

Pontiac council - flood preparations again

Mo Laidlaw

More than twenty citizens attended the regular meeting of Pontiac's council on the 8th May 2018, held at the Breckenridge Fire Hall. Mayor Joanne Labadie gave a summary of what the municipality is doing to prepare for flooding this spring. (A week later the water level is going down). She reminded people that wells in the area where flooding has occurred should be considered contaminated. Bottled water is available for affected residents from the 9th May. After the water has gone down people should get their wells tested. Sand bags are also at the municipal offices. She also mentioned that internet and other communication has been affected by the freezing rain and high winds that brought down communication towers as well as hydro poles and trees on April 16 and May 4.

Public input

Jean Rebertz and Daniel Desjardins stated their concerns with drainage on 5th Concession, Cochrane, and Taber, and vegetation on Mulligan. Ms Labadie said that all sectors need drainage studies. The first one is being carried out in Breckenridge. She reminded citizens that municipal ditches are to drain roads, not private property. Fixing the culvert on ch Alary is the priority this year.

Rick Knox asked if council is going to claim back the legal fees of the former councillor for Quyon, Mr McCann. Council is waiting for advice from the municipal lawyer.

Kevin Brady asked for reactions to the further information he had obtained from Québec about dealing with compost. Ms Labadie has shared the information with her MRC colleagues. The seven Director generals will form a committee to "hash out the problem". A regional solution is needed for large rural areas.

Acquisitions

209 ch Dion will be acquired by the municipality for \$1, with the owner accepting the Public Safety Ministry's payment for properties affected by the 2017 spring floods.

The municipality will also take ownership of two lots in Quyon in default of municipal taxes.

Public works Department

Employees who are on standby for emergency work out of normal office hours will be paid \$16 per day for the normal work week and \$50 per day for weekends and holidays.

Fire safety

A new bylaw on fire safety, complying with SOPFEU (the Quebec Society for protection of forests from fire), was passed. SOPFEU sets the safety level depending on an inflammability index. Fires are not allowed by provincial law when the wind speed exceeds 15 km/h, even if a fire permit has been issued. Residents should read the bylaw before lighting an outside fire.

New municipal employees

Mme Maria Sahagun has been hired on contract as a planning inspector, to deal with the backlog of permits related to the spring 2017 floods.

Marie-France Larose is hired as a temporary clerk.

Expenses approved since the last regular meeting

Invoices amounting to \$49,053 and fixed and pre-approved expenses of \$543,649 for April 2018, and incurred expenses for May of \$29,261.

\$19,800 to Groupe CLR for a new, 22 m self-supporting communications tower and \$6,700 to Exel Radio for dismantling the existing tower, installation, and supplying an antenna for public works and the fire department, and an antenna for the MRC Police. (The existing equipment, as well as that belonging to Pioneer Wireless, was damaged by the freezing rain and high winds of 16 April.)

The municipal share of \$11,698 to the OMH (Municipal housing office).

\$1,345 to the Canada Day Committee.

\$500 to the Quyon tractor pull to help cover costs of portable toilets.

Minutes of council meetings contain the full text of bylaws and are posted on the municipal website: www.municipalitepontiac.com

Mo's reports are archived at: www.heritagepontiac.ca/Municipality