



TOWN HALL NEWSLETTER

November 2014

Municipal Election 2014



The 2014 Municipal Election for the Town of Espanola was conducted using the alternative voting method, Vote by Mail with Optical Scanning Tabulators.

Vote By Mail provides numerous benefits to the voter:

• **Convenience:** Ballots can be cast anytime, anywhere for weeks before Election Day. There is no need to be in the municipality on Election Day to cast your ballot, making it easier for voters who are travelling or do not reside in the community.

• **Accessibility:** All efforts are made to meet the accessibility needs of the community. For voters who have mobility or transportation issues, there is no need to travel to a poll to cast a ballot.

• **Opportunity for Increased Voter Turnout:** All efforts are made to reach the greatest number of electors as possible.

The goal with Vote By Mail is to provide an alternative way to engage voters and assist voters to cast a ballot who might not have been able to vote otherwise.

Of the 4,027 Electors in the Town of Espanola, 2,487 voted in the 2014 Municipal Election. Voter Turnout was a record high of 61.76%.

The use of tabulators reduced the amount of time needed to count each vote. Results were tabulated and announced by 9:30 pm on Election Night.

Official Election Results

Mayor

Candidate	Votes
PICHE, Ron	1,187
BEER, Jill	1,015
LAPIERRE, Jeff	232

Councillor

Candidate	Votes
FOSTER, Bill	1,487
YOCOM, Robert	1,391
MEIKLEHAM, Stewart	1,224
DUPLESSIS, Ken	1,145
DUPLESSIS, Ron	967
DUFOUR, Ray	910
MALOTT DOUGAN, Heather	905
HOWARD, Tim	868
SINCLAIR, Rob	804
GILLIS, Chris	799
MCMILLAN, Jack	787
LALONDE, Dawn	658

The Inaugural Meeting is open to the public and will take place on December 2, 2014 at 7:30 pm in Council Chambers. The first Regular Council meeting of the 2015 - 2018 Council term is December 9, 2014 at 7:30 pm.

Support Campaign

"Support Local" messaging is being played on Espanola's local radio station, integrated in email signatures and profiled on local signage

as part of a campaign to raise local support and awareness.

"Small communities are facing a critical time. Local businesses are now competing with both the big box draw of larger centres and the added escalating competition of online shopping," says Cheryl Kennelly, Community Economic Development Officer. "In tandem, our volunteer organizations which rely on the generosity of local businesses are also facing challenges due to aging demographics and a changing social culture."

The new "Support Local" campaign reinforces the need to support local business, local charity, and local food growers. The message is simple and clear EAT*SHOP*LIVE LOCAL and INVEST*SUPPORT*GROW LOCAL.

"We need to join together to fortify our community on every level; social, political and economic" says Mayor Mike Lehoux. "The new "Support Local" campaign reminds us that we each have the power to fortify our community by the daily choices we make; how and where we shop, where we live, what we eat and how we give, all makes a difference."



Did you know?

CO Alarms are now mandatory in all homes?

Carbon monoxide detectors will now be required near all sleeping areas in residential homes and in the service rooms, and adjacent sleeping areas in multi-residential units. Alarms are also required for homes with an attached garage.

Exposure to CO can cause flu-like symptoms such as headaches, nausea and dizziness, as well as confusion, drowsiness, and loss of consciousness. In high concentrations, it can be fatal. Should you require any further information contact the Fire Chief at the Espanola Fire Department: 705-869-3888.

Bylaw Reminder

Bylaw No. 2030/07, Section 6. Parking Restricted: During night hours in winter months, no person shall park a vehicle on any highway under the jurisdiction of the municipality, between the hours of two (2) o'clock in the morning and seven (7) o'clock in the morning, during the period from the first day of November in one year until the last day of March in the next year, except physicians on emergency calls and operators of authorized vehicles.

