

April 16, 2015 Committee of the Whole Presentation

- Monica Alyea

Mayor Quaiff and Council - first congratulations on getting through your first 4 months and still reflecting an impressive "working team" on our behalf as citizens. At least I am impressed!

After 10 years of sitting in this horseshoe, I realize there is a lovely life outside of politics so you won't see me here much unless I have a burning interest in a topic. The one on the agenda for this Special Council meeting has been and will remain a "button pusher" for me.

First I have to say that if a Councillor hadn't given me the heads up about this meeting just a week ago, I still might not know anything about it. Given its content and history with various Councils and citizens, I think it deserved some print media advertising or at least a press release and if that meant holding up this meeting for a week more, so be it. This is not a good start to this discussion.

Secondly, this topic is on the "short term goal" list for this Council as I understand it. Given it has been through 3 other Councils without the structure being changed, one might take warning that it's not the "short term" that has created the issues before but rather the long term "actualization" of the proposed other options, including the one before you from Mayor Quaiff today. Each of these has potential long term impact elements for democracy, citizen input and engagement, and our culture - both past and present, and our taxes.

If you are a new Councillor or an old Councillor, each of you on this "new" team owe it to yourselves and us to put on your "own" glasses and look at all the proposals for change, including those yet to be solicited in my opinion - AND also look at the current structure. There was a minimum of 150 years of municipal experience (50 Council members x 3 years) that decided this current structure back at the time of amalgamation. The last term of Council were prepared to put their decision out to a citizen group with 69 collective "days" experience.

This is a tough topic and it deserves public input - well planned opportunities for public input. That's how it was done in 1996 by a group of Councillors who knew their communities of interest well. It also deserves "brainstorming" - a no holds barred approach to considering how else we might get our island governance done. I also think a critical look at the current structure is necessary. Is there a way to get more "capacity" out of this current model of 16 ? This has never been explored. Never considered. I think collectively developing a Councillor job description with performance standards would be a start. Why aren't ALL Councillors required to hold a Town Hall meeting at least twice a year? What was the thinking and feeling back when 16 was decided as the number? NO, don't just take someone's word for it because they've been on council since amalgamation. I've heard several stories over the years so I looked back at the newspapers of the day. I encourage you to do the same. I have one page as a sample for you today - the headline is telling on its own..

It will start from this meeting. Some of you will likely be "bullied" for your position - in person and/or in print. Some will seek trade-offs to get the vote they want from you. That's politics and it can have its merits. But the one thing that can surely start at this meeting is the "erosion" of this brand new team. That would be a shame and I personally don't believe this topic has that much merit. You have good things to do for this County; you have important things to do for this County. If you're going to tackle this, please plan the process well.

Take time to thoroughly "visualize" and articulate the outcome. " Except for the elections, everything will stay the same." Tell me what that will look like. And if everything will stay the same, why this exercise. The defense of the structure determined at amalgamation met the Provincial government's test for "representation." I don't believe that has changed.

Please put this template over the situation before you:

"Let's get this done. The people want it. Sounds good. We'll look like we're doing something good and progressive - responding with change. We'll save money. We'll operate more effectively. Nothing will change in communities. People will still get the same service. We'll figure out the details later."
And then there were wind turbines...."

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County backs one tier option by narrow 7-6 margin Municipalities to hold ratification vote Tuesday

By John Chambers
Gazette Staff

It was all business for Prince Edward County Council's 13 members Tuesday, when they narrowly voted 7-6 in favour of a one tier restructuring option.

However, the County must now wait until Tuesday when each municipality will hold a ratification vote on the one tier option, to find out whether or not the decision can be forwarded to Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Al Peck. Of the municipalities who vote to accept the one tier option, their total combined population must be 50 per cent plus one of the County population to win the triple majority

mandatory requirement for any restructuring effort.

"This is a tremendous responsibility we face here today," Wayne Drake, Chairman of the Prince Edward County Restructuring Committee and Deputy Reeve of Ameliasburgh Township, told council members before holding Tuesday's vote. "We have worked through a process to reach this point, but more than that, we have worked together despite our differences as a team to arrive at the three options we face today."

Having predetermined the format for Tuesday's meeting, Drake took the Chair and asked each member of council to address each of the three issues before calling for a vote.

Bloomfield Reeve Ben Prinzen told his fellow councillors that he believed with a bisected single tier government, Hillier and Sophiasburgh Townships came out the losers, and with a modified two tier system, there would be virtually nothing for the lower tier governments to do other than recreational issues.

