



Echoes from Barkmere – January 2021

Here is a summary of the last Council meeting held Saturday, January 16th 2021:

- The mayor reminds everyone that we must respect a curfew from 8:00 PM every night, not have visitors at home, whether indoors or outdoors. Also, sports and outdoor activities are only allowed within our family bubble, and therefore no skiing, snowshoeing or snowmobile expedition with friends are allowed. It is important to get tested rapidly if we have symptoms and to isolate ourselves while waiting for the results. We can be critical and disagree with the choices made by the government, but we must do these efforts, altogether not that difficult, to protect our health system. Already, necessary surgeries are being postponed, hospital beds are occupied by Covid patients, with no place left for others. We are not doing this for the government, but to save the life of people like you and me.
- We have learned last week that Mr. David Perron, a long-time resident of Silver Bay, passed away. David leaves behind his wife Patricia and his five brothers and their families. We are extending our most sincere condolences to them. The Mayor invites the Council and the assembly to hold a minute of silence in his memory.
- We have noticed that visits to the cottages is more important than usual for this time of the year, more people come to Barkmere, and for longer periods. This has an impact on the quantity of waste and recycling to pick up. We will therefore increase the number of the planned pick ups of containers until the month of April. Please fold your empty cardboard boxes when you are recycling so that they use less space in the container.

- The taxation bylaw allows the Town to finance its activities for this coming year 2021. The general tax rate will be \$0.55 per \$100 of evaluation, a reduction compared to the rate of last year. The Mayor reminds us that this is possible through the use of a part of the accumulated surpluses to pay some non-recurring or out of the ordinary expenses.
- Like last year, council has chosen to postpone the deadlines for the three tax installments, to May 1st, August 1st and October 1st due to the difficult economic situation on account of the coronavirus.

- The Mayor informs us that the MRC needs to present a plan of its territory to the Ministry of Natural Resources to identify the portions that are not compatible with mining activities. The Ministry has issued seven conditions to subtract some territories, including the presence of intensive cottaging and the sources of drinking water. We have noticed that the section north of Bark Lake, namely the main source north of Silver Bay, and also north of Green Bay and Whittall Bay, is not protected. The hydrography and topology is such that most of the main tributaries of the Lake are located in these sectors. We will therefore ask the MRC to include them, due to the supply of drinking water to the Lake and village residents.

- The MRC is finalizing its new zoning plan which needs to be adopted this year. However, the proposed zoning for the section between the Exceptional forest ecosystem to the east of Silver Bay and the Jack-Rabbit ecological reserve is “forestry”, which allows for the exploitation of forest resources (cuts). Given the presence of three rivers which feed the Lake and wetlands identified by the study of Ducks Unlimited at the request of the MRC, we are of the opinion that the zoning for this sector should be “recreation”, which replaces the former “conservation” zoning, and which aims to protect more strenuously the ecological and forest sensitive environments. The council approves a resolution in that sense and will send it to the MRC.

Once again, for more details, consult the minutes of the council meeting that will be posted on the town’s website once they are ratified, generally at the next council meeting.

Pictures provided by Dick O'Shaughnessy:







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