



Ville de / Town of

BARKMERE

Fall/Winter Bulletin

December 16th, 2021

Vol 49, No. 2



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

First, I want to thank you for your renewed trust in our team for a new mandate. Kim, Marie-Hélène, Ken, Stephen, Marc, Jake and myself are proud to represent you once again, and to continue in your name, the task of protecting Barkmere and its wonderful lake, and to maintain this haven of peace and quietness that we share with the flora and fauna of the Laurentians.

Our mandate will be very busy, and already we must roll up our sleeves and get hard at work. The recent forestry operations and “rave-type” events reminded us how fragile our natural peace is. The creation and renovation of forest roads open our territory to development, reduce our natural habitats and allow an influx of visitors, not always very pleasant, which threatens our security.

This is why we are working in collaboration with the neighbouring municipality of Montcalm to create a protected area upstream from the Lake, where any form of residential and forestry development, as well as the presence of motorized vehicles, will be prohibited. This zone will join with the Jack-Rabbit Ecological Reserve, and is part of a project to establish a regional ecological corridor.

Next year also, we will revise and update our urban plan and bylaws to solidify and/or clarify some angles and to ensure that the French and English versions are saying the same thing. We

expect that this new version will continue in the same spirit as the current bylaws, which is that environmental protection has priority over residential development.

We will also face some challenges in terms of improving nautical safety on Bark Lake. The increasing number of boats, along with their size and power, are causing issues on a lake with narrow passages and generally quite shallow waters.

We are also facing important increases in expenses, particularly in public security. The dismantling of the local grouping of fire services force us to use the only option left, which is the fire service of the Town of Mont-Tremblant. The cost sharing calculation imposed by Mont-Tremblant is based solely on the real estate values of the municipalities being serviced. This is a very disadvantageous rule for the Town of Barkmere which, due to its geographical characteristics, possesses one of the highest value per capita of the region. The cost of the fire protection will more than double in 2022, with a \$38,000 increase.

Fortunately, the good financial health of the Town will allow us to use the accumulated surplus to pay for significant non-recurring expenses, and also take some calculated risks in budgeting certain income streams which, even if they do not materialize, will not put the Town in financial difficulties. This is why we will start this new mandate without any increase in the general tax.

On that festive note, I wish you a beautiful Holiday season, and a very happy new year 2022.

Luc Trépanier
Mayor

Summer 2022– Barkmere will update its urban plans and by-laws

By: Stephen Lloyd

Think back a bit to 2008-2009: Lehman Brothers collapses, the Great Recession begins, Obama is elected for the first time and “Slumdog Millionaire” wins the Oscar for best picture. Has the world changed since then? Lil’ bit...



Has Barkmere changed since 2008-2009? That is a different question. In fundamental ways, Barkmere is the same: then as now, we have an exceptionally strong community spirit, with young and old caring deeply about the place and its future. We have retained and even improved our financial strength. And most importantly, our natural environment, primarily the Lake’s water quality, has not deteriorated materially.

If Barkmere has held its place since 2008-2009, we mostly have the Council of that time to thank. They worked very hard over that period, conducted extensive public consultations, and came up with a brand new urban plan and accompanying set of urban planning by-laws to replace the historic “little green book” which had applied for so long before.

The urban plan and the 2008-2009 by-laws were controversial at the time and they have been the subject of some challenges. We have had to patch them up and tweak them here and there, but essentially they have held firm. We all know that Barkmere is more than a municipality and our by-laws are more than just “urban planning by-laws”. They reflect the character and culture of our special place and serve to protect many things that we as a community value highly. The 2008-2009 by-laws have done that job admirably.

Municipalities in Quebec are however generally required to update their urban plan and by-laws every 10 years or so. We are a little overdue in Barkmere. The Council has therefore set aside a special budget for this year to go through that process. Presumably, we don’t need a wholesale set of changes. However, now is the time to think again about what is important to us as a community: what do we treasure, and what do we need to measure and protect? What are the best rules to protect ourselves from ourselves? How do we keep our little corner of paradise intact for at least

another 10 years? What is it about Barkmere that makes it distinct from other Laurentian municipalities?

