

Councillor Ashley noted that the lack of end loading docks was a real concern for property owners. It is not possible to load large items such as agricultural implements and roof trusses on the current side loading ferry. Councillor Ashley noted that without end loading docks it was very difficult for someone to improve their property values or to start a business on the Island. The situation deteriorates further when the Frontenac II is replaced by the much smaller Quinte Loyalist which Councillor Ashley feels is inadequately sized. Duncan Ashley noted that the Frontenac II and the Amherst Island operation is an integral part of the Ministry's ferry operations in eastern Ontario and inquired why the funding model for this service should be different than the Glenora and Wolfe Island operations.

Ministry staff requested information on the costs to upgrade the docks. The Minister was advised by his staff that the Stella and Millhaven docks are the only docks not owned by the Province that service Provincially funded ferries and that Loyalist Township had previously forwarded an engineering appraisal to the District Office for the end loading docks.

The Minister said that he would review the requests with senior staff and provide a response to the Township. He noted that the Ministry was nearing completion of the ferry auditing program and that he was aware that there were different operating agreements for the many ferry services funded by MTO. The Minister noted that he would be consulting with former Minister of Transportation, Mrs. Cansfield, and the Minister of Municipal Affairs before making any responses. He also noted that the Province was in the middle of a major review with respect to how it shares financial obligations with municipalities and any changes in program funding would likely be consistent with the overall Provincial changes.

The Minister stated that although he could not respond immediately to Loyalist Township's requests he reaffirmed his commitment to work towards a satisfactory solution on the aforementioned issues.