

THE TINY COTTAGER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by PAUL COWLEY, Carusoe Bay

This fall I am delivering a message I never imagined I would be delivering and yet here we are.

During the past 34 years as a director of FoTTSA (the last 14 as president), I have had the pleasure and experience of working with all of Tiny's councils. Some were more effective than others in serving residents' interests. Unfortunately, our current council has earned a reputation for completely disregarding taxpayers' wishes.

Deputations are ignored. Thousands of signatures on petitions and thousands of lawn signs to stop the process of building a new \$50 million administrative centre are dismissed out of hand. Requests for a referendum on whether taxpayers truly want a new admin centre that no one on council even mentioned during their election campaigns are also dismissed.

Mayor Evans, Deputy Mayor Miskimins, and Councillors Walma and Helowka have formed a 4:1 voting alliance blocking efforts by Councillor Brunelle to enact motions that reflect the wishes of Tiny taxpayers. They have long since disregarded any expression of taxpayers' wishes.

You will see on page 2 the results of a survey we conducted to measure taxpayer discontent. This survey went to our mailing list and social media accounts. The results are shocking: **83% of respondents do not trust our council** to make sound financial decisions on their behalf. Furthermore,

- 84% of respondents do not support the administrative centre project in its current form
- 74% have no trust in the project estimates
- 87% support a referendum.

Not exactly a vote of confidence. A council is elected to deliver the will of the taxpayers.

As I see it, Council is now faced with two fundamental choices:

1. proceed on its current path and face two more years of acrimony and opposition, wasting Council's time and leaving a terrible legacy for future councils.
2. rebuild residents' trust by doing what should have been done at the beginning:
 - pause the process
 - hold public information sessions (2-way, not 1-way) that explain the problems with the current admin centre, and propose a new, more economical path forward.
 - stop blaming residents for having a tenuous grasp of the issues and turn the admin centre web page into a functional aid rather than an obstacle.
 - call for a referendum. Give your taxpayers the ability to weigh in on these huge expenditures.

Let Council know what you, your family and your neighbours think by downloading and filling out a petition now. See "Stop the Build Campaign..." on page 11.

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Photo: Tara Marshall

A scene from the second of three demonstrations at the existing administrative centre.

Tiny Administration Centre Survey: 87% Support a Referendum

By SCOTT WILLIAMS, Georgina Beach

According to a recent online survey conducted by FoTTSA, 926 of 1,059 respondents (87%) support conducting a referendum before proceeding with Tiny's proposed new administrative centre. Calls for a referendum began after many deputations and three demonstrations against the project — each drawing more than 300 participants — failed to persuade Council to pause or reconsider.

The response to this and nine other survey questions suggests Council and staff have a steep uphill battle if they wish to gain residents' support for the new build. For example:

- 84% of respondents do not support the administrative centre project in its current form
- 74% have no trust in the project estimates
- 83% have no trust in this council to make sound financial decisions on their behalf.

FoTTSA undertook the survey primarily to gauge residents' awareness of the two issues and the tax implications. A representational summary of responses appears on page 2.

Another Renfrew?

FoTTSA president Paul Cowley is concerned that Council's indifference to residents' concerns could lead to a debacle similar to what has taken place in Renfrew, Ontario, where the costs to upgrade and expand an aging recreation centre ballooned from \$18 million in 2021 to an estimated \$38.7 million today.

These figures don't include \$15.2 million in financing costs, which will bring total costs to \$53.9 million. A third-party report commissioned by Renfrew Council states that taxpayers will be bearing the financial burden of this project for the next 30 years.

This may sound eerily familiar to Tiny residents since the proposed administrative centre is expected to cost upwards

of \$50 million once the facility is built and financed.

"The Township already increased property taxes by 8.19% this year," says Cowley, "and that's without accounting for the new administrative centre and the asset management plan. How high could our taxes go?"

And then there's the asset management plan

Compounding respondents' concerns about Council's handling of the new administrative centre are fears that the Township's new asset management plan will impose additional taxes on residents as the Township takes steps to eliminate an infrastructure deficit.

The plan is a provincially mandated strategy for maintaining and repairing municipal assets, which for Tiny have an estimated replacement cost of \$342 million. The strategy must also explore how to finance these costs.

Township staff have already recommended an annual, 20-year 2.39% annual municipal tax rate increase to eliminate the infrastructure deficit. This does not include other budget considerations, inflation or potential property tax increases to cover the costs of a new administrative centre.

Four out of five survey respondents (78%) were very concerned that the asset management plan doesn't include any projections for inflation, which could affect the recommended 2.39% property tax increase. For more on the asset management plan, see "Why All the Fuss..." on page 10.

Respondents didn't hold back

After the survey asked respondents questions on the new administrative centre and on the asset management plan (AMP), it invited respondents to comment. The number of

— continued on page 2

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comments was unprecedented in FoTTSA's survey experience. More than 500 people commented on the administrative centre alone.

A handful of respondents supported going ahead with the new centre, but over 95% were opposed. While several accused the survey of being biased, others thanked FoTTSA for bringing issues with the new centre and AMP to their attention.

What respondents said

A sampling of comments on the administrative centre appears below. They have been edited for spelling and grammar. All comments were made anonymously, and are available for viewing on FoTTSA's website: www.tinycottager.org.

The speed with which this project is being pushed through does not make sense, especially when previous councils did not think it sufficiently worthwhile to build reserves. This is a small township, and \$25 million plus financing is a huge sum of money.

Council needs to LISTEN to the residents. The silent majority are cottagers that don't know what is going on.

I agree we need to do something but I question whether Tiny decision-makers are responding to consultants' dream build versus being financially prudent and practical.

The lack of transparency and willingness to hear the public's complaints is astounding.

I attended one of the meetings held about the proposal and we were definitely told, "The Council has approved this and there is no going back." So much for listening to your ratepayers!

This was not ever mentioned during the election campaign and current council minus one councillor are pushing this through. On an expenditure of this magnitude, there must be validation of their decision to proceed or not by holding a referendum.

What this tells us

The survey results are not about who is right and who is wrong, or how to proceed. Instead, they are a snapshot of respondents' anger, confusion and frustration over Township decision-making processes and outcomes.

In a deposition to Council on April 3, FoTTSA president Paul Cowley stated, "FoTTSA believes that there has been inadequate up-to-date information provided to the public regarding the justification and scope of the building project, the priority of the town hall project relative to other essential infrastructure spending demands, the assessment of alternatives, and the rationale for selecting a site remote from any settlement areas." The survey results bear this out.

Inform yourself

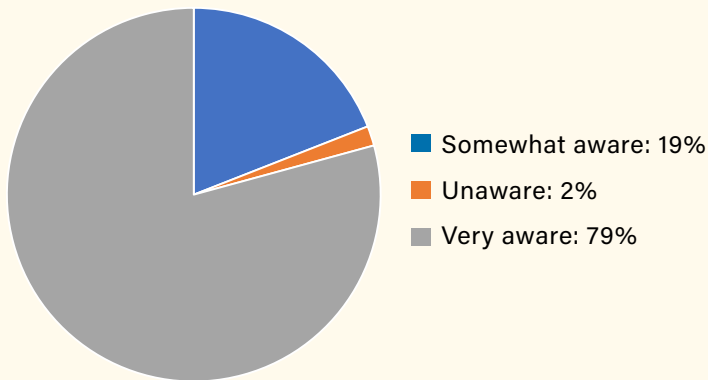
The township website has a page dedicated to the new administration building project. It includes links to essential documents, including consultant and staff reports: www.tiny.ca/township-hall/new-building. The page is not easy to navigate, so have patience as you work through it.

¹ Ted Raymond, "Renfrew, Ont. town council failed to properly scrutinize Ma-Te-Way expansion: report," CTV News Ottawa, August 14, 2024; tinyurl.com/54cwvtdf.

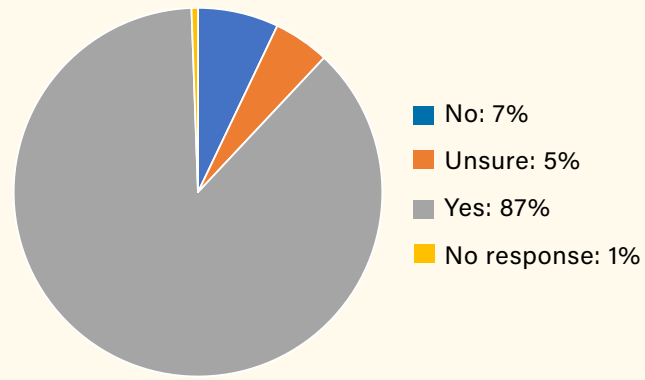
² This survey is FoTTSA's fourth public survey. Previous surveys asked residents about short-term rentals, safety on Tiny Beaches Road, and customer satisfaction with *The Tiny Cottager* itself.

FoTTSA Survey Results on the Proposed Administrative Centre and Asset Management Plan

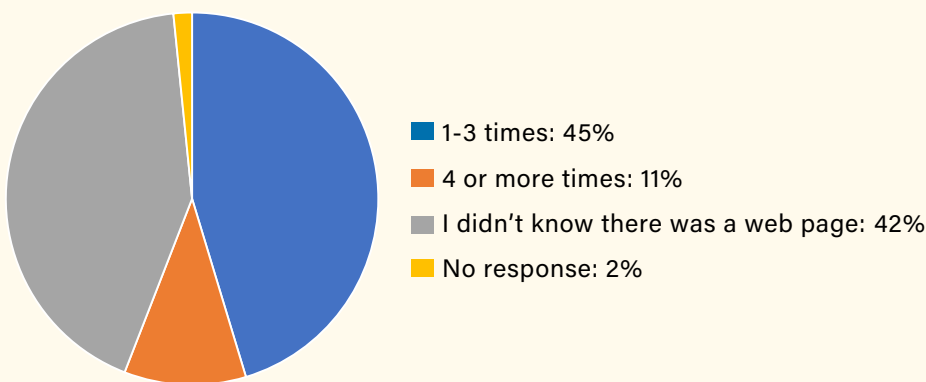
1. How aware are you of Tiny Council's plans to build a new administrative centre?



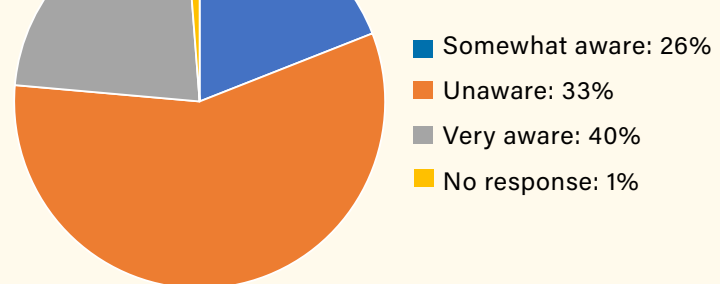
6. Some taxpayers have asked Council to hold a referendum on the project before proceeding. Would you support a referendum?