You will be consulted and you will have a chance for your say! In fact, the process has already started. There was a full house at the “Town Hall” session last August 14 on i) lake navigation; ii) public lands and Barkmere’s wilderness character; and iii) long-term planning for the community. We had some lively discussions about both “internal” issues (navigation safety and wave impacts) and external impacts (“wilderness” raves taking place next door and the arrival at otherwise isolated properties of unexpected visitors, via new roads and pathways).

Our by-laws apply to both Lake and Town residents, with all the required adjustments to accommodate differences. Increasingly, we need also to think more generally about “permanent residents” and “seasonal residents” as having different needs and visions.

To get you thinking about what you going to contribute to next summer’s discussions, here is the list of key issues which came out of the August 2021 public consultation session:

1. Regulation and control of Lake navigation
2. Protection of wilderness character
3. Landing infrastructure
4. Level of municipal services
5. Taxation levels
6. Second tier development vs. promotion of Lake access
7. Integration of new residents and promotion of community spirit
8. Protection of Lake water quality
9. Harmonization of Build infrastructure with the environment
10. Solar power vs. Hydro-Quebec infrastructure

Happy holidays to all! Looking forward to more positive discussions next summer.

Stephen Lloyd,
Councillor

Environmental Matters

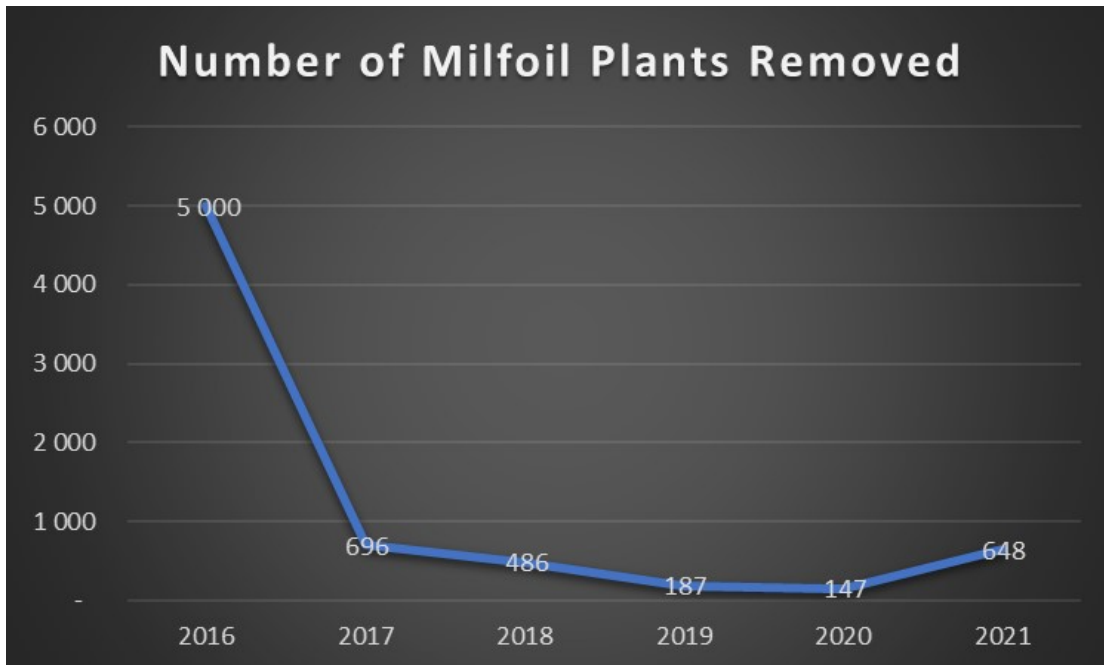
By: Jake Chadwick



2021 Milfoil Update

The annual search and removal of Eurasian Milfoil started very positively with few plants found through June. Suddenly in early July, thanks to the eagle-eye surveillance of Lyndsay Ackroyd and Chris Uchwat, a concentrated colony of plants was found in the shallow waters in the inlet stream. This was initially a very alarming find due to the difficult conditions (shallow waters and many competing plants). Thanks to the help of Anne Létourneau and Sylvain Miller however, the plants were successfully removed over two intensive sessions. Finding plants in the inlet stream confirms that we must continue to expand our search around the Silver Bay area where plants have been historically found to limit propagation. A total an estimated 648 plants were removed during the 2021 summer campaign (versus 147 in 2020). Over 600 of these plants were taken from the inlet. The possible good news of this find is that perhaps it was these plants that were sending fragments into Silver Bay. We urge all residents to not enter the inlet zone next summer until we have had the chance to survey the area.

