



Fall / Winter Bulletin
December 1st 2015



Message from the Mayor

Next March, on the 24th, there will be an important anniversary which will not be seen on television. It will not make the headlines of newspapers. Nevertheless, on March 24th 1926, after years of legal procedures of a few cottage owners, the Quebec Government decreed the constitution of a “Town” in a difficult and remote area of the High Laurentians. The Town of Barkmere was born, and it now celebrates 90 years of existence.

The territory of the then new municipality was carved out from the Township municipalities of Arundel and Montcalm. The reasoning that led to this “City Charter” was that the cottagers of the time did not feel well served by these existing municipalities. The goal of these cottagers was to protect Bark Lake and also their seasonal cottages, from the forest clear-cuts, from the agricultural waste and from development.

With the help and the participation of the Labrosse and Miler families, who ended up permanent residents of the new municipality after the carve-out, these foreseeing cottagers established an avant-garde community. They were concerned about the quality of environment and the protection of landscapes, 50 years before the rest of the Province starts to notice that these natural treasures deserved a particular attention.

I firmly believe that Barkmere is still relevant in 2016. More than ever, Bark Lake needs protection against modern dangers like the Asian milfoil and shoreline-destroying wakeboarding. We are also facing the gradual transformation of the Laurentian lakes into dense four-season resort areas by municipalities who are looking to increase their tax revenues, with no consideration for the future costs and irreversible damages caused by this development.

In 2016, we will build a brand new Town Hall and Community Centre. It is not only necessary, considering the state of deterioration of the existing municipal buildings, but it will also be the symbol of a community which strives to survive for another 90 years, to continue the safeguarding project of these few pioneers and local families of a hundred years ago. At the end of November, we have also renovated the Bark Lake dam, to ensure its permanence for many years to come.

Recently, we have seen how much the municipal life is strong in Barkmere. How much the decisions of the Council are scrutinized by the taxpayers, who attend the meetings in numbers. When about thirty people come to the Town Hall on Saturday morning, to listen to the deliberations and ask questions, it is as if 300,000 people would try to get into the Town Hall of the City of Montreal for their council meeting.

On the eve of this New Year 2016, I express the hope that our Town of Barkmere continues to live for a long, long time. And I wish that, along with its enthusiastic community, it will continue to protect our common paradise, that wonderful Bark Lake, with which we share every year the pleasure of living in full nature.

Luc Trépanier
Mayor

**We have an opening on the CCE
(Consultative Committee in Environment). If
you are interested, please contact municipal
councillor Jake Chadwick at
jake.chadwick@videotron.ca**



**We would like to invite you to our Annual Holiday
Season Luncheon which will be held Saturday,
December 12th at Barkmere's Town Hall around
12:00 noon
(after the council meeting)**

URBAN PLANNING AND YOU

By Stephen Lloyd



If you bring up the subject of “urban planning” with most people, their eyes glass over and they quickly move on to get another drink or check their Facebook updates. But if you bring up the subject with Barkmere citizens, you are likely to get a passionate, well-thought-out response. People from Barkmere might even find themselves reading an article with the title “Urban Planning and You”... Why? Barkmere citizens get it. Urban planning is the DNA of the community. Urban planning rules matter.

Barkmere is different from most communities, urban planning-wise, on a number of fronts:

- Our extremely low construction density;
- Our hyper-sensitivity to the water quality of Bark Lake and the Ruisseau Long and to any man-made activity that affects that water quality;
- Our high percentage of seasonal vs. primary residence homes, with their accompanying lower ecological footprint;
- Our low levels of municipal infrastructure and services and accompanying relatively low level of taxes;
- Our emphasis on a harmonious integration of the built environment with the natural environment and the minimizing of the overall visual impact of buildings.

ZONING CHANGES – PHASE 1

This past year, led largely by our citizen-based Planning Advisory Committee (everyone calls it the CCU), Barkmere took some important steps towards implementing in our urban planning structure the 5th community value above: harmonious integration of new construction with the natural environment. The zoning by-laws were amended, in the sectors surrounding Bark Lake, to minimize the view from the Lake of new main buildings. Some new rules were put in place, some old rules were tightened up and some loopholes were filled in, all with a view to ensuring that new buildings do not dominate the view of our natural shorelines.

