

Mayor's Blog - May 2016

May 3

Zorra Council - One item brought to our attention is a problem with drivers not giving way to the fire workers driving to the new fire hall in Thamesford. With the change in location perhaps residents on different streets are not aware of the significance of the flashing green light on their cars. Please be watching and give way as time is so very importance as these people try to make their way to an emergency.

We had an excellent presentation by Keith Stevens of Execulink and John Deheer of Quadro talking about the need for fibre optics growing quickly in all areas. As usual distances in the country make the costs alarming but the need is great and will only great stronger as time goes on. Some communities believe it is becoming as necessary as hydo, water and sewage service and are including it in plans for upgrading of infrastructure.

Correspondence regarding a plan for lighting for the Thamesford Beach Volleyball courts was received. This is a very active group who managed to fund the courts and now plan to do the same for the lighting badly needed because of the number of teams wanting to participate.

That night I drove to the TBA meeting. This group continues to carry out projects benefitting all of Thamesford. One of their major fundraisers, a golf tournament is planned for early June. This is a great, very well run event that golfers enjoy. If like me you do not golf, think about joining your neighbours for the delicious dinner early in the evening.

May 7

I went to the Celebration of Women at the EZCC. This was a wonderful event with spectacular decorating, a delicious meal, great entertainment and speaker and then draws and auctions for gift baskets. I think I did very well, winning a garden gift basket that was filled with useful and decorative items for the garden and the gardener.

May 10 and 12

Public Meetings were held about the future of the Embro and Harrington dams. There was much information shared and questions answered. More investigation is required before decisions will be made.

If you haven't noticed the monument at the Township is surrounded by a beautiful bed of red and white tulips in full bloom. These were planted last fall on a particularly nasty day commemorating the appreciation of the people of Holland for the Canadian military and the battles won liberating Holland. A recognition event will be held at the Office May 25 and everyone is invited to attend.

Thank you for your patience with the very dusty roads. New gravel has been spread in the north end but dust suppressant cannot be spread without a sufficient level of moisture in the roads. In very dry conditions it simply evaporated and is lost. The recent rain - although particularly cold - was a blessing to help control dust at least for now.

May 17 Zorra Council

The Director of Public Works, Aden Corcoran, presented the annual report re our Harrington Gravel pit. It was very positive with few complaints and the ones received were dealt with

quickly. Certainly the financial report of the money now being saved because of our own gravel supply was very encouraging. There was a brief discussion about disposing of the small fire hall on George Street. For many years it has been used for storage but with the completion of our new fire hall items have been moved to the Allen Street location.

May 18

The County event for recognition of employees was held at Craigowan. It is interesting to note that over half of the employees have worked for the County for over 10 years - and some well over 40 years. Awards were also given to individuals and departments nominated by employees in several different categories.

May 18

I attended the Zero Waste committee meeting at the Administration Building in Woodstock. While I agree with the concept of lowering the amount of waste produced I disagree with the concept that we are working towards a time when we will need an expanded or new landfill. Landfills are simply no longer appropriate for disposal of waste. I believe we have to give our time to investigating new methods of disposal that result in the benefit of producing energy. It will take much time investigating these methods and certainly the costs will be a huge consideration but the time for investigation is now - now in 15-20 years from now when the need for new disposal space becomes critical. Putting waste into the ground is no longer acceptable. We need to do much better.

May 19

TVDSB held their annual meeting for municipal representatives. Now that they have divided the group into smaller local groups the discussions are much more relevant. Zorra Council was very interested in learning that they would be willing to give us free use of their facilities if we would do the same for them. I think you will hear soon of an agreement for this in Zorra.

May 20

I travelled to Toronto with Warden David Mayberry and Mayor Don MacKay to the TECO Culture Centre for a celebration of the Inauguration of the new President of Taiwan. As always Oxford delegates are warmly welcomed. I had hoped for an opportunity to discuss the landfill proposal with members of Toronto's Council but those I met seemed to have little information about this.

May 21

Calithumpian Weekend is underway. Take in as many events as you can and support the new committee who have worked diligently to assure this event continues. It looks like the weekend will be blessed with good weather - so important for the success of event like this.

May 25

Council recognized the strong Dutch-Canadian bonds in Zorra with a brief ceremony at the war monument on the Township Office grounds. Late last fall we received and planted over 200 tulip bulbs in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of Holland during WW2. We were pleased to fly their flag and remember and give thanks for the strong bonds that have developed between the two countries. Zorra has certainly benefitted from the many immigrants who chose our Township as their Canadian home and who continue daily to make strong contributions to life for us all.

In the evening I attended County Council. Once again the discussion re amendments to the Official Plan regarding Waste Management was deferred. I understand desire to refuse some of the garbage entering our landfill but wonder how we are going to stop those residents who take their garbage to outside landfills for reasons that seem to appeal to them. I would welcome an opportunity to speak about the need for the County to begin investigating alternative ways of handling waste.

May 27

AGM for our Rural Economic Committee. Much has been accomplished and much more is being planned. Be sure to visit the website. There is information, assistance, training, etc. offered for businesses as small as one person - or even those still just in the conceptual stage - right up to businesses as huge as you could imagine. One section offers free job advertising for local job seekers and businesses hiring. Check it out.