

REEVE'S OPENING REMARKS FOR MARCH/08

Report on ROMA OCRA Convention in Toronto on Feb 24-27. Met with Ministry Of Transportation re: Blue Church Rd interchange. Accompanied by Councillors Banning, Swan and Steve Clarke executive assistant to Bob Runciman MPP. Excellent meeting – will follow up on our request to review this project and update on the feasibility of such an undertaking.

We also had an audience with the Dept of Aboriginal Affairs re: Algonquin land claim in our area and how that would impact on Augusta's Official Plan update. Mr. Leal, the parliamentary Assistant, re-iterated that his Dept. and Municipal Affairs needed to co-ordinate a joint approach on the subject of Land Claims and give some clear direction to municipalities.

Unfortunately our Roads Super was unable to attend the Good Roads conference due to a death in the family. The Township office on behalf of Council; has expressed condolences to John and family on their loss.

As a follow-up to the recent delegation to Council, I raised the issue of ATV's at a recent PSB meeting. The OPP officers attending re-emphasized their recommendation – not to allow ATV's the use of the shoulders of Township roads for ATV traffic. Similar consultation with our adjacent Townships revealed their similar position – not to allow ATV's to use Township Roads. With Council's concurrence, we will relate that message to the individual concerned.

It's my understanding that the Townships Eco & Dev Committee held another successful program of Feb 27 last re: Tax issues for small businesses. Congratulations & thank you very much for your input and direction.

Budget deliberations will continue. The Library Board has made its pitch, our Roads and Admin will follow as soon as the CAO returns from vacation. The Township auditor has been examining our books. Appreciation to our staff, the auditor's review has been completed in much reduced time frame, will be ready for Council shortly. My understanding is that his report is very positive. The next budget meeting is scheduled for March 27 at 6:30 PM.

On Feb 28, the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark Health Unit passed the 2008 Budget at \$9,028,113.00 which is 14.19% increase over 2007. However, at present, the Unit administration is directed, not to spend over the 5% cap with the understanding the Min of Health will be approached to change the funding formula for this Health Unit. My main concern is that a lease agreement for Health Unit space, combined with wage increased already approved; may well jeopardize that cap. In addition the monies contributed by our municipalities and currently resting in reserve may well be utilized, leaving little or no reserves. A recorded vote requested by myself, resulted in me being the only negative vote.

Last Monday evening March 3/08 Council met as a Committee of the Whole at the Maynard office. The engineering firm of Tottem Sims Hubicki (TSH) presented the Roads Study for Augusta Township. Mr. David Anderson reported extensively on the conditions of our roads and how they may be maintained. The cost analysis of upkeep and improvements is somewhat shocking, however with the enormous cost increase of material in particular anything related to oil (such as asphalt and fuel) the acceleration of the road budget is not entirely unexpected.

Our CAO and Roads Supt will be examining the roads study and making recommendations on how Council may follow the agenda, likewise Council members will be reviewing that report and be prepared for the next budget discussion. Council's interpretation of the study and the manner, in which we initiate the recommendations, will be front and centre at budget discussion.

It is my understanding that the MERC committee has invited Council to hold a regular meeting at the Maitland Hall. After discussion on March 3, 2008 Committee of the Whole, Council decided to respond positively and suggested the May 12/08 as the tentative date. When this is confirmed by MERC, we will notify the public.

On Friday last, March 7, 2008. I attended Maynard Public School to address the combined Gr 5 classes re: local government. This is an outreach project, an effort to acquaint our young people with the lower tier of government. It is my intention to take our message of honesty and openness to our young citizens. The message is all about RESPECT and the willingness to serve your community. I totally enjoyed that experience on Friday and wish to thank the Gr 5 students at Maynard as well as their teacher Miss Marshall for the opportunity. Incidentally, I have extended an invitation to Miss Marshall and her Gr 5 students to join us at our April Council meeting. We will confirm this after she has consulted with their parents.

Our CAO, Mr. Bennett is on vacation for the next 10 days or so, and will return just in time to prepare what I believe may be our final budget deliberations on March 27, 2008.

The UCLG is recommending a doctor recruitment program by proposing an educational grant to students of medicine of \$25,000 per yr plus insurance. This would amount to an additional UCLG levy to Augusta Township of \$1.00 per individual per year – added to our current levy and an agreement to support this program.

I would recommend the acceptance of Darcy Alkerton's resignation from the Water Source Protection committee due to business and family commitments. We are very fortunate to have a wildlife expert in Augusta who is renownedly recognized in North America as one of the best – if not the best. Congratulations to Darcy on his recent contract with Ontario Hydro.

I am suggesting Council advertise this appointment on the Township website and in the local papers. As this is an urgent matter. I would suggest a very short window of 10 days would be appropriate.