For the first time, we dealt with and limited the “reflectivity” of exterior building materials. Maximum widths for the sides of buildings facing the Lake were put in place. Height measurement mechanisms were fine-tuned to deal with the fact that most lakefront properties are on a relatively steep slope. Exterior colors are now required to be “earthy” and to match the vegetative tones of the summer forest. Most importantly, in approving the “look” of a new main building, the CCU now has to ensure that its “volumetric design” is harmonious with the topography of the lot on which it is built and that the architecture of the structure “softens” the view from the Lake.

ZONING CHANGES – PHASE 2

Citizens have understood that urban planning rules are not set in stone. This Council had made it a point to adjust as necessary our new by-laws of 2009 to reflect the general wishes of the population. Citizens have

requested many changes. Not all of them are the subject of consensus. Some suggestions, though, really seem to make sense for everyone. Here are the ones which we are dealing with right now:

- Reducing overly restrictive setbacks in the village sector for accessory buildings such as sheds;
- Establishing “baseline” construction parameters for new boathouses, to ensure that they do not dominate the visual landscape;
- Reassessing the rules for water-based setbacks for new wharves and boathouses;
- Clarifying the rules for determining which is the “front yard” and which is the “back yard” for main buildings having both lakefront and road access, for the purpose of where accessory buildings such as sheds may be built;
- Reviewing and tightening the rules regarding non-essential exterior lighting in the shoreline zone.

As these are not major changes, Council is committed to working with the CCU and citizen input throughout December and January, in order to ensure that the new rules are in place by February. That way, normal construction of new wharves and boathouses in winter and spring 2016 should not be interrupted.

ZONING CHANGES – PHASE 3

Council has set June 11, 2016 as a date for a “Town Hall meeting” on urban planning issues. Hopefully people will have ample time to prepare, reflect and discuss in advance what they would like to see for the future of Barkmere’s urban planning. For those who are unable to attend in person, we will welcome written submissions. We are open to suggestions, but the planned topics for discussion include:

- ⇒ Grandfather rights for non-conforming constructions;
- ⇒ Barkmere’s construction standards vis-à-vis other communities;
- ⇒ Trends in the seasonal vs. primary residence mix;
- ⇒ Links between seasonal and primary residences and municipal services, infrastructure and taxes;
- ⇒ Links between construction footprints and the seasonal vs primary residence mix;
- ⇒ General urban planning issues that citizens want addressed.

I would like to particularly thank the volunteer members of our CCU for their exceptional commitment to the community and extraordinary hard work throughout this process. Their vision and common sense input is extremely appreciated. They are: Susan de Schulthess, Marie-France Émard, Ken Mann, Sandra Matteau, Barbara Pope and Serge Thibault. Make sure you thank them too when you see them!



Buildings and Infrastructure

By: Bruce MacNab & Tim Kalll

Community Center / Town Hall



As we move from Fall into Winter, our new Community Center and Town Hall project is well underway and a detailed construction schedule is being implemented.

Our municipal parcel has been surveyed, and preliminary site inspections and layout are established. Our architectural consultants have finalized plans and designs, including bid packages. Our project manager, Rachel Deslauriers, will put the project out to tender in early January 2016, with the hope that bids will be more competitive early in the season, as construction firms book their seasons. Once the process is complete, the project will be awarded early in spring 2016, and with this information, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs will authorize the final phase of our grant.

Early May will see the site preparation start and formwork beginning. Construction is set to run approximately 16 weeks, plus a 2 week holiday period, which will put completion and delivery of the building around mid-October.



The new Building , facing the parking, i.e. the lake is at its right. The Community Center will be upstairs and the Town Hall will be downstairs.

So next year will be an exciting and rewarding time for everyone in Barkmere, as we watch this building go up. The community center has so much potential for use, and will serve the Town for many years to come. I cannot wait to see it!

Boat launch renovations

A cement ramp consisting of 10 cement slabs was installed on the dry land portion of the boat launch area at the landing. This work, along with an enlargement of the water catch gutter near the garbage bins, will greatly reduce water runoff erosion in this area. The project was funded by a grant from the ministry of Transportation.

The extension of the cement slabs into the lake, and minor asphalt work around the slabs is planned for next year to complete the project.



Reminder: With the installation of the dry hydrant at the landing this summer, all residents with road access near the landing area can request a reduction of their home insurance premiums.



