

Loyalist Township General Transition Board Meeting October 2nd.

- Chris Kennedy -

I attended the General Transition Board meeting in Ernestown this month. The new township seems to be taking shape, and should be up and running by the new year. The General Transition Board seems mainly to be co-ordinating all the special committees that are dealing with the details of the new township.

The meeting started with a presentation from the Ontario Clean Water Agency. This is a Crown Agency, which I had never heard of before, but they apparently run 80% of the water treatment plants in Ontario, including those in Odessa, Amherstview and Bath, and the waste water treatment facility in Bath, and they want to continue working for the new township.

The Board discussed the future of the municipal office in Bath. This is a completely modernised building, and is maintained by the utilities commission in Bath, apparently out of money that would otherwise go to Ontario Hydro.

I did not follow the entire accounting procedure, but it sounded good to the Board, and they decided that instead of enlarging the office space in Odessa to use the Bath building instead. One entire department of the new township could be housed there. Our municipal building on Amherst Island will be used for a ferry office, and as a drop-off place for bills etc.. A part-time

Clerical Assistant-Ferry Operation will be hired to do much of the regular office work connected to the ferry, provided that we still have a ferry to operate.

Ernestown already has a Records Retention By-law. This dictates how long old municipal records must be kept. Amherst Island and Bath were asked to pass a similar by-law, so that a lot of the old paper-work can be disposed of.

It appears that the OPP are the best people to provide police service for the new township. This would be much better than providing our own police force. Each of the three existing councils have to decide what level of service they require, and then we will have to find out how much it will all cost.

The new City of Kingston is still trying to steal part of Ernestown from the new Loyalist Township. However the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Al Leach, has written to say that he does not intend to make any changes, at least until it is seen how well the new township works out. Reeve Paul Gilmore of Ernestown, however, said that Kingston is free to waste their money however they want.

Various matters about our transportation problem were discussed. A resolution to the Premier from the Fact Finding Committee was endorsed. This requested that the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs also be involved in helping find a solution to our ferry problems. A second part of the resolution requested that the Interim Ferry plan be approved so that we are not left stranded on January 1st.

It seems that a bridge to Amherst Island would cost between \$67 million and \$85 million. This is considerably more than the total property value of the Island. Council has received one legal opinion on a challenge to the ferry down-loading, and are waiting for a second.

The meeting closed with a question period. Listening to this Board meeting brought home to me that we are becoming a small part of a

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much bigger organisation. Our municipal politics are leaving the horse and buggy days, and joining the 21st century, in one gigantic step. However, we will still have Stuart Miller as Supervisor/operator for our roads, with Gary and Ron still at the wheel of our snow-plows.

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