

Name won't change

Voters in Alnwick/Haldimand say the name's fine, but change ward system

VALERIE MACDONALD
NORTHUMBERLAND TODAY

ALNWICK/HALDIMAND — People in Alnwick/Haldimand have voted overwhelmingly in favour of keeping the existing amalgamated municipal name — but to eliminate the current ward system in favour of voting in their five councillors at large. Council concurred unanimously

with the survey results in the two recorded motions they passed at Thursday's meeting.

Since council decided, under its strategic plan, to survey residents before costing out what a name change would cost, there has been quite a backlash to it, especially at a recent public meeting where people gave a series of reasons to keep the current municipal name, including those both historic and financial.

The survey results were distributed to councillors just prior to the beginning of council. They were also put on the seats of chairs brought into the council chamber in anticipation of a large crowd for the 3 p.m. discussion. Local grade

five and six students, studying local government, joined their teachers and a handful of residents to listen to the council discussion.

Councillor Bernadette Murray called the existing name "awkward enough" for people to take the time before saying it, and that it reflects the history of amalgamation.

"I am not in favour of a name change," Councillor Ray Bennis said because the money could be used more efficiently better.

Councillor Sherry Gibson said the survey results spoke for themselves and the majority don't want the change and at this time and neither does she.

Deputy Mayor Gail Latchford

said at the public meeting it was clear people didn't want any change and that is how she was voting too.

Mayor John Logel said the decision being made by council unanimously, taken in a recorded vote, would remain as is, as would the existing logo.

As it related to changing the election voting structure, that too was a unanimous decision to support the survey results and change to electing councillors at large, eliminating the existing ward system.

There were 333 people who filled out the survey, according to the staff report.

See NAME | A4

NAME from A1

These are some of the numbers to the questions asked about the name change suggested:

■ 204 voted against changing the name and logo as a way to unify the municipality while 131 voted for it;

■ 193 voted against changing the name to something shorter and more easy to enunciate while 135 thought it should be changed for those reasons; and

■ 199 voted against the idea of changing the name and logo since it has been 16 years since Alnwick and Haldimand amalgamated, compared to 136 who thought it should be changed given the time passed since it came into being.

The other major question addressed by the survey was changing the way councillors are voted into office.

As it related to the question of being able to vote for all five members of council at large rather than a specific number by ward (as it is now) 205 voted "yes" and 125 voted against changing the ward system.

A majority (139) voted to put the new voting protocol in place effective Jan. 1 2017, in time for the 2018 election.

The majority of those who filled in the survey identified themselves as in the 50 to 75 age bracket and 175 were female and 163 were male.

BRIGHTON INDEPENDENT NOV. 24/16

No RFP on insurance until 2017, over objections of Cramahe deputy mayor

BY JOHN CAMPBELL

Cramahe Township — Deputy Mayor Sandra Arthur isn't happy the township won't be issuing a request for proposals from insurance brokers until 2017.

She wanted it to go out before the end of this year but her motion failed to win the support of council Nov. 15.

CAO Craig Brooks said the RFP process could take up to three months to do it properly and he recommended that it held off until early 2017 to determine who will be the insurance provider for the following year.

W. W. D. McGlennon is Cramahe's current broker and its five-year contract expires Dec. 31. Council agreed to extend the appointment for another year.

"There are definitely benefits of having a local broker working on our behalf," Brooks said in his report to council. McGlennon "acquires quotes each year to make sure that the Township is getting the best value for dollars spent for insurance" and that it has "the most comprehensive coverage at reasonable premiums" for the municipality's "growing needs."

Through another local broker, Newman Oliver McCarten Insurance Brokers, it has access to all three major providers of mu-

nicipal insurance, he stated.

But Arthur said "it's not that big a challenge" to put together a request for proposals and insisted "it can easily be done by the end of the year."

Cramahe pays roughly \$190,000 annually for its insurance and Arthur was anxious to see if those costs could be reduced. She pointed out she had been able to lower premiums by roughly half at Norham Industrial Park, which she manages for the Town of Cobourg, by seeking out competitive bids.

"We should be able to have the opportunity to make sure that we are getting the best that we are here, and I'm not saying we aren't," she said. "We have to do our due diligence."

"Most municipalities typically support local brokers," Mayor Marc Coombs said, and the two in Cramahe provide "excellent service" working together.

"I don't suggest we're paying a higher price for it," he added.

He also pointed out that municipal insurance is "a much different ball game" from property insurance, as there are only three companies in the province that provide it.

"I'm telling you it can be done," Arthur

insisted.

But her motion, seconded by Councillor Tim Gilligan, was defeated, with Coombs and councillors Ed Van Egmond and Don Clark voting to hold off the RFP process until early 2017.

Coombs said "fairly sizable" claims in recent years have driven up the township's premiums "but typically not as much as neighbouring municipalities, which have seen some quite large increases."

He reiterated in an interview that municipal insurance and property insurance are "totally different," with many more companies competing to provide property insurance, making their rates competitive.

"We're talking apples and oranges," he said.

McGlennon already "does a wonderful job for us," getting the best rates available from the three companies that specialize in municipal insurance

