the 2019 budget:

- All tax rates will remain unchanged for 2019.
- The fee to turn on existing curb stops is now \$20 and the fee to turn off a curb stop is \$20. Two days notice is required and only a Town employee is authorized to turn on and off curb stops.
- The Central Newfoundland Waste Management curbside pick up fee is increased from \$79 to \$81/year.
- A large consolidated debt was paid off in mid-2018, bringing the Town's debt service ratio from 23% to 11% (for every dollar earned, 11% goes towards servicing debt), which creates some welcomed flexibility moving forward.
- We have applied for Municipal Capital Works Projects valued at over \$5 million. These projects include replacing a large section of the Town's main water line, upgrading and extending water and sewer services in Bayview, retrofitting a sewer lift station and an engineering assessment on our water tower.
- We will purchase a new pick up truck for public works.
- We will be engaging a consultant to develop a new Municipal Plan and Development Regulations for the Town, which will allow us to manage development through more clearly defined objectives and plan strategically for future development.
- Subject to a successful closing, we have plans to purchase 25 Toulouquet to serve as a new Town Hall, increasing our capacity to grow and meet the service needs of the community. Should we purchase the building, a Visitor Information Centre will be considered to support our tourism industry.
- We will develop a new website for the Town to provide residents, businesses and visitors easy access to Council information (i.e. budget, Council minutes, policies, resources, business listings, etc.).

The full budget is available to the public and you're welcome to request a copy from the Town Office.

Please know that we encourage your participation in our local government so please engage with your Councillors, myself or the Town Manager any time. We want to hear your ideas and your concerns. And, of course, 2019 being a Provincial and Federal election year, we encourage you to get out and vote.

In closing, Council wishes to thank all its valued employees, volunteer firefighters, and committee members for their hard work and dedication to our community.

It's been an honour to serve our community this past year and I'm grateful for the opportunity to continue doing so. Wishing everyone all the very best in 2019.

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Mayor Grant White

