



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

Office of Community Services and Tourism

Prepared For: Corporate Planning Committee	Report No.: AP 2018-05
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Preamble

This report details the activities of the Department of Community Services and Tourism in the month of April, 2018.

General

April is the month when the Department switches gears from winter to summer operation. It is a critical time in the year when we remove the ice surfaces and begin preparing the parklands and facilities for summer use. This month, we focused on repairs to the Wawa Tourist Information Centre as well as got a head start on summer programming. Staff also prepared for possible evacuees from the James Bay Coast.

Capital Projects

Wawa Waterfront Project

The Wawa Waterfront Project is well underway, and in April staff and Kresin Engineering hosted a public information session on the project. This information session was well attended, with more than 50 attendees throughout the day. Staff received mostly positive comments about the project, with most of the negative comments received being unrelated to the project itself. The engineer is currently finishing the tender document for the project, with work expected to begin shortly. Other portions of the project, such as the market stalls, and recreation furniture, are currently out for proposal. These items will be completed before the end of August and on schedule. The project's construction phase is on schedule to begin early June after a very late snow melt. This may cause some construction to run into late September, however there still exists some contingency time to ensure that the project can be completed within the scope of the funding agreements. Staff look forward to a presentation to Council.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Prepared By:

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

CST Plow Truck

Staff have issued the RFP for our upcoming fleet improvements to each of the three local dealerships. Each of the dealers have indicated their interest in submitting a proposal. This closes May 11th, 2018.

MMCC Storage Garage

Staff have issued an RFP for a storage garage at the MMCC. This RFP is for an addition to the MMCC at the rear of the building and looks to add on to the existing areas to create a more efficient space. Several contractors have expressed interest in the project. Some challenges in documentation for the original arena have been encountered by staff, however the project continues to be on schedule. This RFP closes May 18th, 2018.

Scenic High Falls

Staff have begun work on the Scenic High Falls project, beginning with the design of interpretive signage detailing the project, its goals and outcomes. This will, be installed early spring as staff begin preparing the site for summer work.

MMCC**MMCC Summer Hours**

The Department is close to making the switch to summer hours, scheduled for May long weekend. Staff always have many requests this time of year to extend the facility hours, specifically for gym members to have access after 4:00 pm. In response to this, staff have investigated solutions for extended access that does not depend on an increase in staffing during critical summer months. The solution decided upon is a fob system, allowing for the front doors to be accessed in a similar way to the fitness area. In conjunction with an alarm system upgrade, this will allow for the facility to be alarmed when not in use, and accessed by members for an extended period of time when the facility would normally be closed. This may offset the significant decline in memberships during the summer months, as the facility will be more accessible for more community members through the course of the summer months.

Arena and Curling**Ice Rentals and Use – April**

April ice has traditionally been difficult to fill at the MMCC, however this April saw a sharp downturn in the amount of arena ice used. This prompted a conversation between staff and user groups, where everyone agreed that there was not the usage to warrant continuing with the ice. This allowed staff to remove ice earlier than planned. This trend will be explored further with user groups in an effort to ensure that the Municipality is responding to the needs of the community.

Arena and Curling Ice Removal

Staff worked hard this year, trying out a different technique for ice removal that was very successful. As the MMCC has used lay in lines and logos for the past 2 years, staff have been learning and trying different techniques to remove the ice. This year, staff completed a soft shutdown of the ice plant to soften the ice before removing the logos and lines. Staff then turned the plant on to re freeze any meltwater and stabilize the slab before turning off the plant in earnest to remove the ice. This reduced the clean-up and made it much easier to remove the ice as an entire sheet. Staff will continue to use this technique in the future as an efficient use of resources.

At the very end of the ice removal process, staff attempted a hard shut down of the ice plant. During this hard shut down one of the prime movers for compressor 2 failed. Upon investigation by an electrician, it was determined that the prime mover had failed internally and there was nothing to be done to prevent this. It came at a good time and the spare unit has been prepared to replace it during the scheduled summer maintenance. Cimco Refrigeration has ensured that the plant is safe for the season.

