

Cramahe talks sewage sharing with Cobourg

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Cramahe Township has begun exploratory talks with Lakefront Utility Services Inc. and the Town of Cobourg to discuss the merits of joint ownership of the proposed Cramahe Wastewater Treatment Plant. The plant is in the preliminary planning stages. It is projected that the Township will start paying for it in 2007, according to the Township of Cramahe Development Charges Study released earlier this month.

Sources say that the Township is looking for Cobourg or LUSI to pick up \$2 million of the projected \$8 million cost of the facility.

Cramahe Mayor, Lee Dekeyser confirmed last Saturday that the Township is looking at shared ownership as well as other options. The Township asked representatives from Cobourg to take a look at the possibilities. Bruce Craig, President of LUSI, and Jim McFarlane, LUSI's water superintendent, of Cobourg visited the existing plant recently and had discussions with the Mayor of Cramahe, CAO, Merlin Dewing

and Public Works Director, Barry Thrasher.

There were no other members of Cramahe council present. When asked to comment on the Mayor's meeting with Cobourg representatives, only one member of Cramahe council even knew there had been talks.

Councillor Tim Post stated late last week that he knew there was going to be some discussion with LUSI, but he did not know the topic.

The remaining members of council were completely unaware of the exploratory discussion.

Mayor Dekeyser said there has been no commitment made by anyone from Cobourg.

Mayor Dekeyser wasn't willing to suggest there were any advantages to Cobourg if it became a joint owner, but he did suggest LUSI is already managing Colborne's water and public utility needs and could look after the sewage system.

Mr. Dekeyser is not sure, at this point, if Cobourg is actually interested; there has been only one meeting, held in Colborne earlier this month.

continued on page 6

NEWS

sewage sharing

continued from page 1

Wastewater is the biggest single item in the increase.

The study states the projected new wastewater treatment facility, slated for 2007 will cost \$8-million. It estimates that grants, subsidies and other contributions will cover \$2-million. The expansion will service an additional 2,000 people, or 870 residential units, serving about double the current population of Colborne. That works out to \$6,896.55 per unit built in the village.

The study determines that the 10 per cent increase in capacity of the proposed replacement water tank that Council approved earlier this year will be allocated to new users. As well, it suggests a need for another water tower in 2009 to meet development needs. This adds another \$735.63 to the cost of each home built in the Village.

Book purchases and the purchase of one new library computer per year for the next five years is added to the bill. About 20 per cent of the cost of the Keeler Centre will be paid by development in the next 20 years. Add \$1,240.10 for those two items.

Even anticipated and actual studies for 2004-5 are charged to the newcomers. The report suggests that the Township will spend a little more than one-quarter million dollars over that period on studies of wastewater (\$143,000) roads needs (\$50,000), sustainable water and sewage services (\$40,000), recreation (\$15,000), and the Tunnock Study which cost \$10,000.

Those combined charges yield the total development charge that was recommended on August 6 by Tunnock Consulting.

The charges for multi-residential units is 60 per cent of the residential charge.

Rural residences will not be levied the wastewater charge or the water storage charge if the contents of the study are approved by Council on September 21.

How Cramahe compares

The proposed urban rate of \$10,194.67 will give Cramahe the second highest urban development charges in Northumberland County if they are passed by Council. Port Hope Council accepted an increase in August, making theirs \$10,258. But after that the development charges for other municipalities are much lower.

Cobourg's new rate is \$8,157. Alnwick/Haldimand charges \$6,261.17. Hamilton Township's new rate is \$3,379. Brighton has increased its rate by \$21 from \$2,975 to \$2,996. Trent Hills charges nothing for new urban development.

Cramahe's rural charges will actually be the lowest in the County, if accepted. The Cramahe proposed rate of \$2,398.13 is almost \$100 cheaper than Brighton the next nearest at \$2,480. Port Hope tops the rural charges at \$5,434.

Cramahe Township is holding a Public Meeting on Tuesday, September 7 at 4:30 p.m. where anyone may make a written or oral presentation to Council supporting or opposing the proposals.

Council is expected to make its final decision on the charges at its September 21 meeting.

Anyone who has a plan of subdivision in place or a site plan agreement can avoid new charges by paying the current fee prior to the passing of the new bylaw.

Happy 80th Birthday, Bill!



PHOTO BY BOB OWEN

It was Bill Baluk's 80th birthday on last Sunday and his wife Diane was there with family and friends to celebrate. Bill was born in 1924 in Oshawa. He served in World War 2 and was a member of the OPP before retiring. He moved to Cramahe Township 23 years ago and continues to live here.



A4C 26/09
COLBORNE CHRONICLE

13