Environmental Matters

By Jake Chadwick



Water Quality

We conducted the usual battery of water quality tests this past spring, summer and fall. Nothing alarming was discovered in the tests. Thanks go out to Lea Hardcastle and the BLPA for their support and participation in the Réseau de Surveillance Volontaire des Lacs (RSVL) programme again this year. We will get the result in the winter to incorporate into our spring report. From the results we do have from this year's testing we can say that the water quality of Bark Lake continues to be very good, and significantly better than many surrounding lakes.

In order to continuously update and upgrade our work we are having the results of the past three years reviewed by Dr. Gertrud Nurnberg, our consultant, so that she can advise us on what changes to make to our program going forward. We will have her recommendations by the end of December.

Shoreline Restoration

We are happy to report that the distribution of free saplings in May was very well received by Bark Lake citizens. Virtually all the trees were quickly taken up for planting. We hope all the trees took to their new locations and that they will enhance the beauty of the respective properties. We will order more next year to keep pace with rising demand. For those who have not yet taken advantage of this programme, we highly recommend it!

The shoreline restoration project team focussed on a sight at the landing near the rental wharves this summer. With the help of the very dynamic and knowledgeable horticulturalist Andrea Galarneau, the team planted what seemed like an endless variety of plants at the sight (see picture). We can hardly wait for spring to see the results. Thanks go out to Stephen Lloyd, Andrea Leber, Chantal Raymond and Jean-Christophe Hamelin for their help.



Andrea Galarneau, horticulturalist and her native plants

We also followed up at last year's main sight – the property of Tate/Vandewater. I think everyone is pleased with the progress. See pictures (last year on the left and this year on the right).



Hydro Quebec and the 4x4s

Marie-Hélène Gauthier has been very active, along with Mayor Luc Trépanier and former Mayor Charles Huot, spearheading and representing the lake on negotiations with Hydro Quebec regarding the problem of 4x4 vehicles circulating upstream from the main inlet to the lake and crossing the stream. The municipality of Montcalm is also participating and so far Hydro Quebec has been quite responsive to our concerns. They have tentatively agreed to close off the area completely. We hope this plan will be implemented in the coming year. As our water testing has shown year after year, the inlet already brings water to the lake with higher than average phosphate levels so we need to be very vigilant as to what might impact the quality of water in the inlet stream.

Addressing Increasing Light Pollution

As a response to the concerns of many citizens, there will be a thorough review of our lighting bylaws, in particular those regarding wharves and boat houses. There has been a proliferation of solar powered lights installed around the lake which emit very bright light regardless of whether residents are at their cottages or not. This, in the opinion of many, spoils the natural beauty and atmosphere of the lake at night. The CCU is working on this issue at the same time as the review of dock and boathouse regulations. All citizens will be able to voice their opinion during the process.

BUDGET 2016

By: Marc Fredette



Year 2015 in review

Based on 2015 preliminary figures (our financial year closes on December 31) we should be in a position to generate a surplus of approximately \$62,500. This surplus is possible due to our costs discipline and some expenses being deferred to 2016. For example, the administration costs were lower than budgeted mainly due to a reduction of \$48,000 in legal fees as the main legal case is delayed until December 2016. The amortization expense is anticipated to be higher resulting from the investment in the dam and work done at the rental docks as explained earlier this year. Revenues were approximately \$45,000 above budget benefiting from transfer taxes during the year offsetting the need to utilise the amount of \$43,400 we had budgeted from cumulated surplus from prior years. We monitored our costs constantly and applied strict discipline to make sure we use maximum dollars to better serve the citizens.

2016 budget

For 2016, we expect the expenses to increase by 3% from the 2015 budget to \$556,500 despite a 37% increase in waste management expenses paid to the MRC and an increase of 45% in amortization expense resulting from the new town hall assumed to be completed in September 2016. The expense for the Sûreté du Québec is expected to decrease by 7% stemming from a reduced cost per agent and lower property value driving down the total cost allocated to Barkmere. Consequently, for the 2016 general taxes and in order to minimize the burden on the citizens and maintain a financial flexibility for major capital expenditures, we will use \$62,000 from the surplus generated in prior years to maintain the income from general taxes at the 2015 level. As some of you might have seen in the local papers, the property assessment value established by the MRC has dropped significantly in Barkmere. For purposes of budgeting, this decrease will be offset by the resulting general tax rate. Therefore, since we are working hard to keep your tax bill as low as possible, the citizens should expect their 2016 tax bill to be, on average, similar to 2015.