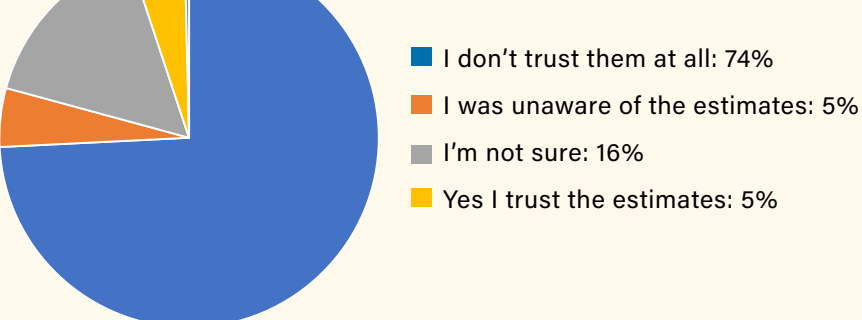
2. How often have you visited Tiny's administrative centre web page to learn more about the project?



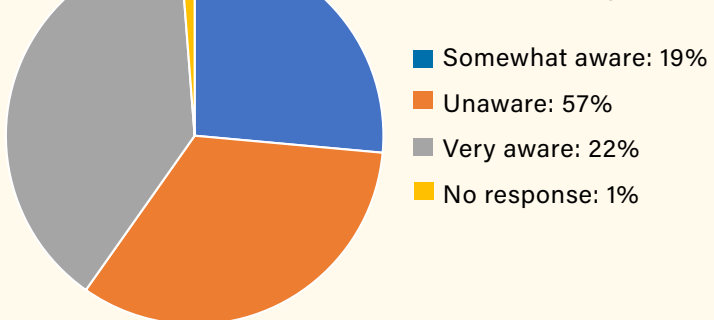
7. Are you aware that Tiny Township staff are recommending a 2.39% increase to property taxes, above normal inflationary increases and any costs relating to the new administrative centre, each year for 20 years to deal with asset management?



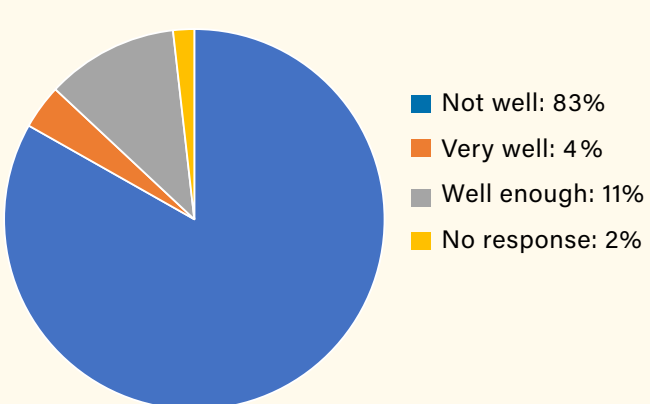
3. Tiny's preliminary cost estimates are \$25.6 million for construction, plus \$21.9 million for financing. Do you believe these estimates will reflect actual costs?



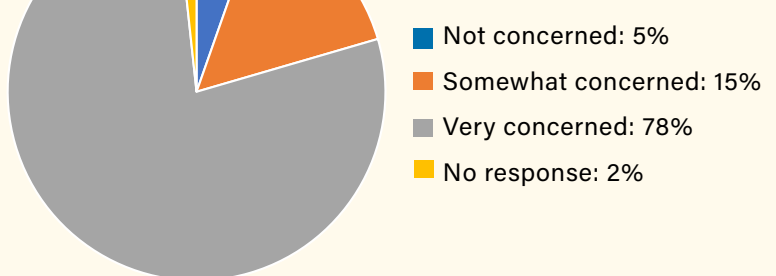
8. Are you aware that Tiny Township staff are recommending a 2.07% increase to water usage fees for those on municipal water, each year for 10 years, to maintain the water service system?



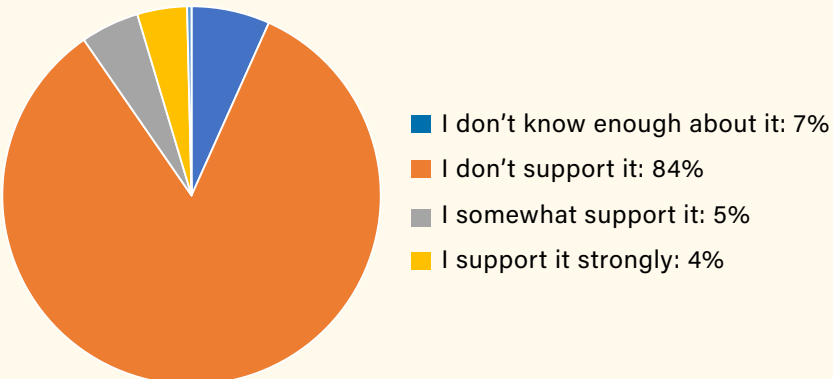
4. How well do you believe Tiny is communicating the costs?



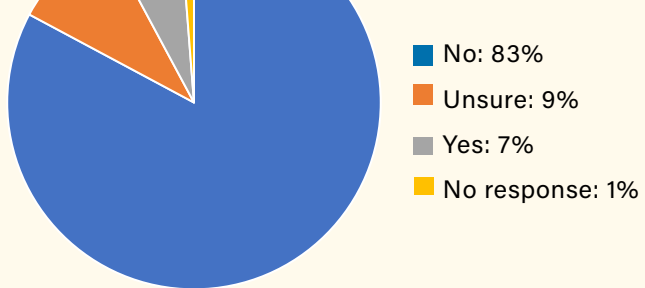
9. The asset management plan doesn't include inflationary projections and assumes all asset replacements are like-for-like. How concerned are you that such omissions will alter the funding needs and eventual tax rates set by the Township?



5. Do you support the project in its proposed form?



10. Based on Council's handling so far of the administrative centre project and the asset management plan, do you trust this council to make sound financial decisions on your behalf?



FoTTSA Recreational Water Testing: Results Mostly But Not All Good

By SCOTT WILLIAMS,
Georgina Beach



Photo by Siska Wijnburg on Unsplash

This summer many beaches in Tiny consistently recorded the lowest detectable level of E coli in FoTTSA's recreational water testing program, but results show a notable increase in the percentage of tests in the "swimming advisory" category.

Each summer the Simcoe/Muskoka District Health Unit samples lake water once a week at five public beaches in Tiny: Balm Beach, Bluewater Beach, Jackson Park, Lafontaine Beach, and Woodland Beach. Every second summer, FoTTSA supplements this sampling. Over nine weeks this summer, FoTTSA volunteers collected 445 samples at 58 locations.

The samples are analyzed for E. coli, a naturally occurring bacteria considered the best indicator of the health of swimming water. Excessive levels increase the risk of ear, eye, nose

and throat infections, or gastrointestinal illnesses if water is swallowed.

Results from FoTTSA's 2024 water sampling program reveal that almost half of all samples (46%) contained E. coli counts of 10 or less per 100 mL, the lowest level for which the samples are measured. This is consistent with 2022 results. However, the percentage of samples containing counts of 201 or more (17%) is double the percentage in 2022 (8%), and eight times the percentage in 2020 (2%).

If samples exceed 200 counts of E. coli per 100 mL of sample water, FoTTSA alerts the respective shoreline association. The health unit may issue or post a swimming advisory on the public beaches.

Key factors contributing to higher E. coli counts include warm air and water temperatures, heavy rainfalls, a large bird population, a sewage spill or leaching from septic beds, shallow water, wet sand, wind, and high waves. Locations with higher counts are often near culverts and creeks, which can introduce contaminated water into the lake following heavy rains.

Results help associations keep members safe

Soon after FoTTSA began testing recreational water in 2001, the results persuaded successive Tiny councils to fund inves-

tigations by the Severn Sound Environmental Association of streams at Woodland Beach, Jackson Park, Balm Beach, and Lafontaine Creek. Changes resulting from these investigations helped reduce the levels of E. coli entering the bay.

FoTTSA manages the program on behalf of participating member associations, which contribute to offsetting the laboratory costs for testing the water. This year 15 associations took part.

Association volunteers trained by FoTTSA collect samples at the same spot at the same time every Monday in the summer. In the process, they record environmental conditions, such as weather, wind direction, water clarity, wave action, and the presence of waterfowl and algae.

"These volunteers are essential to the program's success," says program manager Tara Marshall. "Their tracking helps us monitor E. coli levels rise and provides a comprehensive picture of what's going on throughout the summer."

Eva Firla, a testing program volunteer for Edmor Georgian Heights, is a strong believer in the program. "Testing provides us with a snapshot in time," says Eva. "The results help our members make prompt decisions about whether or not the water is safe to enjoy. We hear many positive comments from our members about our efforts and this important work."

FoTTSA's next recreational water sampling program is scheduled to take place in 2026.

Understanding Tiny's Septage Situation

By TED PHELPS, Copeland Woods



Midland's water treatment plant. Source: Town of Midland Water and Sewer Services tinyurl.com/v4r62hre

For many years, when homes changed hands, your sinks or toilets drained slowly, or you received a notice from the Township that your area was scheduled for the Sewage System Re-inspection Program, you called the pump-out company. The company came, pumped out your tank, inspected it, and you were good for another four to five years.

Generally, from April until the end of November the pumped-out material (septage) is disposed of by land application at two sites in the township. For decades, when the ground was frozen or other weather-related conditions prohibited land application, septage was trucked to the Midland sewage treatment plant, which charged a treatment fee. However, this solution may soon end.

In early 2023, Midland retained Tatham Engineering to conduct an engineering and operation review of its treatment plant, including the septage receiving facility. In June 2023 Tatham produced a report providing a history of the facility, technical alternatives for bringing the facility, built in 1981, up to current standards, and recommendations on how to pay for the project.

Tatham's report stated that, from 2017 to 2022, 59% of the septage came from Tiny Township, with smaller percentages from Midland, Tay, Penetanguishene, Springwater and other adjacent municipalities. It also recommended a new receiving system that, with upgrades to the odour control systems, had a projected capital cost of \$1,555,000 and an annual operating cost of \$77,000. Tatham further recommended that, if Midland did not proceed with a new receiving system, it still implement \$220,000 in upgrades for odour control, with anticipated annual operating costs of \$44,000.