The table below summarizes the number of plants removed since 2016.



We take this opportunity to thank Sylvain Miller and Anne Létourneau for their unwavering support of our milfoil program. We are blessed to have them so motivated to help us protect our lake.

Water Quality Testing and L'ACtion Project

Our water testing activity was severely hampered this past summer due to logistical issues caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. Courier companies would no longer guarantee overnight delivery of our samples to the lab in Quebec City. As a result, several of our shipments were late rendering the samples worthless. This was very frustrating as many hours of work are involved in collecting the samples.

Thankfully the L'ACtion project with our OBV (organization bassin versant) was taking place this summer. The team of biologists visited the lake on four occasions taking water samples and conducting other water quality analysis. They also took samples and collected data from upstream lakes and tributaries. The full report is being prepared now and we expect to meet as a team in

The OBV biologists collecting water samples from the inlet.

From left to right : Kirstin Lachance, Stéphanie Massé et Guillaume Gendreau



CEAP Program

The results of the Community Environmental Action Patrol (CEAP) were rather disappointing in 2021. There were fewer participants than last year and the total area covered was reduced. We are open for suggestions as to how best to motivate residents to take the time to monitor their shoreline. We will certainly modify and improve our communication on this subject next year.

Radio Canada Documentary

In conjunction with their special series La Semaine Verte (“Green Week”), Radio Canada aired a very interesting documentary special on December 4, 2021 entitled *Lacs Sous Surveillance* (“Lakes under Surveillance”). We strongly encourage all Barkmere residents to watch the episode (available [here](#)).

The report follows a few endangered lakes in Quebec and explains the root causes and impacts of too much human activity resulting in poor water quality. The documentary does an excellent job of explaining the threats of invasive species such as milfoil, the role that excessive phosphorus plays in the premature aging of lakes and the importance of shoreline protection - among other topics. If you watch the film, you will quickly realize why we spend so much time and energy monitoring the water quality of Bark Lake, searching for, and carefully removing every milfoil plant found, and ensuring our by-laws protect the shoreline.

*Jake Chadwick,
Councillor*

Diving against debris

By: Kim Lamoureux



Last summer, a group of certified divers from the Project Aware/Dive Against Debris came to Bark Lake to undertake the large task of removing debris from the lakebed. They were present on 4 occasions. The first event took place on a warm weekend on August 21st.

About 900 pounds of debris was removed from the lake. Many volunteers showed up to help transport the divers around the lake and haul out plastic, glass, and rubber.

The divers were impressed by the clarity of the water of Bark Lake and the great number of fish they encountered. Something very encouraging since recently all we hear about is bad news.

This made me realize that there is still hope, that we can maintain this jewel of a lake, and that we should continue to preserve it as long as possible.

This upcoming summer, the council, and administration will be working on ways to help maintain the quality of our lake water by adding new navigation buoys and possibly educating newcomers (and there are many!) on how to navigate on the lake in a sensible way.

Let's continue to be the best lake in the Laurentians!

Kimberley Lamoureux,
Councillor



Debris removed from the lake on August 21st, 2021

Budget 2022

By: Marc Frédette



Year 2021 in review

Based on 2021 preliminary figures (our financial year closes on December 31), we expect to generate a surplus of \$148,500.

Total expenses were \$170,700 lower than what we had budgeted last year for 2021, due, in part, to lower administration expenses of approximately \$85,500. This amount was a result of lower legal fees for the amount of \$77,000, as the legal case has been postponed again, as well as lower than expected election expenses.

In addition, we were \$40,000 below the 2021 budget due to the delay in hiring a part time inspector, a reduction in professional fees and lower training expenses.

The Town also managed to get the lake cleanup well below the 2021 budget, this consisted of environmental fees as well repairs and maintenance, which represented a total of \$35,000 in savings.

Revenues were approximately \$170,800 above budget, mostly from an increase in transfer taxes received for \$127,000. Also, the administration issued and collected a record number of fines for more than \$10,000, something to reflect on. The Town also received payments related to various grants for \$30,000.