Hawkers and Peddlers

Fall seems to bring about many door to door salespersons. If you are unsure about the legitimacy of these salespersons, you can ask to see a copy of their Hawkers and Peddlers licence. The municipality requires that these businesses register with

the Town. This helps to protect our local businesses that also provide these services, as well as protect residents from illegitimate salespersons. The Town would still caution homeowners to carefully review the information being presented to them. Although these businesses may have a valid Hawkers and Peddlers licence, we do not endorse any of these products.

Message from the Clerk-Treasurer /Administrator

Council is responsible for two key documents that provide direction for the Corporation. These are the Strategic Plan and the Annual Budget. The annual budget is comprised of operating and capital financial forecasts for the upcoming year. Department Managers prepare these forecasts based upon knowledge of the issues and risks facing the community and the legislative environment in which we operate.

The next important document is the Strategic Plan. This document sets out the goals and objectives of the Corporation, this document can be found on the website at www.espanola.ca. An important step in measuring the satisfaction level of the services which the Town provides is through an opinion poll. This was last done in 2011 and will be updated with the new term of Council.

The following are key issues facing the new Council in the 2014 – 2018 term. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at 705-869-1540, or email at town@espanola.ca

or drop by the municipal office in person.

Fire Services



There are currently a lot of figures being discussed, many of which are based upon erroneous information.

The current firehall was constructed in 1970 and is now 44 years old. The building remains in its original state. The need to add on to the existing firehall was first identified in 1990 by the Office of the Fire Marshall. At the time of construction the rear wall was built to allow for expansion however it was never completed. Times have changed, the commercial sector in the south end of town has developed, fire services provided by the mill have ceased, trucks get bigger as regulations change and buildings get older increasing the risk of fire to the community.

In 2006, the lot adjacent to the existing firehall was purchased in consideration of future requirements. In 2007, a Master Fire Planning Committee was established, charged with the responsibilities of determining fire protection needs, identifying options and opportunities for delivering these services through efficient and effective use of all available resources. In 2013, an independent fire services review was undertaken. One conclusion has remained consistent- the current firehall does not meet the current or future needs of the community. The current two bay firehall houses three vehicles along with various pieces of equipment.

Homeowners protected by fire hydrants, enjoy approximately 60% lower home owners' insurance rates than homeowners who are not protected. This is due to equipment availability and the training of the volunteer firefighters. The insurance industry produces guidelines for which insurance ratings are based, one factor in this determination is vehicle equipment age of less than 20 years.

If Council chooses not to maintain this level of service homeowners could experience increases in their home insurance of more than double along with the added risk to public safety. In order to maintain this level of service, we must continue to address the risks facing the community and take actions to mitigate these risks. The next vehicle due to be replaced is our 1992 tanker which must be done by 2020 to meet homeowners insurance requirements. It is very unlikely that a newer vehicle will fit in the existing facility prohibiting this purchase.

The simple block construction of the existing firehall will never meet the post disaster building requirements under the Ontario Building Code. It was determined it would be more cost effective to construct a new energy efficient building rather than try to complete an addition which would accommodate the needs of the department.

A preliminary design has been adopted by council and the project is now moving towards the detailed design phase which will provide a more accurate estimate of the cost of construction. The current

estimate is \$2,089,805.12 for a new firehall on the adjacent lot to the existing firehall. This project could be financed utilizing a mix of reserve funds and loan financing.

The next council will have to make difficult decisions based on facts and recommendations from those whom are charged with the responsibilities of providing fire protection and suppression services, enforcement of the Ontario Building Code and respective Ministry municipal advisors. This is a key municipal service and the question is what level of service is the next council going to choose to provide?

Police Services

The high cost of policing in Ontario is a valid concern in every municipality throughout Ontario. Espanola is not alone or unique. The issue has garnered the attention of the province and led to the OPP attempting to provide a more open and transparent costing formula. One key element not clearly defined in the new formula is the fees based on calls per service, this information is not available to the public and therefore it is virtually impossible to forecast what figures the OPP will use in a costing. It is clear that any community that acts as a service hub, such as Espanola has a higher demand on calls for service. The Espanola Police Services costs are included in the annual budget, the annual police report, the audited financial statements and the Financial Information Returns filed with the Ministry, completely open and transparent. The total cost for



2014 is \$2.4 million with offsetting grants of just over \$1 million. Therefore our net costs are \$1.4 million. The idea being suggested that we could save \$1.6 million per year is unrealistic.