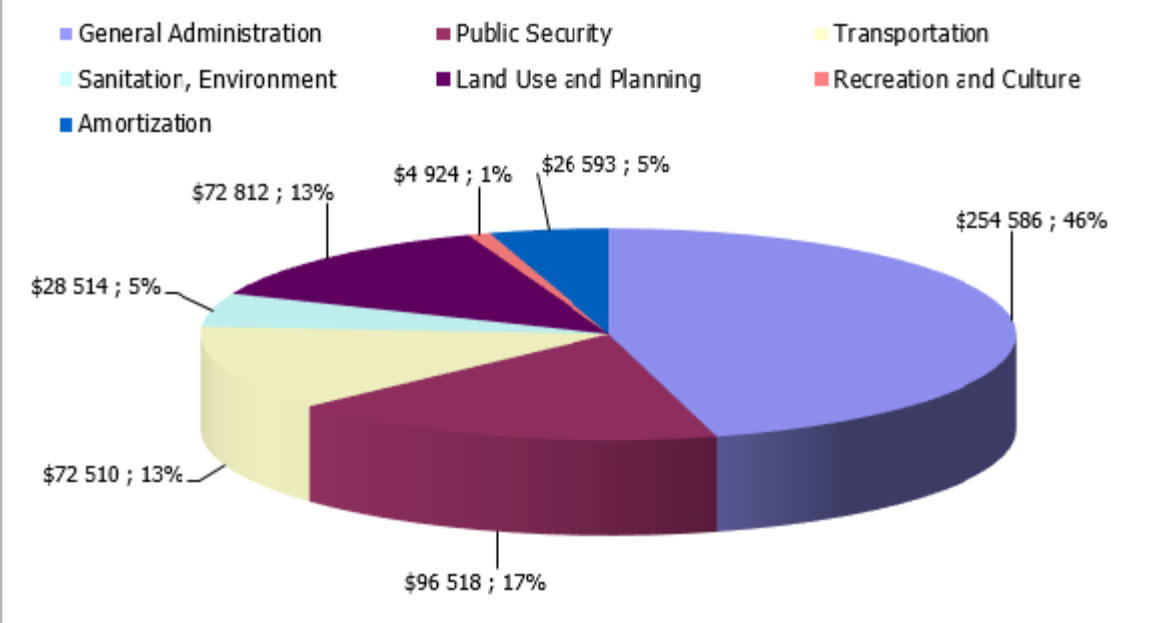
Unpaid taxes by delinquent citizens

As mentioned in our prior bulletins, we are focussing on reducing our taxes receivable to ensure all citizens pay their fair share of taxes on a timely manner. We have intended legal actions last year resulting in a reduction in accounts receivable but still some work needs to be done. Consequently, last November we have approved a resolution whereby two properties will be sold by sheriff in 2016. The town should collect the uncollected taxes via the proceeds from the sales as a first ranked creditor. After many years of warning delinquent citizens, the town will ensure it collects the amounts it is entitled to get.

Revenues			
	2014 Actual	2015 Estimated	2016 Budget
Taxes	\$456 575	\$463 764	\$452 056
Other revenues	\$74 358	\$79 802	\$42 401
Cumulated Surplus Allocation	-	-	\$62 000
Total	\$530 933	\$543 566	\$556 457

Expenses			
	2014 Actual	2015 Estimated	2016 Budget
General Administration	\$209 475	\$193 772	\$254 586
Public Security	\$102 152	\$101 611	\$96 518
Transportation	\$54 873	\$66 899	\$72 510
Sanitation, Environment	\$19 957	\$23 823	\$28 514
Land Use and Planning	\$68 425	\$71 366	\$72 812
Recreation and Culture	\$3 874	\$4 081	\$4 924
Amortization	\$15 522	\$19 496	\$26 593
Total	\$474 278	\$481 048	\$556 457
Surplus (deficit)	\$56 655	\$62 518	<i>Nil</i>

Expenses - 2016 Budget



Mayor's Report on the Financial Situation

Pursuant to article 474.1 of the Cities and Towns Act, this is my report on the financial situation of the Town of Barkmere.