In 2021, higher revenues allowed the Town to absorb expenses without needing to use the allocated surplus of \$147,000, budgeted in 2020 for 2021. As indicated below, the surplus will help mitigate the 2022 budget expenses.

2022 budget

The Town of Barkmere, like all of us, is anticipating higher costs in 2022.

However, our objective is to mitigate as much as we can so that Barkmere taxpayers and their family can enjoy our well-kept jewel with limited financial burden.

This budget reflects higher costs due to the new fire protection agreement (as discussed over the past year) which is expected to increase by \$38,000 or 127%, to \$68,000. This is substantial for Barkmere.

After more than 10 years, our bylaws need to be updated to reflect the new environmental reality and other factors, as mentioned in Stephen Lloyd's article in this bulletin. This process will be costly but needs to be done by professionals. We have budgeted \$100,000 which will be paid by the surplus; hence no impact will be felt taxwise. Rest assured that we will aim to control this expense as much as possible.

The recent inflation figures have put pressure on everyone's purchasing power, and we anticipate the Town salaries to increase in 2022 in line with the 2021 CPI. In order to retain and attract strong talent in the future, we have budgeted for a new medical coverage plan in line with our new employee benefits policy to be approved in early 2022.

On the environmental front, we have budgeted for water testing, milfoil removal and other projects including a lake study as part of program in the region and in collaboration with the BLPA and the OBV RPNS (Organisme de bassins versants des rivières Rouge, Petite Nation, et Saumon).

We have scrutinised the expenses on a line-by-line basis and have reduced some budgeted expense compared to last year. In addition, and in order to minimize the burden on the Barkmere citizens, we will use \$172,500 from the surplus to cover non-recurring expenses resulting in no general tax increases for 2022.

The real estate market is strong and consequently the total taxable value in 2022 for Barkmere is going up by 16.4% compared to 2021. This increase in value assessment represents the average increase in property value. Some are seeing higher increases while others are up a lower percentage. These figures are computed by the MRC.

Due to the 16.4% increase in value, the general tax rate will be 14.1% lower for 2022 versus 2021. Our general tax rate will therefore be \$0.4730 in 2022 versus \$0.5504 in 2021. Therefore, on average, the tax bill for Barkmere taxpayers should be the same as 2021.

Marc Frédette,
Councillor

Revenues

	2021 Estimated	2022 Budget
Taxes	\$482 949	\$479 676
Other revenues	\$237 107	\$135 450
Grants - operations	\$12 221	\$35 484
Cumulated Surplus Allocation	\$0	\$172 500
Total	\$732 277	\$823 110