The staff compliment of the Espanola Police Service in 2015 will represent 11 sworn police officers, 5 full time and 3 part time civilian members who work diligently to provide top quality municipal policing within the town of Espanola. These members provide immeasurable value to Espanola and are accountable to the community.

Most staff members, officers and civilians, reside in Espanola. They are contributors to the Town and are equally concerned with tax rates as are people in all other Ontario municipalities, however, transferring policing responsibilities is not free and much is yet to be learned regarding the new proposed costing model.

Espanola Police Services provide essential services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, no one else provides that.

There are known benefits for keeping our local police. Dispatchers, officers, and complainants will sometimes recognize each other on a first name basis. This is important in an emergency situation. In the recent past there have been two separate occasions when our police service has undoubtedly saved the lives of two people, because we are local.

The Province has put a hold on all requests for OPP costing, this will not be lifted until September 2015. This is the earliest date that Council can request an OPP costing.

Asset Management Plan

Prior to 2009, municipalities were not required to record their assets in a comprehensive manner. Since this change has been implemented for municipalities, the provincial government has also mandated that an asset management plan must be completed as a requirement for any provincial funding. This report outlines minimum annual requirements which should be invested to maintain and eventually replace our assets such as our roads, water and sewer lines and buildings. It is estimated that to maintain our current assets the municipality should be funding approximately \$3.3 million per year. This sounds almost impossible given the current portion of our levy directed towards capital repair and replacement is approximately \$660,000. This is similar to every other municipality in Ontario. Council will need to work together with other levels of government to address this gap. Municipalities receive only 8% of every tax dollar paid in the province and yet are responsible for 66% of the infrastructure.

In addressing this gap, the federal government has announced a permanent federal gas tax program and an application based small communities' fund. The provincial government has introduced a permanent component and an application based component community investment fund. The Town has applied under both of these new funds; one application has been submitted for the ailing

Highway 6 culvert project and another for the water, sewer and road work on Algoma and Annette Streets. Results of the initial application are expected in the next few weeks.

Sewage Disposal

Currently, waste which is processed at the sewage treatment plant is hauled to Sudbury and disposed of at Vale tailings ponds. This is consistent with the treatment process for the City of Greater Sudbury. Vale advised in 2011 that they will no longer be accepting this waste. They have granted extensions until December 2015.

As Staff continues to undertake initiatives to find operating efficiencies, various methods of addressing these issues were explored.

It has been determined that the most efficient means in addressing this issue and to mitigate costs is through the use of geotubes. This process will allow the residual product to be managed locally and eliminate the existing cost of transportation and future cost of disposal at another facility. Ministry approvals have been attained and this project will be moving forward in 2015.

Message from the Mayor

As I retire from 23 years of political life, I want to say that it has been an honour to have served this community alongside past Mayors and members of Council.

I am proud of the accomplishments that the current Council has achieved while being faced with some of the most difficult financial situations forced upon us in

our history. Council faced the challenges strategically and with persistence and were able to remain fiscally sustainable.

It has been a humbling experience to witness the consistent volunteer efforts put forth by so many that reside and care for our community. Their positive attitude, devotion, and commitment to the betterment of Espanola is commendable. I also wish to express my thanks to our local business community and residents who give so generously to our local charities and service groups and are integral to maintaining our position as a service hub for the Manitoulin and LaCloche area.

I am incredibly appreciative of all the hard work and great attitude of municipal employees. It has made my time as Mayor a pleasure and it should go without saying that I owe so much to all of them.

The words of encouragement I've received over the past 4 years whether from residents, staff or fellow Council members have made me realize, we are all in this together, we all have a shared interest in our community, and all want to see Espanola continue to grow and flourish. We truly need to support each other, engage and find active solutions to the challenges facing us.

Leaving office, I would like to wish success to the new council as they take on their new roles and responsibilities.

Sincerely,