Financial Statements and Auditor's Report as of December 31 2014

The audited financial statements as of December 31st 2014 were presented to the meeting of the Municipal Council on April 11th 2015. The surplus before investments was at \$178,257, for a net result of \$119,054, after investments, allocations and amortization expenses. The unallocated surplus of the Town at the end of the fiscal year was at \$274,261, about \$55,000 above our provisions of last year, due to some transfer taxes that were unknown when I presented my report last year, and some interest income that were higher than expected. We have allocated \$200,000 of this surplus to the projects of rebuilding the Town Hall and the Community Centre (\$150,000) and the rehabilitation of the dam (\$50,000) during fiscal year 2015.

Three Year Plan for Capital Expenditures

As forecasted, the Town has proceeded in 2015 to replace the gangway leading to the rental wharves, as well as providing additional spaces, in view of the increased demand. Also, the dry hydrant was finally installed in the landing area. We have also proceeded to install a concrete slab for one of the two descents to the Lake, with the goal of halting the erosion when boats are taken in and out of the water. These latter works were realized with a grant from the Ministry of Transportation.

We had to proceed with emergency works at the expense of about \$60,000 to repair the dam at the outlet of Bark Lake, after receiving an ultimatum from the Division of Dam Safety (DDS) of the Quebec Hydrological Centre. We will undertake a study and talks with the DDS with the objective to revise the classification of the dam, to make sure that the works executed will be sufficient to ensure the permanence of the dam while respecting the requirements of the Dam Safety Act. Otherwise, more works will be required in 2017, in order to meet the requirement of a class B dam.

We have also started the project of rebuilding the Town Hall and the Community Centre, by hiring the professionals preparing the plans and estimates. The construction should occur in 2016, and the total costs of about \$650,000 should be covered at 65% by the grant of the PIQM programmed that we have managed to secure.

Preliminary indications for the results as of December 31st 2015

We forecast, with reservations, that the Town of Barkmere should be able to show a surplus of about \$70,000 for the current fiscal year. This excellent result was achieved without drawing from the unallocated surplus of the Town. This will probably allow paying almost entirely for the cost of the new municipal building, without having to borrow from the bank

General Orientations for the 2016 Budget

A new evaluation roll is coming into force for 2016. The several realty transactions on the territory of the Town, many being lower than the municipal evaluation, have caused the total value of the Town to decrease by about 5%, compared to the previous roll. For most other municipalities in Quebec, this would represent bad news. But for Barkmere, since much of the expenses beyond our direct control are linked to the property values, like the quota-share to the RCM and the Sûreté du Québec, it is actually good news. On the other hand, expenses linked to the burial of domestic waste, as well as the collection and transportation of waste will increase considerably in 2016. I hope the measures taken by Council in 2015, which will continue in the future, like the mobile Eco-Centres and the reduction of the winter collection of containers, will allow keeping these expenses under control.

All in all, the combination of the decreases and increases will allow maintaining an expense budget for 2016 that will be similar to that of 2015. We will again allocate a part of the surplus to reach a balanced budget, since some expenses, like the legal fees, should not be repeated in the future. Also, while the tax rate for \$100 of evaluation will increase compared to 2015, the amount of the tax bill will remain the same as the year which is coming to an end. Very few municipalities will have succeeded, like Barkmere, NOT to increase the taxes in 2016, after the two waves of cuts imposed by the Quebec Government.

List of contracts involving expenditures of more than \$25,000 and of contracts involving expenditures of more than \$2,000 to the same contractor in excess of \$25,000

During the same meeting of the Municipal Council on November 14th, I have presented the list of these contracts, which contained none. The total of invoices paid to the firm Gilbert Miller and Sons amounted to more than \$50,000, for snow removal, maintenance work on Duncan Road, repairs to the dam and the installation of a concrete slab at the landing.

Salaries of the Mayor and Town Councillors

Pursuant to article 11 of the Act respecting the remuneration of elected municipal officers, here are the annual salaries of the Mayor and Town Councillors. As Mayor, I receive from the Town of Barkmere \$1,470 as taxable earning and \$735 as a non-taxable allowance. I receive from the RCM of the Laurentians, \$1,688 as taxable earning and \$844 as a non-taxable allowance. The Councillors of the Town of Barkmere each receive \$490 as taxable earning and \$245 as a non-taxable allowance.