Tatham's financial analysis indicated that the then-cur-

rent disposal rates would not cover the proposed upgrades. Tatham recommended a one-time capital contribution by all flow contributors of \$315,000, shared proportionally among flow contributors, plus an increase in the disposal fee for holding tanks, which would recover the upgrade costs over 10 years. Tiny's one-time capital contribution, based on its historical 59% usage, would appear to be \$185,850.

Midland's response

At a December 6, 2023 meeting, Midland Council received a staff report recommending against proceeding with the upgrades, with the possible exception of odour control, and as of March 6, 2024 against accepting septage from outside Midland's town boundaries. The staff report also suggested the current arrangement could continue based on the financial terms suggested by Tatham.

Tiny's response

Tim Leitch, Tiny's Director of Public Works, reported to the Committee of the Whole at its December 13, 2023 meeting. The committee directed that staff report to Council on re-establishing the former Septage Class Environment Assessment Project Committee. This committee, on which I had been a member, operated a number of years ago, in response to the Province threatening to discontinue land application of septage.

At that time Tiny had spent, in my recall, about \$250,000 to consider building a full urban-style sewage collection and treatment plant system or a land-based lagoon/reed bed-based system designed to treat septage. The full urban system was dismissed as financially impractical. Consideration of the lagoon/reed bed system, also expensive, proceeded

until the Province reversed its policy and allowed land application to continue, probably after taking into account the potentially huge financial impact on small rural municipalities.

On January 31, 2024, Leitch reported to Tiny Council on staff discussions with other affected municipalities. He recommended requesting that Midland extend the March 6 deadline for three more months. Midland agreed to an extension until June 6, 2024.

An undated letter posted April 11 from Leitch to John Thompson, Midland's Executive Director, Environment and Infrastructure, indicated that Tiny was looking into alternative septage receiving options, possible pre-treatment facilities within Tiny, or capital investment in other wastewater treatment facilities. Also, on behalf of Tiny, Penetanguishene and Tay, Leitch requested a one-year extension to June 6, 2025.

In a June 5 response acknowledging Leitch's letter, Thompson provided some history of how the situation had developed and suggested the necessary upgrades had more recently been estimated at \$3 million and were not required by or would not be for the benefit of Midland ratepayers. The following is from Thompson's letter:

During our collective meeting which you reference in your correspondence, you had indicated a perceived reluctance within the Township of Tiny to invest in infrastructure upgrades which would not be spent on facilities owned by the Township. Likewise, it may not be a surprise that there would be reluctance within the Town of Midland to fund and invest in works that do not directly benefit anyone within the Town and certainly not the WWTF (Wastewater Treatment Facility) ratepayers who would bear the brunt of funding facilities they didn't want or need. The current situation and turn of events which has caused Midland to announce the curtailment of septage receiving from external source has indeed heightened the efforts of our North Simcoe neighbours to seek alternative arrangements — as you note in your correspondence. Looking back, at this juncture, one might conclude that the deterioration of our infrastructure and degradation of our treatment processes may well have been acted upon much earlier — however, that was not the case. You had verbally referenced some previous joint activities amongst the North Simcoe municipalities, as well as the County, to study and tackle the real issues of proper hauled sewage waste treatment and disposal, as the issue has been recognized for some

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DRIVE
IN
STYLE

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The *Tiny Cottager* is published each May/June and Sept./Oct. The Federation's members are associations of property owners in those parts of the Township of Tiny designated as "Shoreline" in the Township's Official Plan.

The *Tiny Cottager* is mailed to the permanent addresses of more than 10,600 Tiny Township property owners (including 7,200 in the shoreline areas of Tiny) and to businesses in the area. It reaches some 25,000 readers. Copyright is claimed on all original articles and on advertisement layout and design created by this publication.

The information contained in *The Tiny Cottager* has been provided by sources believed to be reliable.

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The *Tiny Cottager* acknowledges that Tiny Township is situated on the traditional land of the Anishinaabeg. We are dedicated to honouring Indigenous history and culture, and committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation, respect and partnership with all First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.

REPORT ON COUNCIL

April - August 2024

By CHUCK STRADLING, Lafontaine Areas Homeowners Association

This report captures highlights of Tiny Council and Committee of the Whole (CoW) meetings that took place from April to August 2024. More detailed meeting reports are published monthly at www.tinycottager.org.

MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Mayor: David Evans

Deputy Mayor: Sean Miskimins

Councillors: Dave Brunelle, Kelly Peter Helowka, Steffen Walma

APRIL 3, 2024 COUNCIL MEETING

DEPUTATIONS: NEW ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING

Dave Wulff spoke on Council's apparent disregard for public involvement and debt resulting from the project.

Karen Zulynik commented that the municipal building report issued with the agenda was confusing and so large it was difficult to absorb. She also questioned Tatham Engineering's renewed contract when there were so many in non-compliance with the septic regulations, and why the Township is renting space to Tatham when space is required for staff.

Laury Drury spoke on the lack of public engagement, the lack of public awareness, and the importance and historical value of the existing building to the community.

FoTSTA President **Paul Cowley** encouraged Council to change its process, noting concerns such as the short notice period for the initial engagement sessions and the proposed site and selection process. Mr. Cowley was advised that it would be discussed further at the April 24 CoW meeting.

DEPUTATION: BALM BEACH STAGE

Chris Figures, Balm Beach Business Association, proposed a temporary beach stage for the Busk 'til Dusk summer events at Balm Beach, among other community event opportunities. Mr. Figures was advised that the matter would be discussed further at the April 24 CoW meeting.

SILVER BIRCH ROAD RETAINING WALL

Council approved a proposal from GMP Construction to repair the gabion wall for \$442,482 + HST.

APRIL 3, 2024 CoW MEETING

DEPUTATION: COUNCIL GOVERNANCE

Arlene Marchildon addressed the recent public dissatisfaction with Council's governance and encouraged Council to continue fostering open communication with the public.

2023 YEAR END VARIANCE REPORT

The report projected an operating surplus of \$473,000 and a capital surplus of \$476,000, for a total of \$949,000.

WYVALE PARK BALL DIAMOND LIGHTING

Pricing for replacing poles and lights was \$253,000+HST. Council instructed staff to include it in 2025 budget considerations.

TOWNSHIP OF TINY ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRE (TTAC) UPDATE

Council considered a staff report presenting background, options, and financial summaries for Council to provide direction to the committee and staff. No final financing decisions were requested. The update included the historical background, sustainable environmental objectives, work environment objectives and public environment objectives. Council deliberated on debenture options, interest rates, public space options, and a public engagement session.

Council approved Concept Schematic A1 as selected by the TTAC Ad Hoc Committee and confirmed the sizing of the new centre's public space. Council also directed staff to proceed with Unity Design Studios, at an upper cost limit of \$100,000, to write and submit grant applications for the Green Municipal Fund and to complete the planning documentation package at an estimated upper limit cost of \$12,000.

Councillor Dave Brunelle motioned that Council direct the committee to pause future actions until a full public engagement session occurs and completion of the asset management plan. Defeated 4-1. Councillor Brunelle then motioned that Council direct staff to schedule a special meeting of Council for a strategic plan review. This motion carried 4-1.

Deputy Mayor Sean Miskimins motioned that Council direct staff to plan a full public engagement session on the development of the centre and investigate a hybrid meeting structure in a neighbouring municipality that has the needed physical and broadband capacity.

ARTIFICIAL ICE

Council supported a Parks and Recreation Advisory Commit-



tee resolution dated March 12, 2024 regarding artificial ice and directed staff to research the feasibility of artificial ice, and consider the implications of altering/reaffirming the size of the current Toanche Pavilion Project.

MINI MASTER PLAN RESOLUTION

Council supported a Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee resolution re: Township parks selected for mini master plans as approved in the 2024 Budget. The master plan for Perkinsfield Park is to be completed first. Plans for Wyebridge Park and Lafontaine Park will be considered in the 2025 and 2026 budget planning, respectively.

APRIL 8, 2024 SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

(re: Interim Control By-Law)

DEPUTATIONS: INTERIM CONTROL BY-LAW

Cody Morden addressed Council as a local contractor for shoreline development requesting 1) involvement in developing the shoreline alteration by-law, 2) deferring the extension of the interim control by-law until further consultation with contractors and stakeholders has occurred, and 3) a peer review of the study conducted by Aqua Solutions 5 Inc.

Sandra Walti Aqua Solutions 5 Inc., provided an update on the study, including project background, Phase 1 key results, strategic objectives for the by-law on shoreline alterations, a summary of the W.F. Baird study conducted in 2005, and next steps. Upon discussion, the report was received as information. The study is investigating dynamic beach hazards associated with Georgian Bay.

Michelle Dada, MNT Consulting, requested that 1) the Township consider, at a minimum, an amendment to exempt areas of shoreline determined to be non-dynamic, or can be reasonably demonstrated to be non-dynamic through a site-specific study, and 2) the by-law be allowed to expire and consideration be given to a more appropriate solution so that reasonable shoreline alteration work could proceed.

PROPOSED EXTENSION TO INTERIM CONTROL BY-LAW 23-044

Staff advised that in line with the Planning Act a municipality may extend an interim by-law for one year, for a two-year maximum from the date of passing. Given that the dynamic beach study is still underway and implementation tools have not been prepared, it was recommended that Council extend the by-law for another year. Council authorized a one-year extension.

APRIL 24, 2024 CoW MEETING

DEPUTATIONS: TTAC

Drew Ironstone, Director of Facility Management for the County of Simcoe for 24 years before retiring, outlined his experience with similar projects and many issues that could increase both capital and operating expenses, and urged Council to pause and listen to township citizens.

Janice Murton raised concerns with Council's failure to acknowledge the residents' desire for input into the project. Ms. Murton itemized the many deputations requesting more public engagement especially at a time more convenient for seasonal residents, the lack of transparency in the process, the many signatures on a petition, the large crowds at two public protests, the large infrastructure deficit, and the lack of resident representation on the TTAC Committee.

David Wulff provided a detailed deputation on other issues impacting costs for residents: septic management, fuel costs,

lawsuits that will emerge re: short-term rentals and shoreline regulations and rising insurance costs, to name a few. The threat of amalgamation could also have a major impact on residents. Tiny is not a rich community with average income of \$51,000 per year. He requested that, given the current uncertainty of overall deficits, the new TTAC be paused.

Pam Fulford outlined concerns with the toxic atmosphere being generated by the current administration centre which she feels is needed. She also suggested issuing Tiny Bonds to offset the tax burden. Councillor Brunelle asked what she considered the reason for resident anger, to which she replied increased living costs.

