



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

Office of Community Services and Tourism

Prepared For: Corporate Planning Committee	Report No.: AP 2018-01
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Preamble

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

General

In December, staff dealt with the challenges that come with the extremely cold weather. While this cold snap allowed staff to get a head start on the 2018 Outdoor Ice Rink, many other challenges presented themselves with equipment and operations. The holiday break and the associated reduction in use at the MMCC allowed staff to complete some much needed maintenance and clean up to prepare the facility for the next half of the busy winter season.

Capital Projects

Tourist Information Centre – Roof and Landscaping

This project is complete with the contractor putting finishing touches on the facility in January, as the cold has delayed certain aspects of the final repairs. Trees blocking the view of the Goose have also been removed, improving sightlines along highway 17. With the roof complete, staff will work throughout winter and spring 2018 to complete repairs inside the Centre before opening once again in May.

MMCC Retractable Wall

The retractable wall was not able to be installed due to hardware supply issues. It is now scheduled for January 2018 with a guaranteed date of the 2nd week of January. This will not affect pricing and staff will ensure the project is completed before the busy bonspiel season kicks off.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Prepared By:

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

Olympia Ice Resurfacers

The Olympia Ice Resurfacers continues to be delayed, and is now scheduled for arrival in January. This will require the resurfacers project to be carried over into the 2018 budget year. No costs have been incurred in 2017 and the budget amount will not change in the new year. Due to issues with the old Olympia, Resurfacers Inc. has provided a newer unit for use until the new one can be delivered. Staff expects no further issues.

MMCC**MMCC Upgrades and Repairs**

Staff and contractors continue to make improvements to the facility with installations of new water fountains, new flooring in the canteen and a renovation to the storage room in the women's change room. New cubbies arrived for boot and shoe storage in the lobby, as part of upgrades to be installed in January. Delivery of tables and chairs for the canteen and lobby are in progress and staff is working to have these upgrades completed before February to better host community events and tournaments.

Arena and Curling**Olympia CO Issues**

In early December, staff experienced increased CO emissions with the Olympia ice resurfacers. Staff have been monitoring these issues after the McMeekens Arena in Sault Ste Marie was closed for a period of 6 months last year. When staff noted an increase in low alarms in the Olympia bay, a handheld detector was used to investigate elevated readings. Staff found that while members of the public had not been exposed to any significant levels of CO, the instantaneous build-up of the gas in the bay was concerning. This, as well as evidence that the problem was worsening over time, prompted staff to remove the unit from service before the situation worsened further. Within 3 days, a newer and better functioning unit was delivered on loan from Olympia. This unit will remain in service until the new, battery powered unit is delivered. Upon using the new unit, staff observed all levels of CO decrease to well within acceptable levels, with readings of 0ppm CO consistent throughout the stands while the unit is in operation.

Parks and Trails

Nothing to Report.

Community Events and Recreation

Holiday Season Community Events

December was an exciting month in Wawa and at the MMCC. We hosted two Tim Hortons Free Skate Days, as well as the final Canada 150 event "Canada Skate Day". Staff applied and were successful in a grant to provide free skating, prizes and food to celebrate Canada 150. Attendance was well over 100 people and those who normally do not use the centre had an opportunity to experience what the Municipality offers. Canteen staff provided candy bags and popcorn which was covered under the grant. Tim Hortons' graciously donated coffee and hot chocolate.

The Municipality also celebrated the renewal of the Festival of Lights. With hundreds in attendance and town pride at the forefront, the event was a success. The mayor hosted guests at the MMCC as the bus toured friends and family around town to see the decorated houses. Volunteers and businesses provided food and hot beverages for those that waited for the tour. Plans are already in the works for next year.

Tourism

Algoma Kinniwabi Tourism Association AGM

Staff attended the Algoma Kinniwabi Tourism Association (AKTA) annual retreat and strategic planning meeting. The focus of the meeting was to encourage operators to consider using budgets to work on quality of product ie. improve facilities, grounds. The meeting concluded with a discussion on the use of social media in marketing. Staff is now on the board of AKTA and attended the year end board meeting.

This marks a key change in direction away from marketing and towards product development. Several industry experts have recommended the shift based upon the changing way that potential visitor access information and determine their destination.

Auxiliary Services

National/Greyhound

November continues to see a steady amount of bookings, with 20 this month. Greyhound package services were very busy, expected during the holiday season.

Other Projects

Tourism Strategic Plan

Staff is currently in the process of working with regional marketing professionals to create a five year plan as the successor to the 2002-2008 work plan for Wawa's tourism industry "The Trail". Previous plans will be evaluated and updated with the latest travel

and tourism trends and insight from District Marketing Organizations (DMO). This will allow Wawa to shift our tourism efforts along with the shift in trends brought about by the new age of social media marketing and renew a focus on product development.

Funding and Grants

Wawa Waterfront Project

The RFP for Engineering Services has been completed, and the Engineer will start work on the detailed design in the new year. Staff have added the project to the 2018 Capital budget and work will begin in the new year on getting the project ready for the summer construction season.

Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund

Staff are currently in the process of applying to the Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund with an emphasis on Age Friendly Planning Outreach Initiatives. This grant focuses on programming, physical activity development in youth and seniors and accessibility for all age groups. The goal of this grant is to grow physical activity, development fundamentals in physical activity and create a lifelong enjoyment of physical activity in the community.

Capital Projects 2018

As staff prepare the 2018 Capital Budget, funding sources continue to be identified for 2018. While staff consider funding, it is our goal to find 90% funding for all non-emergency projects. This will include further upgrades to the Tourist Information Centre, the refacing of Municipal Billboards, and other projects. These will be presented along with the 2018 Capital budget.

Conclusion

In December, staff successfully dealt with several challenges, ranging from equipment failures and issues to operating a facility during challenging environmental conditions. This holiday was an excellent showcase of the work it takes to provide our community with the opportunities it deserves. We are very happy with the way the month turned out, and look forward to continue improving our community in 2018.

Attachments

No Attachments.
End of Report.