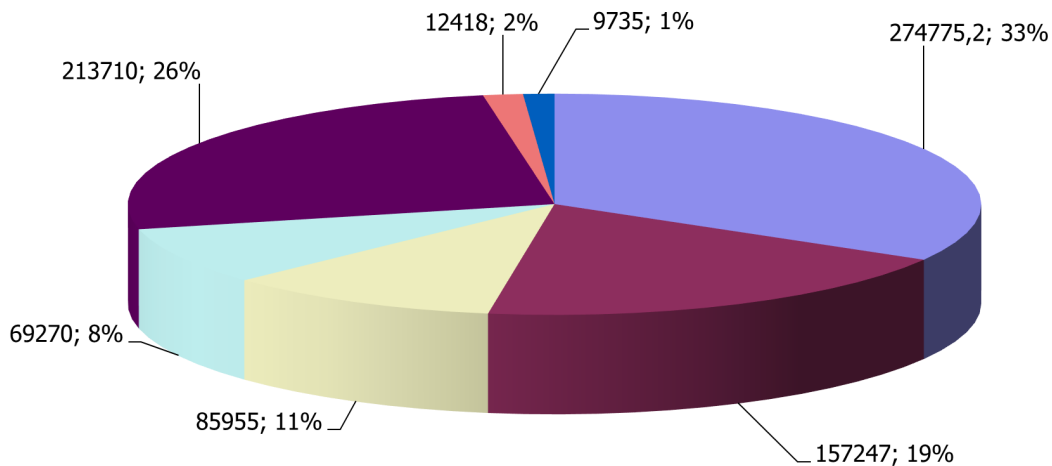
Expenses

	2021 Estimated	2022 Budget
General Administration	\$202 931	\$274 775
Public Security	\$124 186	\$157 247
Transportation	\$67 226	\$85 955
Sanitation, Environment	\$56 763	\$69 270
Land Use and Planning	\$71 213	\$213 710
Recreation and Culture	\$4 969	\$12 418
Financial expenses related to the debt	\$10 449	\$9 735
Total Expenses	\$537 737	\$823 110
Grants - capital expenditures	\$0	(95 000)
Cumulated Surplus Allocation	\$0	(113 649)
Allocation Jesuites & Duncan reserves	(1 174)	\$0
Debt repayment	\$20 800	\$21 400
Capital expenditures (capex)	\$26 415	\$187 249
Total Expenses, Capex & Debt Rpmnt	\$583 778	\$823 110

Surplus (deficit)	\$148 499	NIL
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Expenses - 2022 Budget

- General Administration
- Public Security
- Transportation
- Sanitation, Environment
- Land Use and Planning
- Recreation and Culture
- Financial expenses related to the debt



My vision for the future

By: Marie-Hélène Lemarbre

I am a newcomer to Barkmere. On my first boat trip, as I left the landing and made my way to Silver Bay, I immediately knew that I wanted to have a cottage here, that I wanted to be part of this community, and especially that I wanted to protect a place as beautiful as this.



My father had for a long time a cabin at Lake Barnard, in Mauricie. A cottage which was only boat-access, where we had no electricity and where only the satellite phone worked... You will understand that this is not my first experience with a cottage without a road. I discovered everything there; the richness and quirks of a lifestyle out of the ordinary, but one that I adore. Unfortunately, my father had to sell. Since then, I always said that I would buy a cottage in a place similar to the one I had known in Mauricie. So one day someone told me about Barkmere ... and here I am six years later, ready to work with you and my colleagues on the council to preserve this unique place and community.

The environment is a fundamental issue for me. In the current context of climate change, we must monitor our lake and its environment closely. My colleague, Jake Chadwick, referred you to a Radio-Canada report on the state of our lakes in Quebec. This is a major and very real issue, since it is a question of our drinking water supply throughout Quebec. It's no small feat, but we can all play a positive role in preserving our water bodies. This is what I plan to do with you. Together, we can take concrete action to keep our lake healthy. With the help of my colleague Kimberley Lamoureux, we want to develop a dynamic mode of communication, via different tools, which will make it possible to reach and inform everyone. I look forward to sharing our ideas with you!

For now, I wish you all a happy holiday season. Enjoy time with your loved ones and family.

*Marie-Hélène Lemarbre,
Councillor*

New fire department

By: Ken Mann



It will be my pleasure to serve on council over the next four years and I look forward to meeting those of you that I have yet to meet. I am a long-time resident on the lake (30+ years) and I absolutely love our lake, the town and this area of the Laurentians. One of our many priorities in the new year will be upgrading the navigation buoys and beacons - we will provide an update later in the spring. As well, for your information, there have been some changes in our fire department service arrangements as outlined below.

The Fire Department commonly known as La Régie Incendie Nord-Ouest Laurentides (RINOL) will end its operations on December 31. Starting January 1st, 2022, the City of Mont-Tremblant will take over the management of Fire Security services for 10 municipalities around Mont-Tremblant which includes Barkmere.

Most of the employees from the RINOL will be transferred to the city of Mont-Tremblant fire station, and this includes the closure of 3 fire halls in our MRC, including the one in Huberdeau.

The advantages of this reorganization for Barkmere are;

- o Full-time firefighters in both fire stations of Mont-Tremblant, improving response time in case of emergencies.
- o Automatic calls dispatched to Mont-Tremblant improving response times.
- o The fire Station in Montcalm (Weir) will be maintained to cover the entire territory.
- o Compulsory prevention visits will be the responsibility of the Mont-Tremblant station.
- o The firefighters are fully trained and have the proper equipment (Zodiac boat) to intervene on the lake in case of an accident.

In case of emergency, Dial 9 1 1

Enjoy the holidays, the winter and all the best to everyone.

*Ken Mann,
Councillor*

The Director General's column

By: Martin Paul Gélinas



Hello everyone,

It is my pleasure, once again this year, to take this opportunity to address you and deliver some messages of practical interest.