Luc Trépanier
Mayor

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC
RCM OF LAURENTIANS
TOWN OF BARKMERE



VILLE DE / TOWN OF

BARKMERE

TOWN OF BARKMERE RATEPAYERS

PUBLIC NOTICE

ENTRY INTO FORCE OF BYLAW NUMBER 229

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given by the undersigned, General Director and Secretary-Treasurer of the Town of Barkmere:

THAT at the regular meeting on July 11th, 2015, the Council of the Town of Barkmere adopted the Bylaw 229. This Bylaw modifies the bylaw 110, concerning the scheduling of the emptying of septic tanks and holding tanks

The Bylaw number 229 is available for consultation at the Town Hall, at 182 Barkmere road, during normal business hours.

GIVEN AT Barkmere, Quebec, this 30th day of November 2015

Steve Deschenes
General Director and
Secretary-Treasurer

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC
RCM OF LAURENTIANS
TOWN OF BARKMERE



VILLE DE / TOWN OF

BARKMERE

TOWN OF BARKMERE RATEPAYERS

PUBLIC NOTICE

ENTRY INTO FORCE OF BYLAW NUMBER 230

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given by the undersigned, General Director and Secretary-Treasurer of the Town of Barkmere:

THAT Bylaw 230, adopted by the Municipal Council on November 30th, 2015 entered into force on November 26nd, 2015, the date appearing on the certificate of conformity issued by the RCM of Laurentides.

This Bylaw modifies the Zoning bylaw 201, modify certain standards concerning the calculation of the height of a main building, the covering materials as well as the provisions regarding the revegetation of shores and the requirement of an environmental strip.

The Bylaw number 230 is available for consultation at the Town Hall, at 182 Barkmere road, during normal business hours.

GIVEN AT Barkmere, Quebec, this 30th day of November 2015

Steve Deschenes
General Director and
Secretary-Treasurer

**PROVINCE OF QUEBEC
RCM OF LAURENTIANS
TOWN OF BARKMERE**



VILLE DE / TOWN OF

BARKMERE

TOWN OF BARKMERE RATEPAYERS

PUBLIC NOTICE

ENTRY INTO FORCE OF BYLAW NUMBER 234

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given by the undersigned, General Director and Secretary-Treasurer of the Town of Barkmere:

THAT at the regular meeting on November 14th, 2015, the Council of the Town of Barkmere adopted the Bylaw 234. This Bylaw modifies the bylaw 213 to consider a minimum amount associated with non-financial assets.

The Bylaw number 234 is available for consultation at the Town Hall, at 182 Barkmere road, during normal business hours.

GIVEN AT Barkmere, Quebec, this 30th day of November 2015

*Steve Deschenes
General Director and
Secretary-Treasurer*

Echoes from Barkmere

By Chantal Raymond



This year, Jim Tooley and I have traced another trail on Goulden Island. We still need to do a little bit of work on a small lookout that we want to set up and we might join the two existing trails at the start, but all in all, it is pretty much finished. Our inspector, Dave W. Roy, will help in making a map of both trails with his tracer. Not that anyone could get lost, mind you, but it is still interesting to see where the trails meet and the lookouts. I am in the process of making wooden arrows (natural looking) to mark them out. The next step that the town would like to take is to have a few 'rope and wood' games for the kids, that will look very natural and will merge well with their natural environment. We hope that this will be a good incentive for the youngsters to want to go trekking and therefore exercise.

Also this summer, I have worked on updating a 'Welcome Package' for newcomers. It is in the form of a pamphlet and gives general information about the Town, its history and what makes Barkmere a special place. We also include a map of the lake with names of bays, the position of the fire pumps and dangerous rocks. We inform the newcomers of the general by-laws ruling our community and of our incentive to protect Barkmere and its environment and control residential development, contrary to what other towns tend to do. All in all, there is nothing better though than to actually go and meet your new neighbours in person.



In leaving, please find a picture of the dam being repaired - men at work!

INFORMATION ON CITY HALL

OPENING HOURS

November to April
Monday to Friday: 9 AM to 12 PM and from 1 PM to 4 PM

Telephone 819-687-3373
Fax 819-681-3375

Personnel:

Town manager/ Treasurer	Steve Deschenes	1-819-687-3373	(dg@barkmere.org)
Building inspector	Dave Williams Roy	1-819-681-3374	(inspecteur@barkmere.org)