



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

Office of Community Services and Tourism

Prepared For: Corporate Planning Committee	Report No.: AP 2017-14
Agenda Date: October 24, 2017	File No.: 9.32

Preamble

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

General

Return to Fall Programming

The Department of Community Services and Tourism shifts into fall with the start of normal programming. It is an exciting time as the regular school year begins and we welcome students and youth back into hockey, skating, dance and other programming. The fall season also kicks off our adult fitness programming as well. After installing ice, the maintenance staff works on both the MMCC and Parks, with a reduction in service in the parks that corresponds with the additional duties of running the MMCC between 6am and 10pm 7 days a week. Staff will soon start preparing to close the parks for the winter and shift activities completely to the MMCC.

Capital Projects

Wawa Goose and Tourist Information Centre

Staff have received the required MTO permit to start forestry activities along the hillside. Staff are working with Algoma Power to complete this project before the snow flies and expect to be completed before December. Staff have also advertised for the repair of the roof, also expected to be complete before December. These are the final tasks that will complete the project for 2018. Staff are preparing a second round of funding applications for a interior modernization pilot project based upon recommendations from Tourism Excellence North that will be a part of the 2018 Capital Budget.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Prepared By:

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

Wayfinding Signage

The Wawa Wayfinding signage project is now complete, with the contractor removing the final set of older signage in October. This marks the completion of the Wawa portion of the Wayfinding Signage Pilot Project, and staff will now complete a final audit to determine what gaps exist in our current signage inventory that will need filled.

MMCC Retractable Wall

Staff have completed the RFQ for the Retractable Wall at the MMCC and it is currently out for bidding. The Wall is scheduled to be completed in time for the Christmas season, with a block of time in November scheduled for its' replacement. This will allow for a degraded piece of infrastructure in a high use area to be renewed, both beautifying the space as well as removing a health and safety issue.

Olympia Ice Resurfacers

The Olympia ice resurfacers has been delayed until December due to a large volume of orders received by Olympia this spring. Staff have been able to keep the original Olympia in operation for the duration of the 2017 season. This will impact the operating budget for 2017 as the expense of operating the original Olympia was only expected for the first half of the year. Staff will compensate in other areas to ensure the overage does not adversely affect the overall budget.

MMCC**Reception and Canteen – New Hours**

The increasing traffic at the Community Centre every day of the week have prompted staff to look at the services we offer and attempt to fill a more diverse need. In that spirit, the Canteen will be open 7 days a week during the fall as a pilot to try and meet the demand for healthy options available to youth who frequent the MMCC. In doing so, we hope to better serve the community attending programming. This has meant a redistribution of some Reception hours as well as some services. Basic retail and membership functions will be found in the Canteen every night, as well as the regular informational services on offer at Reception. To focus on the increased demand of booking and auxiliary services offered in Reception, there will be two staff members present weekdays to provide all services. Staff expect this process to be fully integrated by the end of October and will reevaluate the success of the pilot during the Christmas break. Any feedback is welcomed.

Arena and Curling

Ice Installation 2017

Staff have completed the seasonal installation of the arena ice surface without any major issues. Installing ice in September as opposed to August has a positive impact on the cost of installation. This September was one of the warmest on record, and both the plant and dehumidification system were running at full capacity for the first week of ice programming, when temperatures and humidity was highest. As temperatures drop, so does energy usage. Staff expect this to be moderate in October.

Parks and Trails

Fall Parks Maintenance

During the fall, especially when the MMCC is operating in its' ice season, staff capacity is significantly reduced for fall maintenance. With the arrival of cooler temperatures, this becomes less apparent as grass growth slows down. Staff are planning on completing closing activities after Thanksgiving to be completed before November.

Voyageur Trail – Reroute

Staff are working with a landowner as well as the Voyageur Trail Association to reroute a section of trail between Scenic High Falls and Silver Falls. This will allow better access while also increasing privacy for the landowner. This trail will be complete in time for the winter snowshoeing season.

Community Events and Recreation

Fall Programming at the MMCC

As the summer concluded the doors of the Community Centre began to see more and more traffic. As our facility is being used more for meetings, weddings and special events our staff, fitness instructors, parents, and volunteers continue to provide exceptional recreational activities.

This fall the Community Centre hosted a “registration night” for all local recreational activities that proved convenient for parents and assisted the recreation programs in growing the activities they offer. This evening also gave the community an insight into everything that is offered in our community.

Dance, Hockey, and Figure Skating, continue to have a positive presence in the community, with programming happening seven days a week. Our fitness programs are being well attended which include chair based exercises for the elderly community, yoga and high energy exercise programs.

4th Annual Blueberry Fall Festival

This year was another very successful Fall Festival was hosted at the MMCC. With over 30 vendors, it is an excellent showcase of all Wawa has to offer. Games and activities had better attendance than in past years, with partnerships from several community organizations bolstering the event. The Committee now looks to open new special events between the fall fair and winter carnival – so keep an eye out for more to come.

Science North Planetarium

The Municipality of Wawa partnered with Michipicoten First Nation to offer a very unique experience for our communities – a portable planetarium courtesy of Science North. This included dreamcatcher crafts and colouring as well as featured interpretation and an artefacts display from MFN. Nearly 120 people came out to experience this event, an excellent showcase of the partnership of our communities.

Tourism

TIC Closing and Season Summary

Thanksgiving weekend meant the closing for the season of Wawa's Tourist Information Centre. This year proved to be a very successful year in communicating with locals and tourists about everything Wawa has to offer. Not only did we have a high volume of people visiting the Centre, the TIC was instrumental in the Canada 150/Goose Unveiling Celebration.

The staff did a fantastic job welcoming guests from across North America and the world proudly wearing their Wawa Canada 150 t-shirts. A quick look at Tripadvisor.com and you will see that our staff was highly commended for their knowledge and welcoming attitude. This is a crucial part of Wawa's destination culture. It is at our Tourist Information Centre where guests get their first impressions of Wawa and the north.

Auxiliary Services

National Car Rental

This month saw rentals continue to be elevated, in line with the summer months. 27 separate rentals occurred this month, more than one per operating day. This continues to keep staff busy as each rental takes between 2 and 3 hours between cleaning and inspecting vehicles, completing the required paperwork and calling insurance companies.

Greyhound

Greyhound services remain stable in September, both in ticket sales and freight.

Other Projects

Sandy Beach OCEF

Staff have postponed the OCEF Sandy Beach project this summer due to other commitments in the community such as the Canada 150 celebrations as well as the Evacuation taking priority. This project will resume this fall and continue into next spring. This project will rely on school involvement to accomplish its goals. The Municipality has until 2019 to complete the Project.

Ski Chalet Contents

With the recent sale of the Municipal Ski Chalet, staff have undertaken a project to clear out the contents and store or dispose of the articles contained therein. These articles ranged from heavily damaged ski boots to priceless community artefacts stored there by the Heritage Committee. A contractor has been sourced to undertake the job of safely removing and packaging the contents of the chalet, and staff have worked with the Heritage Committee to transport the artefacts being kept to a secure location for their continued storage.

Funding and Grants

Wawa Waterfront Project

Staff have been working on a scheduling change to take into account the delayed funding award for the project. This will be available before November, with the project occurring between January 1st, 2018 and December 31, 2019. A full schedule and informational report will be presented to Council before the end of 2017.

Conclusion

The fall period is always challenging as staff balance the needs of our parks infrastructure with the increased use of the MMCC. As programming starts in September, staff work to prepare other facilities for their winter use or closure. Fall programming kicks off the start of the winter season, and it is a welcome sight to see the parking lot full again.

Attachments

End of Report.