Use of waste containers

We need to use the containers the same way we would use a rolling bin. Therefore, as much as possible, attempts should be made to minimize space by compressing the cardboard boxes. And above all, large objects should not be deposited there. The Town offers you a few ways to dispose of these large items. First, the Eco centers; there is one in Mont-Tremblant, and on Saturday mornings before noon there is another in Huberdeau. You can find the coordinates and timetables for these two locations on the MRC des Laurentides website at the following address: <https://traindeviedurable.com/ecocentres/>

As a citizen of Barkmere you have the right to use the services of these Eco centers; don't forget that you pay for them with your property taxes.

Another way to get rid of large items is the mobile Eco centers that we organize twice a year. This year these Eco centers will be installed on June 17 and 18, 2022 and August 12 and 13, 2022.

Finally, if you can't do either of these two ways, don't hesitate to contact us and we'll be happy to help you find a solution. The objective is to prevent overuse of the containers in front of the town hall, causing an unpleasant atmosphere for everyone who passes through the parking lot. In summary, let's all act as if it were our home, since we all share the responsibility of keeping the town clean.

Navigation

Again this year we received several complaints about the speed of boats who are navigating too close to the shore. We will therefore take more care this year to inform boaters to navigate with courtesy and respect for the well-being of all residents. We will install navigation buoys to best identify the directions of traffic, as well as to reduce noise and waves caused by boats.

Fire safety

Finally, I take this opportunity to remind you of a basic safety rule. According to data from the *Sécurité publique du Québec*, wood-burning appliances cause an average of 235 building fires per year in the province. Caused by improper installation, lack of maintenance or hot ashes, these fires endanger people's lives and cause serious damage.

Also according to the Public Security of Quebec, of the 235 building fires caused annually by wood heating systems, 140 are caused on average by improper storage of hot ashes. In addition, these are among the top 10 heat sources identified by firefighters. In addition to posing a fire hazard, ashes emit carbon monoxide, which can be toxic to your health and that of those around you.

Note that the main misstep in disposing of ashes is storing them in an inappropriate or inadequate container. Never underestimate the heat that emanates from the ashes, sometimes even when the fire has been extinguished for a long time. Did you know that ashes can stay hot for over 72 hours?

Best wishes

I hope that we will continue to work together to benefit from our wonderful environment while protecting it with all the tools at our disposal.

With all my best wishes for the new year,

Martin Paul Gélinas,
Director general

The Inspector's column

By: **Marc-André Paquin**

EXTERIOR LIGHTING / NIGHT SKY PROTECTION

As of March 22, 2021, new requirements of the zoning by-law regarding exterior lighting were put into effect. These requirements are meant to substantially reduce exterior nighttime light diffusion to preserve night skies.

Exterior lighting fixtures are limited in number, must be shielded, project downward, and function with a manual on-off switch.

Motion activated exterior lights are only authorized along a path located outside of the 5-meter zone from the shore, and under certain conditions.

Lighting fixture on docks, boathouses, wharves or on the water are prohibited.

An inspection was conducted on the lake in September of 2021, and more than 40 Official notices were sent for properties in contravention of the new requirements.

Most owners gracefully conformed to the new requirements and we thank them for that. Questions about security were raised, to which the use of a small flashlight should remedy the issue. It should be a part of any boat equipment.

Cooperation from all owners is sought to fulfill the objective of preserving a star-filled night sky.



**PROTECTION OF BARK LAKE'S NATURAL BEAUTY AND OF A STAR-FILLED NIGHT SKY
GOES HAND IN HAND**

*Marc-André Paquin,
Municipal Inspector*

INFORMATION ON CITY HALL



OPENING HOURS

November to April

Monday to Friday:

8:00AM- 4:30PM

Mayor:	819-681-3374, ext. 5100	maire@barkmere.ca
Director General and Treasurer:	819-681-3374, ext. 5101	dg@barkmere.ca
Finances (tax bill):	819-681-3374, ext. 5102	finance@barkmere.ca
Urbanism and infrastructures:	819-681-3374, ext. 5103	inspecteur@barkmere.ca
Communications:	819-681-3374, ext. 5100	communications@barkmere.ca