Karen Zulynik expanded on the values and benefits of the Township adopting a hybrid work policy that would significantly reduce the floorspace required for the administrative centre. She was advised that this would be further discussed at the May 15 CoW meeting.

Paul Bell noted that the new administrative building project contravenes the Endangered Species Act and recommended that the current facility be expanded to avoid this and the excessive costs associated with a new build.

Erik Schomann expressed concerns with the threat of amalgamation, requesting a more democratic, conciliatory approach to ensure protests do not accelerate to provincial levels.

TTAC UPDATE

Councillor Walma asked the Director of Finance how many taxable properties are in Tiny. She stated that there are 12,097 taxable residences and the average cost per household on an assessed value of \$350,000 would be \$6.39 per month. This is based on a 30-year debenture at 4.71% using funding through Infrastructure Ontario. Councillor Brunelle motioned that Council direct the TTAC Committee to pause future actions until a full public engagement session occurs and the asset management plan is completed. Defeated 4-1.

APRIL 24, 2024 CoW MEETING

COMMUNITY RISK ASSESSMENT REPORT

Grace McDonough, the Loomex Group, presented its report outlining treatment plans for identified public safety risks. Full report in the April 24 agenda.

SHORT-TERM RENTAL UPDATE

To date 182 licences have been received for processing, with 150 approved and 118 available.

DISCUSSION: FOTTSA DEPUTATION

Councillor Brunelle commented on the April 3 presentation by FoTSTA president Paul Cowley, supporting many recommendations and expressing hope that questions raised would be answered. It was moved that the deputation be received as information.

DISCUSSION: BALM BEACH STAGE

On review of a proposal for a non-permanent beach stage for use at the Busk 'til Dusk summer events hosted at Balm Beach, it was recommended the item be discussed during 2025 budget deliberations.

MAY 15, 2024 COUNCIL MEETING

DEPUTATION: ROADSIDE STAND ZONING AMENDMENT

The proposed amendment is intended to reduce restrictions towards small business and promote locally produced food. The existing by-law prohibits signs, outdoor storage and displays, and permits the sale of goods produced on site only if

conducted by telephone, internet, or mail order.

Loreta Santelli advised Council that a revised by-law could support innovation, entrepreneurship, and economic growth. She requested that 1) signage be permitted while adhering to By-law 02-073, 2) goods sold must be produced on site, and 3) permit roadside stands from May to September for products made, grown or manufactured, 100% of which must originate on the premises and conform to Simcoe-Muskoka District Health Unit requirements if applicable.

DEPUTATION: 2024 TERRY FOX RUN

Don Chapman outlined the details of this year's event and requested the usual support from the Township.

SEPTAGE RECEIVING AT MIDLAND WASTEWATER TREATMENT CENTRE (WWTC)

Council approved a letter from the Township requesting an extension of a deadline to halt accepting Tiny septage from sources such as holding tanks, septic systems, porta potty and marine waste. The current deadline, extended once already, is June 6, 2024. The requested extension is to June 6, 2025. This would enable Tiny to investigate other options.

JUNE 5, 2024 CoW MEETING

ANNOUNCEMENTS: TTAC PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRES

Three sessions will be held as follows: July 16, virtual; July 23, virtual; July 31, hybrid. Staff are seeking public input into the public spaces in the new TTAC.

DISCUSSION/DEPUTATION ON ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT FOR ROADSIDE STANDS

Council considered the scheduled deputation of May 15 from Loreta Santelli but noted that the issue required more consideration in the form of a staff report.

COUNTY OF SIMCOE MANAGED SERVICES

The County of Simcoe strategic plan includes developing an IT security and shared services model for member municipalities. Tiny's director of corporate services and the IT coordinator met with the County to discuss their IT shared service model. Following discussions, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was drafted. There could be an annual savings of \$80,000. Council approved a recommendation to migrate IT to the Simcoe County IT managed services.

PAY PARKING AT TREW AVENUE, BLUEWATER BEACH

It was questioned as to why pay parking was removed here. Staff to report back with the reasoning at a future meeting. Jesse Garland later explained that pay parking was removed for safety and security.

JUNE 26, 2024 COUNCIL MEETING

DEPUTATIONS: TTAC

Karen Zulynik noted from the consultant's report that 1) \$49,000,000 was the number arrived at by the report, 2) there was no mention anywhere of extensive public opposition to the project, and 3) there was no explanation as to why a larger venue could not be secured for the public

to voice their concerns. She noted the "Stop the Build/keep Tiny affordable" campaign was taking off with over 1000 signs, and her petition contained more names than election votes for the deputy mayor and three councillors. Zulynik questioned Council's assertion that the silent majority do not oppose the building.

Dave Wulff voiced concern that the expensive Blackline Report had been put on the shelf because it did not meet the aims of the CAO. The report made several recommendations, including undertaking a hybrid work structure, which would mean that 15,050 sq. ft. would be sufficient to meet staff needs.

Borys Kowalsky requested a referendum on whether to proceed with the TTAC. He pointed out that project costs could be substantially greater than those estimated by Council's consultants, which would result in tax increases substantially higher than Council projections.

2024 ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN (AMP)

The 2024 AMP, an update of the 2022 plan, serves as a guide for addressing an estimated \$49.6 million infrastructure deficit. Staff recommend implementing a 2.39% annual tax increase over 20 years to eliminate the infrastructure deficit.

The Water Department is in the process of completing a water master plan and water financial strategy. The report suggests that, to close the water infrastructure gap, water rates be adjusted annually for the next 10 years by 2.07%. The full report is available @ tinyurl.com/2jpuf7k3.

TTAC COMMITTEE UPDATE

At its May 27 meeting, the committee recommended forming an ad hoc committee comprising residents, staff member(s), and a council representative.

JUNE 26, 2024 CoW MEETING

TTAC UPDATE

Unity Design Studio has submitted a design report for work completed as part of Phase 1. It includes 1) the background, methodology, information, and analysis the architect used to develop their schematic design, and 2) renderings of the schematic design, outline specifications, the functional program, and a Class D Estimate for the project.

The main intent of this report is to seek approval to start Phase 2 activities, which include design and budget planning for the balance of the project. Phase 2 is expected to look at energy efficiency upgrades beyond what is required in the Ontario Building Code.

The Township is now planning a net-zero energy and carbon facility with a large amount of public space. An environmentally focused facility will make the Township eligible for grants and borrowing options. Based on this directive, additional sub-consultants are needed by the architect to conduct such tasks as energy modelling, draft specialized HVAC designs (geothermal), design a photovoltaic system, etc. Unlike the Phase 1 works, the fee structure for Phase 2 is not based on a lump

sum, but a percentage of the construction cost of the facility. Unity had originally proposed a fee of 5.63% and provided a revised fee of 6.63% for the increased scope of work. They have also included a provision that their fee would increase or decrease if the construction cost decreases or increases. Staff believe Unity's proposed fee remains competitive.

Council approved awarding the contract to Unity. Full report available here: tinyurl.com/2nyys4tn.

TAY REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF SSEA FUNDING AGREEMENT

Mayor Evans outlined his views on the value of the Severn Sound Environmental Association and supported the rights of the other seven municipalities to review their opinions on their needs from SSEA. He recommended that, if a review takes place, it be a comprehensive review of the entire partnership agreement conducted by an independent third party.

LETTER TO TOWN OF MIDLAND RE: SEPTAGE

Mayor Evans noted that Midland's response requesting a one-year extension for receiving Tiny septage was not positive and that alternatives were being considered. Discussion ensued regarding the formation of a Tiny septage committee with involvement from the County. Director Leitch indicated they are currently working with neighbouring communities to come up with solutions.

AUGUST 7, 2024 COUNCIL MEETING

DEPUTATIONS: TTAC REFERENDUM

Noel Macartney requested Council support a motion to hold a referendum. **Borys Kowalsky** repeated a request made in a previous deputation regarding a call for a referendum.

TTAC MEETING MINUTES

Councillor Brunelle questioned why size-related recommendations in the Blackline Report were not followed. Mayor Evans explained that the Blackline recommendations were high level and not done to the same level as staff have since done.

WYVALE BALL DIAMOND COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE

Participating community residents have requested a refund of their charitable donation as the LED Lighting Capital Project has been deferred to 2025. Staff was directed to return the donations and advise there could be tax implications.

EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF TTAC AD HOC COMMITTEE APPLICATIONS

Only 3 of 7 required applications from residents have been received. The application process was extended by two weeks.

AUGUST 7, 2024 CoW MEETING

Councillor Brunelle expressed concern that Council was doing a disservice to residents by not considering a referendum. He proposed a motion as follows: that Council pause the project and conduct a referendum. No one seconded the motion.

COMMUNICATIONS: CONSENT ITEMS

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks -
— continued on page 6

Support Your Local Association: Strength in Numbers

By **CHUCK STRADLING**, Lafontaine Areas Homeowners Association



- Farlain Lake Community Association
- Georgian Highlands Cottagers' Association
- Kettle's Beach Subdivision Association Inc.
- Kingswood Acres Beach Association
- Lafontaine Areas Homeowners Association (LASHA)
- The Nottawaga Beach Association
- The Pennorth Beach Corporation
- Pine Forest Beach Ratepayers Association
- Thunder Beach Association
- Wahnekewening Community Association

- make deputations to Council on matters affecting the interests of LASHA members.

What LASHA has achieved

Among LASHA's activities, the association has

- monitored every regular Council, Committee of the Whole and special meetings of Council, and reported to our members via the monthly *LASHA Currents* and periodic *LASHA Ripple* e-blasts.
- proactively addressed Council on local issues, including short-term rentals, road safety, road improvements, and implementation of the LA Beach Master Plan.
- coordinated several meet-the-candidate sessions during the last municipal election process and provided our members with the platforms of most Council contenders.
- been directly involved in beach clean-ups and raised funds to have courtesy benches installed throughout our community. We are currently exploring the installation of a welcome sign to promote LASHA and to recognize our distinct community.
- joined FoTTSA in 2020, which provides added value to our members through a larger voice at Council, involvement in proactive lobbying efforts, and access to the retail discount program.
- been represented on the FoTTSA Board of Directors for the past two years which has provided direct input into their strategic planning efforts.
- supported FoTTSA as it addresses township wide issues including water protection, library and arena services, the need for a new municipal building, and the need for public input into the annual budget process, asset management and strategic plans.

LASHA's success depends on representing as many residents as possible and has kept its annual fee at \$40.00 for the past seven years to encourage participation. The louder the voice, the better the response. So, if you live in our area and are not a member of LASHA, we strongly encourage you to join and have your voice heard.

