

Here are the highlights from the regular Lanark County Council meeting held Wednesday, Feb. 10.

Council Commends County Staff During Pandemic: Council passed a motion commending the staff at Lanark Lodge, the county's long-term care facility, and in the social services department for their work throughout the past year during the pandemic.

The county has remained committed to protecting the health and safety of all residents and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic while taking prudent measures to stop the spread of this virus. "As a council and a community, we remain deeply grateful to all the frontline workers who continue to work tirelessly to help keep our communities going and ensuring our residents are safe," the motion states.

It recognizes essential frontline staff "who have been keeping the most vulnerable among us safe from the virus; our residents and families at Lanark Lodge and our social services clients who rely on us for support. Lanark County's success over the past 11 months is a direct reflection of your selflessness, versatility, genuine care and commitment to your positions and employer and for that we are forever grateful."

Staff have been subject to daily screening, weekly testing and strict adherence to personal protective equipment protocols, and they have adjusted to staff cohorting, long hours, extra shifts, technology updates, virtual programs/services delivery and rapid changes in safety measures while continuing to ensure the safety of clients and residents. "You have all been one of our greatest weapons against this virus."

Staff also worked to keep long-term care residents connected with families and loved ones virtually or through safe window or outdoor visits. "Time and time again, you have showed your creativity and innovation by finding more ways for residents to keep active – mentally and physically, you have demonstrated true care and concern for your clients, fought hard and acted quickly to open up more daycare spaces, developed plans in the span of hours and distributed funds to essential areas of service."

The motion applauds the efforts made and anticipates continued success with due diligence shown. "Together, everyone has been accommodating significant changes in policies and procedures with grace and understanding and have gone above and beyond to keep our residents and clients safe and happy."

Warden Christa Lowry (Mississippi Mills) will send a letter of recognition to staff through the Director of Lanark Lodge and Director of Social Services, and copied to the local MP and MPP. For more information, contact Leslie Drynan, Clerk/Deputy CAO, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502.

Council Recognizes Work of Paramedics: Council passed a motion commending Lanark County Paramedic Service (LCPS) staff for their ongoing efforts and commitment related to the challenges of COVID-19.

The county has a service agreement with Almonte General Hospital for the provision of paramedic services. Since the spring of 2020, LCPS has supported public health in surveillance testing of all long-term care and retirement home residents to mitigate and prevent outbreaks. This has included

weekly or bi-weekly COVID-19 surveillance testing by swabbing employees, as well as setting up pop-up testing sites at various schools, job sites and long-term care homes when an outbreak has been declared. LCPS has worked with colleagues at Almonte General Hospital to ensure the assessment centre is staffed for swabbing seven days a week, and paramedics have also set up pop-up testing sites throughout different municipalities to ensure health-care equity to the residents of Lanark County.

To date LCPS has completed more than 25,000 COVID-19 swabs and has, with public health, administered more than 600 COVID-19 vaccines to the most vulnerable members of our communities, in addition to having assisted with in-house vaccinations for influenza last fall.

“On top of their normal 911 operations, the staff of the Lanark County Paramedic Service answer the calls to assist our community healthcare partners in keeping our approximately 70,000 residents of Lanark County safe and will continue to play an integral role in the COVID-19 response,” the motion states, adding LCPS has been instrumental in supporting many other institutions at the same time.

“As a council, we feel that it is important to bestow special recognition upon the staff of LCPS, who have truly stepped up to the plate in every capacity to help keep our residents and community safe from the virus. You are the true frontline healthcare heroes. Your amazing spirit of human solidarity has become even more infectious than the virus itself.... You continue to rise above the call of duty, and you are held in such high regard throughout our community.”

Warden Christa Lowry (Mississippi Mills Mayor) will send a letter of recognition to LCPS staff through the Paramedic Chief, with a copy to the Board of the Almonte General Hospital and the local MP and MPP. For more information, contact Leslie Drynan, Clerk/Deputy CAO, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502.

Upcoming Meetings: County Council, Wednesday, Feb. 24, 5 p.m.; Public Works, Feb. 24 (following County Council); Economic Development, Feb. 24 (following Public Works). **County Council, Wednesday, March 10, 5 p.m.;** Community Services, March 10 (following County Council); Corporate Services, March 10 (following Community Services); Special Public Works, March 10 (following Corporate Services). Watch for details about public access to meetings on agendas and through online notifications. For more information, contact 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502. Like "LanarkCounty1" on Facebook and follow "@LanarkCounty1" on Twitter!