

Greetings

A very Happy New Year to you all! We hope you and your families had an enjoyable holiday season and that 2020 brings good health and happiness.

A Year in Review

Heading into 2019, Council set ambitious goals and we're pleased to say that many were achieved. Here are just a few highlights:

- 25 Toulouquet Street now serves as our new Town Hall, providing increased capacity to serve residents and businesses with additional office space, storage and meeting rooms. With some necessary upgrades, the Fire Department will assume the old Town Hall at 65 Main Street.
- Plan Twillingate www.plantwillingate.ca, the project to review the plans and policies that will guide how our community develops over the next 10+ years, was launched. Thanks to all who participated in the public and business consultations this past Fall. The draft plan will be released for your review and input early in 2020.
- A new website www.townoftwillingate.ca will launch early in 2020, providing you with easy access to all Council and community-related information, such as Council Minutes, budget information, regulations, news, events, a business directory, and much more.
- Six roads were repaved and water and sewer service was extended on Park Road, at a total cost of \$419,000, of which the Town paid \$124,700. The remainder was paid with Municipal Capital Works Funding.
- It was announced that we will receive \$2.8 million in Municipal Capital Works Funding to replace 1.7 km of mainline waterline on the South Side of the harbour and \$15,000 to do an assessment of our water tank. These projects will cost the Town approximately \$282,000. The mainline waterline project will undoubtedly come with some disruption so we will keep everyone informed of project plans as they are confirmed. The start date of the project is yet to be confirmed.
- We received funding to hire a Recreation Director and we're thrilled to have Jeff Blackler on the team. In only a short time this role has proved incredibly valuable with new programming introduced, grants received, and events created. Don't forget to get your tickets to watch the Toronto Maple Leaf Legends take on our very own Senior Combines on March 25th and do your part to help make our Town the next Kraft Hockeyville beneficiary. Contact the Town office to learn more!
- Ownership of our coastal hiking trails is being transferred from the Twillingate Islands Tourism Association (TITA) to the Town. The Town is best-positioned to receive government funding and execute large-scale trail projects and working with TITA, we are committed to making Twillingate Island one of Canada's best hiking destinations. An application for over \$450,000 in funding was submitted to the Provincial and Federal Governments. The outcome of this application will be announced as soon as possible.
- Grants totalling more than \$30,000 were received to assist in paying for some unanticipated expenses including: 2 sewer lift station pumps, and electrical and Occupation Health & Safety upgrades to the stadium.
- A Job Creation Partnership (JCP) Project and a Community Enhancement Employment Program, with a combined value of \$54,000, were awarded providing employment for 15 people. Highlights of these projects included building of a new wharf in Bluff Head Cove and upgrades to the old and new Town Halls.

2019 was of course not without its challenges. It's no secret to any resident or business that issues stemming from our aging infrastructure continue to plague us. Receiving \$2.8 million to replace 1.7 km of mainline waterline is great news but unfortunately, this is only a small portion of the aged and problematic infrastructure in our community. Rest assured that the Town is working with all available resources to plan for future upgrades.

The Year Ahead

Aligned with strategic goals developed by Council, we're pleased to announce that we are entering 2020 with a balanced budget of \$2,667,499, a slight increase over the 2019 budget.

Key goals for 2020 include: continuing to drive efficiency, increase service level & communication with residents & businesses, support economic development, address the abandoned/dilapidated buildings, upgrade infrastructure/equipment, and update policies/regulations.

Here are a few initiatives you can look forward to in 2020:

- Early in 2020, we will be introducing electronic bill payment through Scotiabank. This will allow residents and businesses to pay their Town Taxes via the Scotiabank online banking platform. Contact the Town Office to learn more.
- We have applied for Municipal Capital Works Projects valued at over \$1.5 million, with our portion estimated at \$255,000. These projects include retrofitting two sewage lift stations, upgrading a portion of water and sewer in Bayview, and purchasing a new chiller for the stadium. We can expect to hear the outcome of these applications in the summer of 2020.
- Working with TITA, we will open a Visitor Information Centre (VIC) at 25 Toulouquet Street. The VIC will open ahead of the 2020 tourism season.
- The Recreation Director role has been extended for another year and the scope of the role has been expanded to include economic development. This means that in addition to managing our recreation programming and services, Jeff will also be taking an active role in supporting and growing our local economy.
- Working with legal counsel, the Town will identify and determine the appropriate course of action for abandoned and dilapidated buildings in the community.

- The Finance Committee of Council did an extensive review of our Schedule of Rates and Taxes and associated policies. They looked at comparable communities in our Province and evaluated concerns raised by staff, residents and businesses in an effort to ensure our competitiveness, eliminate problem policies and create new policies.
- We plan to purchase a new dump truck to meet our snow clearing needs.

2020 Budget Highlights

- The mill rate for residential and commercial property will remain at 7.5 mills.
- The minimum property tax will remain at \$290.
- Poll tax will remain at \$290.
- Residential Water and Sewer Tax will remain at \$420.

Here's a summary of what's changed:

- Senior citizens (65+) on fixed income (current accounts only), are eligible to pay their taxes in equal monthly installments over the full calendar year avoiding interest charges if paid in full by 12/31/20. In order to receive this benefit, eligible seniors should inquire at the Town Office.
- Water & Sewer Taxes will not be adjusted below the minimum of \$420, even if the property is vacant for the full year.
- Central Newfoundland Waste Management (CNWM) is increasing the residential garbage pick up fee from \$81 to \$83/year. Waste Management Fees will not be adjusted seasonally or for vacant properties.
- Some changes were made to the tax structure for businesses. If you're a business owner, you will receive more detailed information with your 2020 Business Tax bill.

WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM:	
Residential/Commercial Property Tax	\$1,075,387
Residential Water/Sewer Tax	\$495,396
Commercial Water/Sewer Tax	\$91,333
Business Tax	\$337,113
Residential Garbage Collection & Disposal	\$104,497
Poll Tax	\$53,360
Recreation and Cultural Services	\$95,000
Fire Department	\$14,000
Grants	\$377,413
Other Municipal Revenue	\$24,000
TOTAL:	2,667,499

WHERE IS THE MONEY SPENT?	
General Government*	\$559,239
Water/Sewer	\$335,200
Road Maintenance Services	\$633,590
Residential Garbage Collection	\$217,746
Planning & Development	\$22,250
Recreation & Cultural Services	\$270,454
Debt Service	\$278,429
Fire Department	\$58,750
Other Fiscal Services**	\$291,841
TOTAL:	\$2,667,499

*General Government includes: administration and professional services including: legal, accounting, municipal assessment, insurance.

**Other Fiscal Services includes: capital expenditures and authorized transfers.

View the full Budget and Schedule of Rates & Taxes either at the Town Hall or online, following the launch of our website www.townoftwillingate.ca.

Thanks

On behalf of Council and Staff, a sincere thanks and appreciation to our valued volunteer firefighters, committee members and all of you who volunteer throughout the community. Your hard work and dedication are invaluable.

Please know that we encourage your participation in our local government. Share your thoughts, ideas and concerns with the Town Office, a Councillor, the Deputy Mayor or Mayor. Together, we'll continue to make Twillingate a great place to live, work and visit.

Wishing everyone all the very best in 2020.