Visit our website and join today: www.MyLASHA.com; info@MyLASHA.com; 1-844-MyLASHA.

The Federation of Tiny Township Shoreline Associations (FoTTSA) is a non-profit, volunteer organization that promotes thriving and sustainable communities in Tiny Township by bringing together and representing resident associations.

FoTTSA uses effective communication *The Tiny Cottager* and *FoTTSA Flash*, education and advocacy to promote positive environmental stewardship and to provide leadership on sound public policy on key township wide issues.

Supporting your local association is key to that strength in numbers and we encourage you now to have yourself counted in. FoTTSA will be featuring our local associations in our publications, both online and in print, to support their growth and our strength as a federation. If you are not a member of one of the associations listed below, we strongly encourage you to join your local association and have your voice heard. FoTTSA comprises 22 association members representing

- Addison Beach Property Owners' Association
- Ardmore Beach Association
- Bluewater Dunes Ratepayers Association/Corporation
- Bluewater, Georgina, Wendake, Beaches and Ratepayers Association
- Carusoe Bay Association
- Cedar Point Cottagers Association
- Cedar Ridge Homeowners Association
- Cleopatra Resort Co-Ownership Inc.
- Deanlea Beach Association Inc.
- Edmor Beach-Georgian Heights Ratepayers Association

- Woodland Beach Property Owners' Association
- Wymbolwood Beach Association.

Featured member: Lafontaine Areas Homeowners Association (LASHA)

Formed in 2015, the Lafontaine AreaS Homeowners Association represents residents with homes in the area shown in the above map. As a proactive association of concerned "off-beach" and "beach front" neighbours, it acts as a consolidated voice to preserve our quality of life while promoting safety, community and environmental concerns.

LASHA is on the front lines of important planning, social, cultural, environmental and community issues and responds in many ways to the needs of its members through proactively addressing local issues at the municipal level directly and through its FoTTSA membership. Its prime functions are:

- ensuring our local politicians remember their election promises and holding them accountable
- being an active voice in how our tax dollars are spent by monitoring all budget deliberations
- providing a forum for input and discussion on our neighborhood's future development and environment
- regularly communicating about what is happening in our community
- coordinating community events and forums
- promoting member home-based businesses
- carrying out periodic surveys to ensure that every member has an opportunity to express their opinion



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Agent for SANDERSON MONUMENT CO.

—continued from page 5

Application for Approval of Waste Disposal Sites for spreading residential hauled sewage. The site covers 21 hectares, with a total usable spreading area of 6.4 hectares. The Township and County were requested to comment on the application, including whether the property is appropriately zoned and what the current zoning designation is. For further details of the site's operation, contact Chuck Duquette, Regional Sanitation Disposal Ltd., cduquette1978@gmail.com.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

Midland, Penetanguishene and Tay Joint Letter - User fees and charges for all recreation amenities: Councillor Walma suggested Tiny be involved since Tiny provides services used by other municipalities. Mayor Evans stated that Tay is no longer participating, and noted Tiny had withdrawn payment for services in the past for a number of reasons that remain relevant. He is against user fees and feels that 1) the support residents provide in terms of commercial tax revenue far exceeds what could be generated by user fees, and 2) residents should not contribute to facilities we have no say over. Councillor Helowka and Deputy Mayor Miskimins supported the mayor's position. Councillor Brunelle suggested discussions with neighbouring municipalities. The item was deferred until after the North Simcoe Heads of Council meeting in September.

AUGUST 28, 2024 COUNCIL MEETING

TOWNSHIP OF TINY EDUCATION BURSARY RECIPIENTS
Council recognized the following individuals who received \$1000 each: Aimee Edmonds, Georgian Bay District Secondary School • Ava Beauchamp and Wesley Simons, École Secondaire Le Caron • Gena Dafoe, Georgian Bay District Secondary School • Sebastian Zakkari Elemento, St. Theresa's Catholic High School.

MINUTES OF TTAC COMMITTEE JULY 22, 2024

Councillor Brunelle questioned which statistics are being tracked by the Public Distribution of Correspondence Tracker. Director Leitch outlined the spreadsheet developed to track correspondence received and summarized by the committee, which will be presented to council in September.

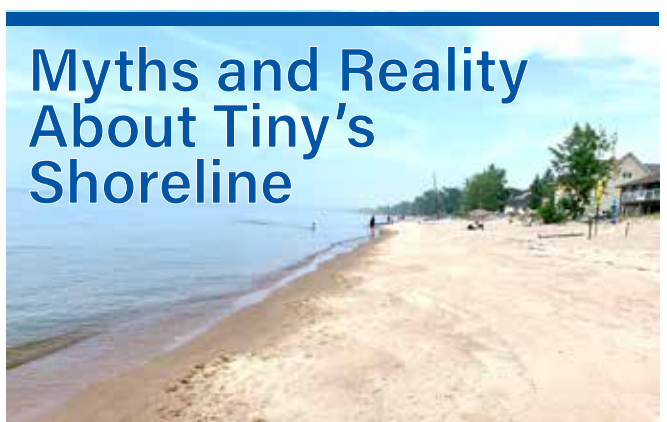
AWARD OF TENDER PW-24-11: HOT MIX PATCHING

The 2024 budget includes \$140,000 for a hot mix road patching program to repair areas with a high concentration of potholes in roads otherwise in fair or good condition. In July staff issued a tender for several areas amounting to 2,000 square metres of patching. Council awarded the contract to Global Simcoe Paving for \$110,600 + HST and directed staff to work with the contractor on selected other areas for patching not included in the base tender with funds remaining in the 2024 budget.

AUGUST 28, 2024 CoW MEETING

MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION: NAMING OF TOANCHE PARK BASEBALL DIAMOND

Council reviewed correspondence proposing naming the ball diamond "The Larry Patenaude Diamond" to recognize his many contributions since 1972 in his quest to provide a baseball facility for the neighbourhood. The matter was referred to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee.



Myths and Reality About Tiny's Shoreline

Who owns and who has access to the shoreline has long been a source of misunderstanding and confusion for some residents. The answer is not simple, and depends on which part of the shoreline.

Appearing below are five myths that have contributed to the misunderstanding and confusion.

FoTSA takes no position on beach access issues and believes that decisions about these issues are best determined by those directly involved, on an informed basis, without coercion or confrontation.

1. Tiny's beaches belong to all of us. The legal history of beach ownership tells a different story. All land in what is now the Township of Tiny originally belonged to the federal government. Between 1823 and the late 1800s, the government issued Crown patents — legal documents transferring government land — to individuals as a means of promoting settlement.¹ As time passed, many farmers and woodlot owners eventually sold land for cottage development. Beach property was a part of these sales. See "Who Owns Tiny's Georgian Bay Shoreline" for more on shoreline ownership in Tiny.

Tiny does have five parks that serve as the primary locations for public waterfront use and activity on the western shoreline. These parks are located on Woodland Beach, Bluewater Beach, Jackson Park, Balm Beach and Lafontaine Beach Park.

2. The Township's 1823 survey plan limits Crown patents to the edge of the woods, not the shoreline. This was an argument put forward in *Ontario (Attorney-General) v. Rowntree Beach Association* (1994), 17 O.R. (3d) 174 (Gen. Div.). Justice R. Jeffrey Flinn of the Ontario Court of Justice rejected the argument and upheld the deeds of ownership, which in this instance showed ownership to the water's edge.² The Province never appealed the decision. If the Attorney-General's argument had held, it would have affected all of Tiny's 70-km shoreline, not just the beach in question.

3. The government owns shoreline up to the high water mark. The Court ruled in 1852 that "high water mark" has meaning only where there are tides. There are no tides on the Great Lakes. This ruling was reaffirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada in 1974.³



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4. The government owns a 66-foot shoreline allowance around the edge of all lakes in Ontario. This is a variation on the line of the woods and high water mark arguments. There is no 66-foot shoreline allowance along the shore of Tiny Township. However, in some places in Ontario such an allowance does exist.

5. Cottagers can extend their property line to the water's edge using Ontario's *Boundaries Act* or *Land Titles Act*. Property boundaries are dictated by the original transfer from Crown land to private ownership. Neither act addresses extending the boundaries. The purpose of the *Boundaries Act* is to determine the actual position of one or more boundaries of a property. The purpose of the *Land Titles Act* is to guarantee that land ownership and purchases are valid and recognized under Ontario and federal laws. It also protects property owners from claims of adverse possession — commonly known as “squatter’s rights.”

¹ “Court rulings don’t support claim of open beaches,” originally published in the *Midland Free Press* on May 19, 2000 and republished by the Centre Ipperwash Community Association; tinyurl.com/295h2b49.

² Patricia O’Driscoll, “It’s Over! Attorney General’s lawsuit against Rowntree,” *The Tiny Cottager*, March 15, 1994; tinyurl.com/mpjz4r6c.

³ Attorney-General for Ontario v. Walker et al. (1974), 42 D.L.R. (3d) 629; tinyurl.com/yc4c4358.

Who Owns Tiny’s Georgian Bay Shoreline

Different forms of waterfront ownership on southern Georgian Bay exist:

- First Nation ownership to the water’s edge (e.g., Christian Island)
- provincial ownership to the water’s edge (e.g., Awenda Park)
- Township ownership to the water’s edge (e.g., portions of Woodland Beach, Bluewater Beach, Jackson Park Beach, Balm Beach, Lafontaine Beach and other municipal properties that may be signed to indicate municipal ownership)
- communal ownership to the water’s edge (e.g., Rowntree Beach)
- individual ownership to the water’s edge.

The Township has made significant efforts to sign and demarcate the beaches and beach access/pathways that it owns. To determine the ownership rights for a particular beach area, ask the Township if it owns the beach in question. If it doesn’t, look up the property on the Ontario Land Property Records Portal: www.onland.ca/ui. The results will provide a legal description of the property, including whether it extends to the water line.

Local Golfers Raise \$45,000 for Charities



On June 14, 110 golfers came out to the Midland Golf and Country Club for the 9th annual Mayor’s Charity Golf Tournament, helping the event raise \$45,000.

The day featured a noon shotgun start, a plated dinner, a silent auction valued at \$8,500, a 50/50 jackpot of \$712, as well as on-course competitions and prizes, all in support of local not-for-profit and charitable organizations in North Simcoe.

