

REEVE'S OPENING REMARKS FOR OCTOBER 13, 2009

1. It is always a pleasure to have residents in our Council chambers, welcome and thank you for coming.
2. On the subject of meetings, as we have previously discussed scheduling Mondays for meetings, I will be in Ajax next Monday October 19/09 representing the Counties at the CRST Conference and EOWC meeting in conjunction with it. Thus Council should decide if they wish to hold a meeting on that date or postpone until Committee of the Whole meeting on Oct 26/09. If Council's decision is to wait until Oct 26, I would suggest a 4:30 meeting as I am scheduled to attend meetings in North Grenville, Merrickville Wolford and Leeds & 1000 Islands beginning at 6:30 PM.
3. I was able to attend the OEMC in Kingston on Sept 16 & 17 where agreement was reached by EOWC to advertise and RFP for Broadband backbone & satellite service. Councillor Stephenson and our staff representative Linda Robinson attended also on behalf of the Township.
4. On Sept 19, I was honoured to accompany Augusta Fire Dept. representatives at the grand opening of the new Kemptville Fire Station.
5. The Eastern Ontario Economic Showcase featuring Donald Trump of U.S. fame as keynote speaker, was held in Ottawa on Sept 24/09. Augusta participated in the UCLG booth in an effort to bring attention to our Industrial zoned opportunities. There definitely is a co-operative element of partnership with our major Chemical companies to promote the assets of infrastructure, property and the well trained personnel which we have available in Augusta and area.
6. The Township of Augusta Police Board members, Mr. Ray Edwards, Mr. Keith Robinson and myself attended a Zone 2, PSB in Ottawa on Sept 25/09.
7. A well organized Volunteer appreciation BBQ was held at Roebuck Hall on Oct 24/09 served by Councillor Pakeman & wife Betsy, assisted by our staff Richard Bennett & Linda Robinson. Despite the rainy evening, I believe the evening was appreciated by all.
8. Another Zoning By-law review took place here in the Council chambers on Oct 8/09. The AD-Hoc Committee on the O.P. update & zoning by-law changes, continue to be the focus of discussion for this Committee, joined by staff & Council. Our planners at Stantec will be presenting the revised edition of the Zoning By-law for further review before being circulated throughout the Township for public perusal and comments.

These Ad-Hoc committee meetings are of course, open to the public and I encourage anyone interested to please attend and make us aware of any concerns not already dealt with.

9. It is now time for a Reality Check. Two of our major employers in our Township have announced major company re-alignments, resulting in significant lay-offs. Subsequently the fall out to our Township, I believe, will be a major impact on our industrial assessment, consequently lowering the Townships tax base. I would also point out that the recent closing of the Proxair plant, which was also located in our Industrial zone, has added to our challenges.

As though the difficulties mentioned above, were not enough, recent information has come to our attention whereby the Province of Ontario intends to lower the OMPF (Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund) transfer of funds from the Province to our Township by some \$166,300 a 22.35% reduction in Provincial support. This loss of Provincial revenue alone represents a 4.75% tax rate loss.

Therefore, a bold and determined Council, supported by staff, will need to make a number of difficult decisions about the Township finances in 2010 and beyond. It will not be easy, however, we have no choice but to face the reality and deal with it. Beginning immediately, I am requesting Council and staff to review all expenses with the goal of a 10% minimum reduction in expenses. I am forecasting some pain will be incurred. To set the example, Council needs to consider a reduction in remuneration, and a limit on 1conference a year with an upper limit on spending. This may result in Councillors selectively choosing where and what conferences need to be considered. This entire subject should be debated at an Admin & Finance meeting.

All Township departments will need to share the burden of this challenge and together we will make the difference. I anticipate 2010 budget deliberations will begin in November this year.