



Barkmere Echo – October 2024

The following is a summary of the last Town Council meeting held on Saturday, October 12th, 2024:

ANNOUCEMENTS

It is with shock and disbelief that we learned the passing of Dr. Heidrun Fink, better known to us as simply “Heidi”. She was only in her early fifties, and everything seemed fine when she was with us in August. But she had a heart condition and lived with some sequels of her fight against her breast cancer. It seems that she contracted Covid and could not fight it.

We hugged her like every year when she left to go back to Germany. Nobody could have known that it would be the last hug. Heidi was a direct, no-nonsense person, who would not tolerate gossip and judgment of others. She was positive and shared her contagious happiness around. She loved Bark Lake and all her friends here.

We extend our condolences to her son Jacob, who turned 10 years old, the day before his mother passed, her husband Sasha, her stepson Paul, her two brothers, Martin and Rainer, and their families. Her Bark Lake friends are very sad. She will be missed a lot by all.

BARKMERE-MONTCALM PROTECTED AREA PROJECT

Our project is being officially presented to the Ministry of Environment on October 15th. We thank all the people who answered the survey for the socio-economical study done for this project. The surveyed population is over 90% in favour of the creation of this area. But even more interesting, the great majority of those surveyed would be ready to pay more taxes to allow and support the permanence of this protected area. Therefore, they attach a significant economical value to this protection. This is an important argument against the exploitation of the forest with tree cuts, which only happens every 25 years, and generates a lot less potential revenue than the possible taxes.

Both the Town of Barkmere and the Municipality of Montcalm have any intention to increase their respective tax bills for this purpose.

CHANGES IN THE LANDING AREA

The new waste containers are currently being installed and will change the “visual landscape” of the parking lot. Also, the extension of the “B” wharves was delivered and will be used next year to offer more rental mooring spots for the population.

FOLLOW-UP ON LAST MEETING

The Town of Mont-Tremblant confirmed that they accept to provide the First Response service to Barkmere, Huberdeau and Montcalm for the year 2025 only. The agreement will have to be renewed next year, considering the results of this first year.

That is related to the announcement of Mont-Tremblant that they would not renew the current Fire Services agreements, under the same terms. The structure of the fire stations, inherited from the now dissolved RINOL and from the municipal services in place before, does not allow the SIMT to fulfill its commitments regarding the Risk Coverage Plan of the MRC, and to intervene rapidly and with the necessary staffing. A consultant, hired to study the current operations, issued many recommendations to solve the problems, and to allow pursuing on the base of a truly regional fire service, but entirely under the governance of the SIMT.

PROTECTED AREA IN MONT-BLANC

The Council has adopted a resolution to support the municipality of Mont-Blanc for the creation of a protected area in the south of that municipality. The area would be contiguous to the Parc Écotouristique of the MRC and to the conservation reserve of Jack-Rabbit, and thus connected to our own project of a protected area.

15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COUNCILLORS' AND MAYOR'S TERM OF OFFICE

Prior to last Saturday's meeting, Council members and employees celebrated the 15th anniversary of Councillors Stephen Lloyd, Jake Chadwick, Marc Frédette and, of course, Mayor Luc Trépanier. We also presented him with the symbol of his office, the mayor's gavel.



ADOPTION OF THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE NEW URBAN PLAN

We are pleased to announce the adoption of the first draft of our new urban plan, along with the associated amendments to our by-laws. A public notice has been issued to this effect. A special thank you goes out to the members of the CCU for their hard work and unwavering support throughout this process.

LAST COUNCIL OF THE MRC

The new evaluation rolls for the years 2025, 2026 and 2027 were presented. For the Town of Barkmere, this represents an increase of 50% of the total real estate values compared to the previous roll. It must be said that the other municipalities suffered similar increases in the past few years, and now our turn has come. For the whole MRC, the last two rolls have increased the global real estate value by 75%.

The major causes of these increases are the COVID epidemic, the possibility to work remotely and the arrival to retirement age for the “baby boom” generation, which pushed up the demand for properties in our MRC.

Interesting fact: while public lands represent about 40% of the territory of Barkmere, their values amount to only 6% of the total value of the Town. Probable explanation: the value linked to the forest cuts of these lands is not as profitable as the Ministry of Forests would like us to believe...



Picture of the lake on October 17th
Photo taken by: Shanny Larose

For more details, please 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.