At the end of the day, Mayor Evans, Council, and members of the volunteer Mayor’s Charity Golf Tournament Working Committee presented funds to the following organizations:

- Angels with Backpacks
- BGC North Simcoe
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of North Simcoe
- CLH Foundation
- Compassion Place
- Friends of Awenda
- Gateway Centre for Learning
- Georgian Bay Cancer Support Centre
- Georgian Bay Food Network
- Georgian Shores Swinging Seniors
- Hospice Huronia
- Huronia Community Foundation
- Independent Living Services, Simcoe County
- Quest Art School and Gallery
- Scientists in School
- Sistema Huronia Music Academy
- We Are The Villagers

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— continued from page 3
 considerable length of time — and is especially poignant for the Township of Tiny with so many existing properties served by septic systems ... Recognizing the origins of the need and benefits to the parties which they accrue, Midland is put in the position that it is in and can only follow a different course if funds to properly effect the necessary upgrades are received from external sources ... As this type of work takes time to organize, administer and complete, it is not likely that even if adequate funds were in hand immediately, that the completion would occur before the winter restrictive spreading window of 2024 arrives.



Photo by Marta Wave on Pexels

For some, the changing leaves and chilly weather signal that another incredible cottage season has come to an end. As you prepare to leave for the season, it's important to think about environmental stewardship. As a cottage owner in Tiny Township, it's not just the scenic views and tranquil surroundings that make your property special, it's also the critical habitat and wildlife that call it home. Being a good steward is essential because in sharing the land with wildlife, we are responsible for preserving the habitat they depend on. When preparing to close your cottage for the winter season, it is important to close it with the land and wildlife in mind.

Here are eight tips on being a responsible steward as you close up your cottage for the season.

Actions that support natural habitats

1. Leave your yard natural. Enhance wildlife habitat by leaving your yard in its natural state this fall. Leaves, rotting logs, and brush piles can provide shelter for small mammals, pollinators, reptiles, and amphibians. Additionally, leaving dried flower heads like sunflowers, asters, and goldenrods from your garden can serve as a natural food source for birds, while the stems and leaves provide homes for hibernating insects.

2. Preserve the night sky. Light pollution can negatively impact wildlife, such as birds or insects, as they migrate or forage. Before you go, ensure all outdoor light fixtures are turned off to reduce light pollution. Additionally, when us-

Where we are now

As of press time, sources say that Tiny has reached an agreement with Midland. In related news, the provincial government recently announced \$30 million in funding to the town mostly for water, but also for wastewater treatment improvements without specifically including septage facilities.

If an agreement has not been reached and septage solutions are not in place by December 1, or when winter weather conditions dictate land application will end, Tiny residents with full holding tanks, failing septic systems

requiring immediate attention, and construction and event sites using portable toilets will have no solution.

The easy and economically sensible solution suggested by Tatham, costing Tiny probably less than \$200,000, should have made this problem disappear.

How far would \$200,000 go in hiring consultants and developing a Tiny solution for treating septage? Based on my experience on that septic related committee, not very far.

If you haven't already had your treatment system attended to, now may be a good time to do so.

8 Ways To Be Environmentally Friendly While Closing Your Cottage

By Georgian Bay Mnidoo Gamii Biosphere

ing lights at the cottage, consider making outdoor lighting changes, such as installing shields or switching to motion detectors. Not only does this benefit wildlife, but it also enhances your stargazing experience.

3. Check for invasive species. Help prevent the spread of invasive species by thoroughly removing, cleaning and properly disposing of all plant and animal material from your vehicle, boat, trailer, or any other equipment before removing them from your property and then again before coming back to your cottage in the new year.

Actions that help individual species

4. Bird proof your windows. Birds mistake the reflection of the sky or trees on windows as a clear path, causing injury or death to birds from window strikes. Reduce the risk of birds crashing into windows by simply closing your blinds, shades, or external shutters. Consider adding decals (spaced 2 inches apart) or tinted film onto your windows to make them visible to birds.

5. Dispose of your garbage responsibly. It can be a risk to wildlife if they rely on human food sources. Avoid attracting bears and other wildlife to your home by taking all garbage and food with you. Ensure anything left behind (like birdseed) is in air-tight containers. Clean all appliances, cupboards and barbecues to remove crumbs and grease. Store barbecues and outdoor cooking appliances in indoor spaces.*

General stewardship practices

6. Properly store hazardous material. Make sure that any hazardous materials, such as gasoline or oils, are either taken with you or properly stored to reduce spills or leaks into the environment.

7. Be smart about your septic system. When using a septic system, all liquids that flow down your drain end up in your

septic system, and eventually the output will be released into the environment. Contaminated or nutrient-rich wastewater that enters the environment can impact water quality and wildlife. Always take care of your system by limiting your inputs. Do not add grease or fats, and use natural/phosphate-free soaps or detergents to minimize environmental impacts from your septic system. It is also crucial that you are on top of pumping your tank every few years to prevent any major back-ups, leaks, or other issues from occurring.

8. Plan stewardship for the spring. Over the winter is a great time to think about your property and how to continue creating a naturalized space. Two great starting points are:

- restoring natural shorelines. Natural shorelines and vegetative buffers are crucial in providing a protective barrier against erosion and fostering biodiversity. Protect existing natural areas and create a vegetated shoreline buffer zone with native plants, trees, or shrubs.
- native plant gardening. Embracing native plant gardening fosters a more natural, diverse and less meticulously maintained green space. Transforming traditional lawns into gardens, meadows, shrub areas, or "rough" habitats is strongly encouraged wherever feasible. This transition reduces the need for intensive maintenance, significantly boosts biodiversity, and lends a hand to wildlife with natural food sources and shelter.

As a cottager, your role in preserving Tiny Township's natural beauty and ecology is crucial. By taking simple actions, you can help ensure a healthier environment for your visits, the land, and the wildlife that call this place home.

* If storing a propane grill indoors, disconnect the propane tank and store it outside. Position the tank upright and cover it with a plastic tarp to prevent water and ice buildup.

The Georgian Bay Biosphere is situated within Anishinaabek territory Along Eastern Georgian Bay and inland, from the French River to the Severn River. The biosphere was designated in 2004 as a region of global ecological significance that makes an ongoing commitment to strive for a sustainable and equitable region.

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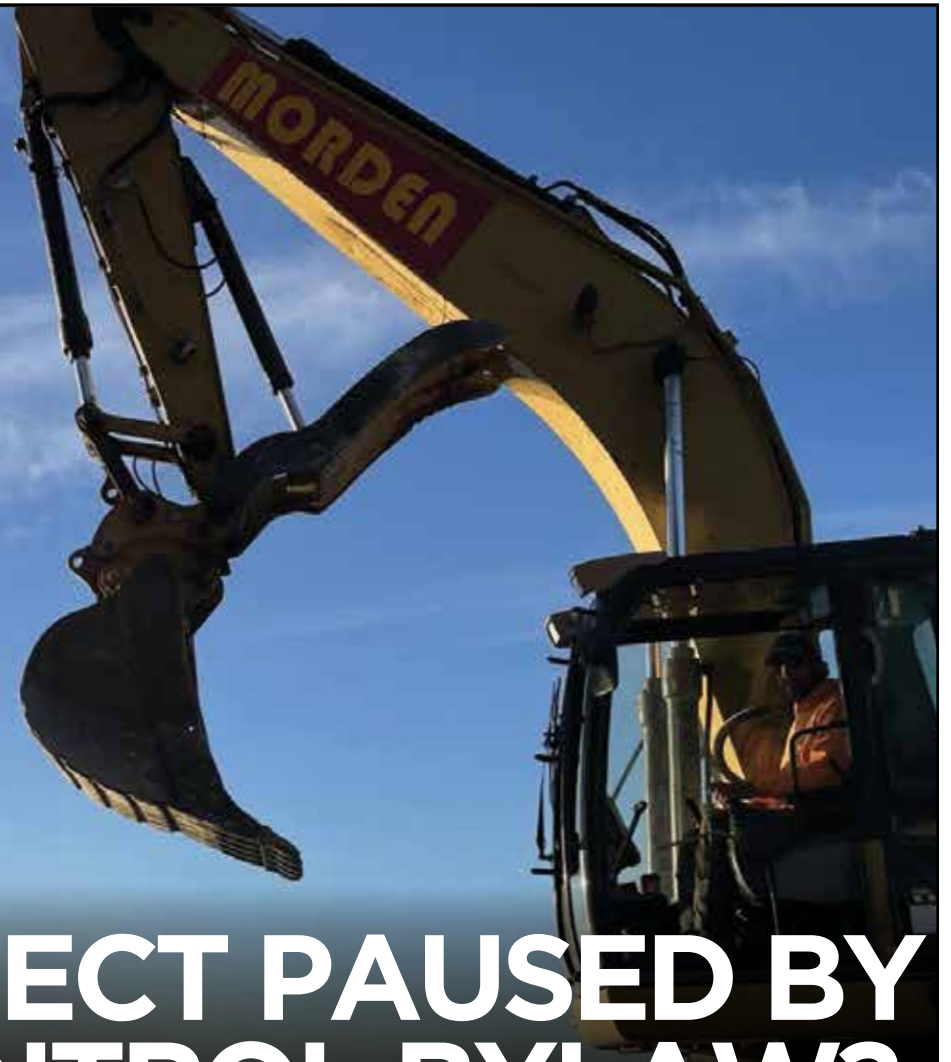
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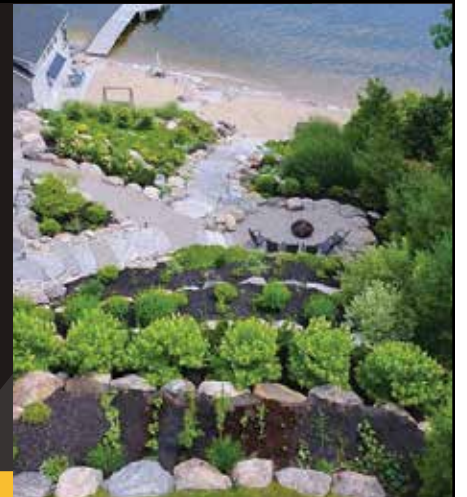
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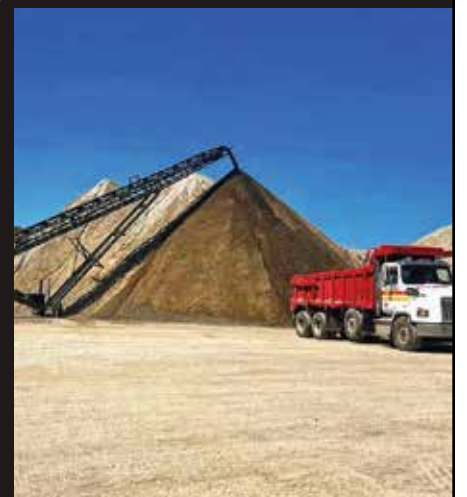
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Why All the Fuss About Tiny's Asset Management Plan?