"A one tier government provides the biggest cost savings from Prince Edward County," Prinzen stated. "I believe with a one tier government everyone would have fair and equal representation and we would still be a unique county," he added.

Wellington, Reeve Bill Greer disagreed, noting concerns that taxes could rise under a one tier system.

"Modified two tier and one tier options both benefit Wellington - more so with a modified two tier," Greer explained. "But, I am concerned that a one tier government could push our taxes up," Greer continued. "Our taxes are quite high now in Wellington, and if we lose our volunteers in our museums, recreation departments or library, we could have to make up for it, and it could cost us."

"My council has instructed me to vote for a modified two tier system," the Wellington Reeve proclaimed.

Hallowell Reeve Keith MacDonald and Deputy Reeve Jim Duplop voiced their support for the one tier option.

"I am supporting a one tier system. The geography, size and service levels

lend themselves to a one tier system," stated MacDonald.

"Change must occur, and one municipality for the County is ideal," Dunlop added. "One tier will present us with more options to cope with reduced provincial funding, so let's make the plan and work the plan. Let's unite as one and work as a team for the benefit of all of us - this is a win-win situation for everyone," he continued.

Sophiasburgh Reeve Fred Campbell told council he really hadn't made up his mind, noting that he believes council has not allotted enough time to truly examine the three options.

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PERCA to hold open house on Marsh Creek project

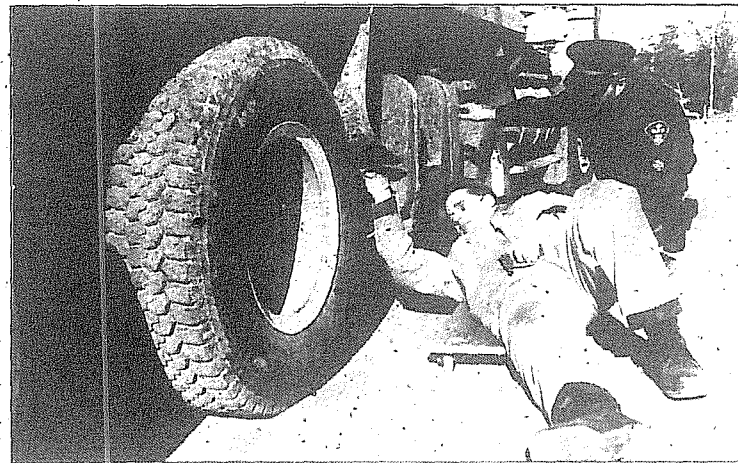
The Prince Edward Region Conservation Authority is proceeding with the approval process for a storm water pond to treat storm runoff before it enters Marsh Creek.

The public is invited to attend an open house to see plans and designs for the stormwater pond and the whole project.

PERCA has begun work on the Marsh Creek Rehabilitation Project in the Delta Park area. The total project consists of a series of channels designed to improve the creek and improve water quality and habitat.

The stormwater pond proposal fits in nicely with the improvement work, the focus is currently doing in the Delta and the Town of Picton has been very helpful in terms of helping us with the project and local tax payers, environmental liaison officer for the conservation authority.

There is currently a natural stream



Rob Strickan, an enforcement officer with the Ministry of Transportation's Belleville office, inspects a truck during Wednesday's one day safety inspection blitz, while Picton Detachment OPP Constable Kevin Tucker looks on.

OPP and MTO target unsafe vehicles in PEC

By John Chambers
Gazette Staff

Members of the OPP's Picton Detachment and the Ministry of Transportation had seven checks on Wednesday dur-

ing the day in Prince Edward County.

"Jim Lam told me that over the last several years, the overall condition of trucks being driven locally has improved

and about doing spot checks, it makes them think a little more carefully about what they are doing and whether they are operating a safe vehicle."

While vehicle operators and owners

North and South Marysburgh co-host public meeting on restructuring

North Marysburgh Reeve Laverne Bailey and South Marysburgh Reeve Doug Miller have agreed to co-host a public meeting on the one tier restructuring option on Monday evening, November 18, beginning at 7 p.m.

The meeting will be held at the newly built North Marysburgh Town Hall, and following Tuesday's meeting of County Council there is little doubt members of both townships will have questions.

During Tuesday's meeting, Bailey voted to go with a modified two tier restructuring option, citing it as the best option for both the municipalities and their rate payers.

Miller told council on Tuesday, his council had instructed him to vote for a one tier restructuring option, adding that he wanted nothing more than to see the County of Prince Edward stay together and remain as one.

Province sounds smoke alarm

Alaya - Co. 03 - April 16, 201