

Reduced staff, for new structure

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By Louise Sproule

ST-ISIDORE — About 26 full-time employees will be hired by the new Nation Municipality, a reduction from the current 35 jobs currently held by workers in the four merging municipalities.

The Nation Municipality's new administrator, Raymond Bessette, began his new job yesterday (August 5), while the rest of the new municipal staff will begin work on January 5, 1998.

Three more full-time positions were to be posted last week (July 31) for manager for the St-Isidore Recreation Centre; manager/caretaker of the Caledonia Community Centre, supervisor of recreational facilities for South Plantagenet; and manager/caretaker of the St-Albert Community Centre, who will also be supervisor of recreational facilities for The Nation Municipality and Chief Foreman of the recreation or community centres.

Pommainville reported that employees were wondering about seniority issues.

Bradley pointed out that it had been agreed that all employees would start at the same level. Years of experience with another municipality would not be taken into consideration.

"I find it hard ... why haven't we considered the years of experience that some employees may already have? It's pretty hard to take somebody who may have 20 years of experience and it suddenly means nothing just because we're starting a municipality with a new name," Gravel said. "We can't just forget it."

"There's really no ladder. Everyone is starting at the bottom," Pommainville said.

"We all know we're just starting out. I think it's better to start out this way and adjust people up, rather than down. This is our first year," pointed out Cambridge Township Councillor Claude Lafrance.

"There's no question there will be adjustments ... for everybody," Bradley said. "Some people are used to having three weeks of vacation, and we're staring everyone with two weeks of holidays. Perhaps it will be adjusted next year. We have to start somewhere," Bradley said.

"I just hope the new council will take seniority into consideration," said Gravel.

Extra training will be provided for new employees, but if employees leave within three years, they will have to reimburse the cost of their training to the municipality.

Following Township of Caledonia Reeve Jean-Paul Charlebois' suggestion, the committee agreed that if more full-time or part-time employees are needed in the future, former employees of the four municipalities should be sought out before posting the jobs to the public.

As the hiring of personnel continues, the transition committee will be responsible for communicating with new staff members.



The Nation Municipality transition committee chairperson Gary Bradley (centre) listens to discussion at a recent meeting. On his right is recording secretary, South Plantagenet Clerk-Treasurer Calista Nicholas.

The Nation Municipality's transition committee meeting last week dealt primarily with personnel and hiring issues.

To date, about 16 full-time job offers have been made. Ten full-time positions are with the roads department; other full-time workers will include: one treasurer; an administrative secretary; a receptionist; a planner; one by-law enforcement officer and one building inspector.

Four previously posted job offers were withdrawn due to a procedural error, said transition committee chairperson Gary Bradley, but these jobs (for accounting clerk, administrative assistant for the roads and drainage department, librarian and management of recreational services) will be re-posted.

Three full-time employees (handymen) will also be hired: two employees at the St-Isidore Recreation Centre and one for the South Plantagenet Hall, the Fournier and Ste-Rose ball parks and for other jobs related to recreation or the maintenance of municipal buildings.

Questions and answers about future

Questions raised by future employees at a special meeting of the Human Resources Committee were outlined for transition committee members by Cambridge Township Reeve Denis Pommainville at a meeting last week.

January 2, 1998 was declared a holiday for this year, as it is a Friday. Work in the new municipality will formally begin on Monday, January 5.