By HERB HUCK, Farlain Lake



Every individual or entity that owns assets needs to maintain them to avoid costly repairs or untimely breakdowns, and at some point replace them. Tiny Township is no exception. So why are we hearing about Tiny's asset management plan (AMP) now, and why do we need to know about it?

As part of the *Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, 2015*, the Ontario government introduced Regulation 588/17 - Asset Management Planning for Municipal Infrastructure. This regulation requires municipalities to formally implement AMPs in phases, which began with an asset management policy due in 2019 and will end with an approved financial strategy, due in 2025 that contains assessments of the assets' condition, service level assumptions, risk of failure scenarios, and alternative financing proposals.

The findings in Tiny's most current version of their AMP, released in June 2024, raise concerns about the condition of the assets, the costs to address these concerns, and how much this will cost taxpayers.

Municipal assets typically include roads, bridges and culverts, water, wastewater and stormwater management systems, and municipal buildings and facilities.

The *2024 Township of Tiny Asset Management Plan* breaks down all assets into nine categories; four are deemed core and five, non-core. The total estimated replacement cost for all assets is \$342.18 million.

Within the nine asset categories, 38% of assets (\$133 million) were categorized as poor or in very poor condition.

Dealing with an infrastructure deficit

The document concludes that, on average, \$11.6 million is required each year to remain current with capital rehabilitation and/or replacement needs for the Township's asset portfolio. However, based on funding levels over the last four years, the Township is running an average annual infrastructure deficit of \$5.9 million.

In this time period, the major sources of funding came from property taxation at 28%, grant funding at 24%, and discretionary reserves at 34%. To eliminate the deficit, the AMP suggests using only reliable sources of ongoing funds, such as property taxes.

Under this more conservative approach, the annual deficit rises to \$7.5 million in 2024. Going by the 2023 tax revenue budget, eliminating the cumulative deficit would require a 47.8% one-time tax hike, but that would be harsh on residents given we have already absorbed almost 20% increases in property taxes over the last two years. The AMP suggests an alternative which would require a 2.39% fixed amount, or \$375,000 be added to the budget each year for 20 years,

thereby eliminating the deficit at the end of year 20. It should be noted that the AMP does not take into account inflationary increases and assumes asset replacement will be like-for-like. The latter may not always be possible. For example, the proposed new administrative centre is not a like-for-like replacement.

Don't forget proposed hikes to water usage fees

Although not part of the property tax assessment base, water usage fees are also proposed to increase significantly to deal with the infrastructure needs in those asset classes. Not all Tiny residents are on the municipal water system so those increases will impact a subset of our community and add to the tax burdens already discussed. A onetime increase of 20.7% to close this funding gap would be too harsh, so a 10-year phase in period using 2.07% has been proposed instead.

Next steps for the AMP

Tiny's Corporate Services Department still has a lot of work ahead of it before devising a financial strategy, required before finalizing the AMP in 2025. Still to be done:

- conducting assessments of the condition of 40% of township assets that haven't already been assessed
- updating financial projections to reflect the most current tax data
- taking inflation into account
- reviewing all assumptions, including other sources of revenue.

How this impacts you



Focusing on property tax implications, if we use the proposed simple increase of 2.39% for 20 years based on the 2023 tax base, property taxes will increase by 47.8% over the 20-year period just for asset management funding. If we add in an inflation factor for township operations of 2% compounded, the increase over 20 years skyrockets to 106.7%.

Imagine what will happen if the Township proceeds with a new administrative centre? We need our councillors to focus on responsible financial planning and doing everything possible to avoid these significant increases. Let's make sure Tiny stays affordable despite these challenges.

Learn more about Tiny's asset management plan here: tinyurl.com/47hryyss.

Herb Huck is a retired chartered professional accountant (CPA) and would like to express his sincere appreciation for the help and support of Marley Mendel, Asset Management Coordinator, Tiny Township, in providing guidance on how to interpret many details in the AMP.

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"Stop the Build" Giving Voice to Taxpayers' Concerns

By BORYS KOWALSKY, Cawaja Beach,
and ERIK SCHOMANN, Lafontaine



Photo by Linda Andrews

Tiny Township Council's sudden decision in 2023 to build a new administrative centre for which it had no mandate from voters has led to a "Stop the Build" campaign. This campaign has united residents and interest groups, including Tiny Township Residents' Association (TTRA) and FoTTSA, in urging Council to halt the project and examine more affordable alternatives, such as renovating the current townhall site as suggested by the Blackline consulting report in January 2024.

The campaign has been active on many fronts, including rallies, lawn signs, pamphlets, online petitions, many deputations, meetings, letters, and above all calls for a referendum.

The mayor and Council appear determined to proceed despite these efforts, resisting requests to meaningfully engage with the public and dismissing any discussion of a referendum.

While the campaign proceeds, the proposed cost and size of the administrative centre continue to escalate. Accountants say the original estimate of \$27.4 million is closer to \$48 million, including financing costs, while the proposed 33,000 square feet of space is 2.5 times larger than the existing footage. Overruns are also expected to add to these costs.

The Township already has over \$50 million in infrastructure projects like roads and bridges that are needed, and now also may also have to invest in septage treatment. Midland advised in January that it would no longer accept Tiny's waste because its septage waste removal system is now at capacity. This leaves Tiny with two options: help fund Midland's system upgrades or build a system of its own.

Currently, Tiny's population is 13,000, with projected growth to only 16,000 by 2051. With no commercial or industrial tax base in the township, residents cannot afford this new building. There are 58 employees today, yet the new build is designed for 84 employees in a large round glass structure for municipal offices only. Environmental concerns exist as at-risk species of ice age grass and other flora have been confirmed on the proposed property.

A key component of the "Stop the Build" campaign is a downloadable petition calling on the provincial government to require a referendum. Completed petitions will be presented to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario this fall.

So far the petition has generated overwhelming support from local residents who want their tax dollars spent on essential infrastructure — not on a new administrative centre that is not needed — and who have been told they can provide input only on the centre's public spaces. Residents are united in signing the petition to let the government know that they do not want a new build that was not mandated. This project will affect everyone — farm operators, villagers, commuters, retirees, inland and shoreline residents, and permanent and seasonal residents.

The mayor and Council claim to have a "silent majority" of support but provide no figures to back their claim. Contrast this with support shown for the Stop the Build campaign through the escalating number of "Stop the Build" signs throughout the Township — over 2,000 so far — and petitions signed to date.

Constituents are frustrated and disappointed by the lack of transparency that Tiny's municipal government has shown throughout. This petition calling for a referendum raises awareness and unites Tiny's residents in opposition to Council's arbitrary and fiscally irresponsible ways.

Continuing to collect signatures will make it even harder for Council to ignore concerned taxpayers. We encourage you to join with your neighbours in signing a petition and being part of the solution. Your support helps unite everyone.

Download a petition here: tinyurl.com/yc8jx2e3.



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How Farlain Lake Routed an Aggressive Aquatic Plant

By ELIZABETH DI CHIARA, Farlain Lake



The following is the story of the Farlain Lake Community Association (FLCA) battle to manage the spread of the extremely aggressive invasive aquatic plant, Eurasian watermilfoil, in Tiny Township's largest freshwater lake.

Located on the Penetanguishene peninsula, the lake community consists of over 350 properties with a mix of permanent and seasonal residences.

About Eurasian watermilfoil

Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) is an aggressive, invasive aquatic plant that impedes recreational activities and displaces native plants, harming fish and wildlife habitat. Algae blooms can result from nutrient release in late season die-back.

EWM was discovered in the lake back in 2012 during an underwater aquatic plant study conducted by FLCA. The original infestation started as an isolated area an acre in size and over the coming years spread to 17 sites covering 4,700m².

The battle

Starting with extensive research into management strategies used by other communities, and through the leadership of a core EWM team of volunteers, FLCA developed an "Integrated Management Strategy." That strategy essentially included three components:

1. application of the herbicide Reward
2. installation of benthic mats (bottom barriers) in infested areas
3. manual diver-assisted harvesting.

Implementing these strategies required extensive planning, mapping infestations, acquiring government permits, preparing sites to contain the cut plants, many volunteers, and ongoing evaluation and reporting.

All this work required resources, and up until 2018 expenses were provided by community fundraising along with some support from the Township of Tiny. In 2018 we obtained an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant for equipment, supplies, etc. That grant is finished as of the end of this year.

Despite all our efforts, the number and density of EWM sites continued to increase. Reward had little effect. Our volunteers were burning out and eliminating EWM felt like a losing battle. Community members at the north end of the lake, one of the largest and densest sites, faced challenges using their motorboats and even swimming as the plant grew around their docks.

The future looked dim. However, our EWM team continued to research alternatives. They became aware of a new aquatic herbicide, ProcellaCOR FX, which had been developed and used successfully in the United States since 2018. Health Canada's Pesticide Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) received an application to use the herbicide in 2019, conducted an extensive review of the product, and granted registration allowing its use in May 2023.

About ProcellaCOR FX

ProcellaCOR FX was developed by SePRO, an environmental services company based in the U.S. It has been used in over 200 U.S. lakes and shown to be highly effective in removing EWM with no harmful impact on wildlife, fish, or humans.

ProcellaCOR FX is taken up by the target plant and translocated internally, meaning the plant absorbs the herbicide through its entire structure. This kills the plant from inside by impacting its hormones. Essentially, the plant cells self-destruct because they are growing rapidly out of control.

Once ProcellaCOR FX was registered in Canada, FLCA spent three months obtaining permission to use it in Farlain Lake. FLCA also obtained permission from shoreline property owners located within 60 metres (200 ft.) of each site.

The application was approved in August 2023 and SOLitude Lake Management was retained to apply ProcellaCOR FX on September 6. At that time, there were no licensed applicators based in Canada as specialized training and equipment were required.

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The results

A review of the treated sites four weeks following the application found the EWM was severely damaged or dying, while native plants appeared healthy and untouched.

In May 2024 our EWM team surveyed the sites and observed no sign of the EWM anywhere. As before, the native plants appeared untouched.

A SOLitude biologist returned to the lake in July, conducted a thorough review, and confirmed no EWM. In addition to surveying the vegetation using a rake toss method, the biologist identified and recorded native plants, and collected a temperature and dissolved oxygen profile at four sites, per Fisheries and Oceans Canada requirements. Oxygen levels were normal or higher than levels in previous profiles.