Parks and Trails

Summer Season Opening

Staff began work in the parks with the annual litter clean-up and damage assessment. Litter was consistent with previous years, and playgrounds continue to show significant wear and tear as they continue to age. Most of the older swing sets are non-serviceable, with replacements planned in Queen's park as the existing units are unsafe. This winter also saw significant tree damage in Queen's park, as the monoculture of Jack Pine reach the end of their lifespan. Staff plan to remove several of these trees this spring, as well as plant a more diverse set of trees to protect the park for the future. In other parks, staff will work to stabilize new trees after damage this winter, fix flowerbeds, and ensure that the parks are safe for community members.

Marina

As the ice receded, there is still work to be done to improve conditions at the Marina. Contractors have been scheduled to finish both electrical and plumbing replacements on the slips after the re floating project of 2017. It appears that the re floating has been a success, as the slips are in good condition after a long winter. Staff are also working to create a better reconciliation and stickering system that can be applied to all users in an effort to recoup the investment in the facility. Staff are making a concerted effort to have everything ready in time for the May long weekend.

Community Events and Recreation

Curling Bonspiels

The MMCC hosted the Men's and Ladies' bonspiels this month, with both events being very successful. The curling ice, while requiring more maintenance than in previous years, was a well-received product by most curlers. Both events brought community members and visitors together for two very fun weekends.

Tourism

Tourism Northern Ontario – Corroboration Survey

Tourism Northern Ontario implemented a "corroboration survey" with tourism partners on the north shore of Lake Superior. The intention of the survey was to help TNO develop a plan for greater partnerships with Canadian and American organizations.

Staff discussed local attractions, our emphasis on product development and the partnerships the Municipality has with Algoma Kinniwabi Travel Association and Superior Country. It was brought to staff attention that TNO considers Wawa as one of the few Municipalities on the north shore that care for the visitor, the operator and our continual infrastructure improvements are leading the way.

Algoma Passenger Train Summit

Staff attended the Northeastern Ontario Passenger Rail Summit in Sault Ste. Marie. The summit included presentations from First Nations communities, local operators, Ontario Northland Trains, and Bombardier. The summit's purpose was to have interested parties of the passenger train clearly identify the train's importance and how to create a strategy to have the provincial government move forward with its operation. Subjects such as job creation, travel safety, environmental impact, accessibility for seniors and the disabled and economic impact were all discussed.

Auxiliary Services

National/Greyhound

National continues to be busy, and staff often report a month that is completely full, with customers on a waiting list for vehicles. Greyhound continues to show stable freight services, with a decline in passengers yet again attributed to the more competition in Ontario Northland.

Other Projects

2018 James Bay Evacuation Preparations

Recreation staff took time in April to prepare for an emergency evacuation of Kashechewan. Staff partnered with Michipicoten First Nation and The Best Start Hub to create a recreational program for the guests. Staff also advertised, interviewed and hired recreational staff for the evacuation. All evacuation staff received WHMIS, work place safety, sensitivity and ADOA training. A tentative work schedule was prepared in the likelihood of an evacuation. This enabled staff to be much more prepared for an evacuation should it occur. These same systems can be used in future years as well.

Funding and Grants

Ontario Sport and Recreation Communities Fund

Staff have been successful in our application to the Fund. This will allow for training for the community's fitness instructors. This will in turn permit the Municipality to offer more diverse recreation programming in our community. This both assists in building community capacity, as well as allows the Department to provide better service, have more fitness memberships, and further fill needs within the community.

NOHFC Internship – Tourism and Recreation Planner

Staff have been successful in this application – meaning we can move forward with the hiring process. Staff expect to have a staff member in this position before July – as the position and hiring needs to be approved first by the NOHFC before beginning work. This staff member will assist in the preparation of the updated Recreation and Tourism plans, which are currently out of date.

Conclusion

April is one of the more challenging months of operations at the MMCC, as staff work to complete a quick and efficient changeover of the arena from winter to summer operations, while also working to open the TIC and community parks. Recreation staff have also been switching gears to prepare for a busy summer season, and Management staff continue to work on both funding and capital projects. We are all looking forward to a very busy summer.

Attachments

No Attachments.

End of Report.