



**The Corporation of the Municipality of Wawa
Staff Monthly Report**

Office of Community Services and Tourism

Prepared For: Corporate Planning Committee	Report No.: AP 2017-08
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Preamble

This report details the activities of the Department of Community Services and Tourism in the month of March, 2017

General

Tournaments, Bonspiels, and Spring

In March, the MMCC hosted the Wawa Ice Fishing Derby, Old Timers', NEOHA and Wawa Mustangs hockey tournaments, and the Wawa Ladies' Curling Bonspiel. These large events hosted at the MMCC bring in residents and visitors alike. Staff work throughout these events providing services such as bartending, event supervision, cash, setup, takedown, and building operation. Staff also work hard to ensure that ice surfaces are of high quality for the increased use they see during this month. In April, there will be one more bonspiel before the ice is removed.

Capital Projects

Wawa Goose Monument

The Contractor has almost completed the first portion of the Goose Project – the construction of the internal frame of the Goose. This is expected to be completed shortly, where they will then begin the process of installing the feathers that will make up the exterior of the Goose. This month staff have also begun the reporting and claims process of the NOHFC funding grant that will help pay for the Goose, and have completed the first round of reporting for the FedNor grant. The project is still well on schedule and will be opened on Canada Day Weekend. A report to Council regarding the fate and use of the Old Goose is forthcoming and will consider different ways to use the 1963 Goose for the community's benefit. See **Appendix A** for construction pictures.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Prepared By:

**Alex Patterson, Assistant Director,
Community Services and Tourism**

Wawa Wayfinding Signage Project

Staff have completed and awarded an RFP for the installation of Wawa's new Wayfinding Signage. The contract was awarded to J. Provost Contracting after a review and scoring process. The signs will be installed throughout the summer and the project will be completed before the fall. This will replace the old signage directing visitors to our tourism resources, and will feature the new Wawa – Real Algoma logo. This is part of a pilot project that will see similar format signs installed throughout Northern Ontario. Wawa and Thunder Bay are the first communities receiving this signage. This project will also include the fabrication and installation of Ojibway language signage on the Wawa MTO entrance signs due to be installed this summer. Staff are working with Michipicoten First Nation to ensure appropriate translation.

MMCC**Spring Fitness Classes**

The spring fitness class season is soon upon us! Spring classes follow a shorter two month term, to allow for both summer break as well as summer boot camp. For these classes the MMCC is trying out a different advertising format, with a more visually appealing and descriptive pamphlet. This will be available at the MMCC as well as select community locations to promote classes.

Arena and Curling**Youth Curling Night**

The MMCC hosted a Youth Curling Night in partnership with the Youth Solutions Committee and several volunteer curlers. There was a great response from both local youth as well as adult volunteers from the Curling clubs. This event helped promote the Youth Solutions Council and garnered a great deal of interest from local youth to the program. The Youth Solutions Committee will use this event as a stepping stone for other events in the community targeted at youth throughout the summer.

Parks and Trails**Spring 2017**

Staff start work this month, before the snow melts, on preparing equipment for the parks for spring use. This includes all maintenance equipment, from attachments for heavy equipment down to string trimmers for grass. This preparation in advance of the melt means the Department only waits for weather to start summer activities.

Community Events and Recreation

Canada 150 - Dream Catchers Musical

Staff have investigated a free community event – a musical troupe of Canadians performing a diversity of art. Staff have been informed that Wawa will be on the list of included communities for the 2017 tour. This is excellent news as the demand for this event was extremely high, and staff are very pleased that getting Wawa's bid early secured our place on the Tour. Keep an eye out for more information to follow.

Wawa Ice Fishing Derby

At the beginning of March, the MMCC hosted the 26th annual Wawa Ice Fishing Derby. This event sold out, and with 1400 tickets sold, was a very busy and well attended weekend at the MMCC. As the largest special event in Wawa, this year's Fish Derby brought in a great deal of visitors to the community, and with them a great deal of economic development. Attendance for Friday night prizes and Saturday's dance was up from last year as well, increasing bar sales. Overall the Ice Fishing Derby was a very successful event and the Municipality looks forward to working with the Committee for next year's event.

Tourism

Social Media Audit and Increased Presence

This month CST staff have been working with ITI staff to audit our social media accounts. This includes accumulating and condensing a multitude of older accounts created over the years. This process will include development of policy surround the appropriate use of social media to satisfy our tourism and recreation marketing goals. This policy will be presented to Policy Committee at a later date. In addition to the audit, staff have also increased presence on social and online media, and results for events and pages such as the Wawa Drag Races and Wawa Tourism have shown great increases in activity over the past month.

Tourist Information Centre Improvements

Staff are currently in the final planning stages of improvements at the TIC. This will include interpretive signage and displays, landscaping and roofing/lighting improvements. Staff have been in contact with the MTO for certain landscaping improvements and a final plan for the summer will be in place in the coming months.

Auxiliary Services

Greyhound / National

National Car Rental continues to be stable at the MMCC, with 25 separate rentals this March. Greyhound services also continue to be stable, with the normal issues for passengers of lateness and unreliability ever present. Passengers often find it difficult, especially in the colder weather, to catch the westbound bus at 0400.

Other Projects

Sandy Beach OCEF

Staff are currently in the preliminary stages of organizing this year's Sandy Beach Project. Staff are working with the two high schools to plan a tree planting and boardwalk installation event at the end of the school year. Staff are also working with Wawa MNR staff to complete the required environmental assessment and permitting to complete sections of the project. Additional trees not planted at Sandy Beach will be used throughout the community's parks.

Funding and Grants

Wawa Waterfront Project

Staff have finalized grant applications for Stage 2 of both FedNor and NOHFC. These applications contain more specific details of the project such as quoted costs, engineers' preliminary drawings and details on the economic impact of the project. The next steps in these funding applications will be to review all costs with the major funders and provide any extra supporting documents as required. Staff expect an announcement in between 3 and 6 months. The next steps in the Waterfront project will be working on the Ganley bioswale, which the EDC has secured funding for, as well as applying to supplemental grants to aid with the Municipal share of the cost. These include the FCM Green Climate Change as well as follow ups with the Great Lakes Guardian Fund.

Wawa Goose Celebration

At the end of the month, the Municipality was notified by NOHFC that we were successful in our application to fund the Wawa Goose Celebration. The Municipality received \$15,000 towards our Canada 150 celebrations surrounding the unveiling of our new Goose. This will include monies for the artists, sound system, and increases in fireworks in the evening.

Conclusion

The Department of Community Services and Tourism has focused this month on ensuring ice surfaces are to a high standard for tournaments, as well as begun preparations for the Spring. Staff are positive about the outcomes and progress of several funding applications that have progressed or been successful in the past month. Looking forward to April, the Department will transition from winter operations to summer operations very quickly to ensure effective service in both areas. The Department is also looking forward to developing further social media presence to complement our traditional marketing methods for both recreation and tourism.

Attachments

Appendix A – Wawa Goose Construction Photos

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End of Report.