Meet Editorial Cartoonist Angela Kanik

By SCOTT WILLIAMS, Georgina Beach



A cartoon from Angela Kanik's "Adam and Evie" series.

Two years ago, when life had become too hectic for *The Tiny Cottager's* long-time editorial cartoonist Chris Figgures, he suggested we approach Angela Kanik. We were grateful for the connection but sorry to lose Chris — a pleasure to work with — and fretful about starting a new relationship. How well could Angela draw? More importantly, how well could Angela translate local issues into editorial cartoons?

Needless worry, as it turned out. Angela's a natural. And she knows Tiny. Her family has owned a cottage north of Balm Beach since 1930. When Angela was just one week old, her father dipped her toes in the lake, and she's been coming to the cottage almost every year since.

We recently had a conversation with Angela to get to know her a little better. Here's how it went.

When did you start drawing, and what form did it take?

I started drawing pictures on pieces of scrap paper when I was very small, and later studied art at university to become an art teacher. Now I mostly draw for my own pleasure.

Where did the characters Adam and Evie come from?

I like to capture the quirks of humanity that I see around me. Most recently they've taken the form of Adam and Evie, an older couple. This one is from what seems like every Sunday dinner in my own life. 'Dinner's ready.' 'No, just three more minutes.' Half an hour later it's still three more minutes.

How much of you is in Evie?

I don't look like her, but there's probably a lot of me in her.

Do you express yourself in other visual arts?

I've illustrated several children's books with watercolour, although I still like line drawing best. Forget the shading and so on.

How do you go about creating an editorial cartoon?

The line comes first. I'll do at least five or six variations, working probably an hour or two every morning over three weeks. I work on it, put it down, and then come back to it again.

Do you consider yourself a political person?

Very much so. I'm also a pragmatist. I'm not stuck on any one party and vote according to the issues and policies. I also write letters when the situation calls for it. For instance, I let my MP (Conservative) and the Prime Minister know just what I thought of the truckers' blockade in Ottawa.

Watch for Angela's cartoons on page 4 of *The Tiny Cottager*.

What's next

FLCA will continue monitoring the lake for any sign of EWM. "Spot" treatments may be required in the coming years but based on the experience in the U.S. the results we've seen this year should continue for at least three years.

Farlain Lake is the first freshwater lake in Canada to use ProcCellaCOR FX. We have received many inquiries from other lake associations struggling to manage EWM and we are happy to share our experience, part of our commitment to the Ontario Trillium Foundation when we received our grant. Our success is owing to the power of community and the incredible dedication and hard work of our EWM Team and all the "Weed Warriors."

Further details of our experience with the EWM, along with downloads of reports and presentations, are available on our website: tinyurl.com/2s4k4959.

Elizabeth Di Chiara is Past President of the Farlain Lake Community Association.

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 - Hootenanny**, October 12, Wasaga Beach
tinyurl.com/bdh85rhn
 - Pavlo in Concert**, October 12, Midland Cultural Centre
tinyurl.com/3c6zt6en
 - Hometown Harvest Festival**, October 12-14, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons
tinyurl.com/muhe42sj
 - The Tudhope Carriage Company** (virtual speaker series), October 16, Orillia Museum of Art and History
www.orilliamuseum.org/project/10-24/
 - Downtown Historical Walking Tour**, October 17, Penetanguishene
tinyurl.com/yrh7b58e
 - Pumpkin Inferno**, October 17-20, 24-27, and 31 to November 2, Discovery Harbour
discoveryharbour.on.ca/events/pumpkininferno/
 - The British Legends**, October 17, King's Wharf Theatre
tinyurl.com/3f9wmhja
 - Grimm Grounds Scare Event**, October 18-19, 25-26, Georgian Bay Park
grimmgrounds.com
 - Jeff Leeson - The Unscripted Tour**, October 18, Midland Cultural Centre
tinyurl.com/4fkwpzw5
 - Meet the Spirits of St. James on the Lines**, October 18, Penetanguishene
tinyurl.com/2ssyzfvc
 - Bark Twigs Leaves: Tree ID Workshop with Craig**, October 19, Wye Marsh Wildlife Centre
www.wyemarsh.com/tree-id-workshop
 - Lighthouse**, October 19, Midland Cultural Centre
tinyurl.com/2jumvftb
 - Midland Folk and Blues Collective**, October 22, Midland
tinyurl.com/2f8j94t8
 - Author Visit with Mark Bourrie**, October 23, Midland Public Library
tinyurl.com/5n6kycme
 - Senior Speaker Series: Social Connections**, October 23, Lafontaine
tinyurl.com/yfzms7ey
 - Listen to the Music: A Tribute to the Doobie Brothers**, October 25, Midland Cultural Centre
tinyurl.com/45ezkyhb
 - Grimm Grounds Halloween'en Event**, Oct. 25-Nov. 9, Georgian Bay Park
grimmgrounds.com
 - The Rimers of Eldritch** (Huronians Players), Oct. 25 – Nov. 9, Midland
<https://tinyurl.com/mvuen8fr>
 - Halloween Spooktacular**, October 26, Penetanguishene Centennial Museum
tinyurl.com/47b793rd
 - Mini Monster March**, October 26, Midland
downtownmidland.ca/events/mini-monster-march
 - Halloween at Wye Marsh**, October 26
www.wyemarsh.com/halloween
- ## NOVEMBER
- Christmas Market**, November 2, Penetanguishene Legion
tinyurl.com/34s4z67f
 - Paint Afternoon at the Museum**, November 5, Penetanguishene
tinyurl.com/um8nzrka
 - A Christmas Carol: The Panto**, November 6-23, King's Wharf Theatre
tinyurl.com/39tnh667

- Senior Speaker Series: Jill Farren, Motivational Speaker**, November 7, Council Chambers
tinyurl.com/2p96af42
 - The Beatle Band**, November 8, Midland Cultural Centre
tinyurl.com/2zmbnpyb
 - We Walk the Line - Tribute to Johnny Cash**, November 9, Midland Cultural Centre
<https://tinyurl.com/5n99yesm>
 - Wye Nursery Christmas Market**, November 10, 17, 24, Tiny
tinyurl.com/y6emfmm8
 - Midland Jams**, November 11, Midland
tinyurl.com/554ebuu9
 - Remembrance Day Ceremony**, November 11, Midland Cenotaph
tinyurl.com/4hs482bu
 - Green Drinks Midland Meet-Up**, November 12, Midland*
www.greendrinks.org/ON/Midland
 - Steve Strongman with Rick Robichaud**, November 15, Midland Cultural Centre
tinyurl.com/3hw2wcxk
 - Simply Queen**, November 16, Midland Cultural Centre
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tinyurl.com/4xys7kne
 - First Light**, November 21, 22, 23 and 24, 28, 29, 30, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons
tinyurl.com/yc2e2phz
 - Downtown Midland Christmas Tree Lighting**, November 22
tinyurl.com/yc2a4nx5
 - Christmas Spirit Market**, November 24, Barrie
tinyurl.com/yfx8vaxk
 - Holiday Market**, November 24, Wasaga Beach
tinyurl.com/2seu7phx
 - The Bowie Lives**, November 24, Midland Cultural Centre
tinyurl.com/mvujduw5
 - Tiny Township Christmas Tree Lighting**, November 26, Perkinsfield Park
tinyurl.com/myb59974
 - Classic Troubadours Live**, November 29, Midland Cultural Centre
tinyurl.com/ye2xrhh4
 - Midland Civitan Clubs' Santa Claus Parade**, November 30
tinyurl.com/9c94n7tv
- ## DECEMBER
- First Light**, December 1, 5, 6, 7 and 8, Sainte-Marie among the Hurons
tinyurl.com/yc2e2phz
 - Midland Jams**, December 2, Midland
tinyurl.com/2p4s2x7j
 - Fun with Santa**, December 14, Penetanguishene Centennial Museum
tinyurl.com/yc88kbkb
 - ABBA Revisited - Christmas Concert**, December 15, Midland Cultural Centre
tinyurl.com/yjzd52mf
 - Midland Folk and Blues Collective**, December 17, Midland
tinyurl.com/5d5cz9ah
 - Elvis' Wonderful World of Christmas**, December 19, Midland Cultural Centre
tinyurl.com/ycxa2tk8

Wye Marsh Open House, December 21
www.wyemarsh.com/Open-House

JANUARY

- Polar Bear Dip**, January 1, Balm Beach
tinyurl.com/454djzsw
- Orillia Museum of Art & History Winter Gala**, January 18
tinyurl.com/33t5cpbp
- Anne of Green Gables** (Huronians Players), January 31, Huronia Players, Midland
tinyurl.com/mvuen8fr

FEBRUARY

- The Thanksgiving Play**, February 6-16, Orillia
www.mariposaartstheatre.com/thanksplay
- Winterama Festival**, February 14, Penetanguishene
tinyurl.com/36b5e4s4

APRIL

- Bare Bear Bones** (Huronians Players), April 25-May 10
tinyurl.com/mvuen8fr

* Meet-ups occur the second Tuesday of every month.

—continued from page 7

“We want to thank each and every one of you that participated in this year’s tournament, including every golfer, dinner guest, volunteer, sponsor, donor, and staff member that made the tournament so successful” said Mayor David Evans at the event. “Your generosity will be felt on a community level by all 17 of the local charitable organizations we were able to fund and more directly by all of the people these organizations support.”

Sponsorships are an integral part of the fundraising activities and a valuable opportunity to raise brand awareness among active and committed members of the Tiny community. For example, FoTTSA continues to contribute as the event’s founding sponsor. “This is just one way in which we’re committed to improving the quality of life in Tiny Township,” says FoTTSA president Paul Cowley.

Much of the event’s success results from the efforts of volunteers, starting with members of the Mayor’s Charity Golf Tournament Working Committee, who meet regularly to plan each year’s event. On the day itself, 27 volunteers organize and staff the registration area, lunch table, putting and closest to the line challenges, longest drive contest, silent auction, reception area, and more.

Since 2015, the golf tournament has contributed \$479,000 to more than 40 local not-for-profit and charitable organizations focusing on supporting community health and wellness, building the local economy, delivering exceptional services, and much more.

Interested in joining the committee?

As of press time, Tiny has one opening on the Mayor’s Charity Golf Tournament Working Committee, which plans, coordinates and implements the Mayor’s Charity Golf Tournament. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and residents of the Township of Tiny.

The committee meets on the third Tuesday of every month at 4:30 p.m., and is composed of four non-elected members, the mayor, and one additional council representative.

The deadline for applications is Friday, October 18 at 12:00 noon. Find out more at www.tiny.ca/node/1900.



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