

Here are the highlights from the Lanark County Council meeting held Wednesday, Sept. 8.

County to Recognize Truth and Reconciliation Day: Council has passed a motion to commit to recognizing Sept. 30, 2021, as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (National Orange Shirt Day) by sharing the stories of residential school survivors, their families and communities. This is in keeping with the federal government declaring the day to be a federal statutory holiday.

The motion refers to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report in 2015 that included 94 Calls to Action to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation, and it follows recent discoveries of remains in unmarked graves across the country, leading to increased calls for all levels of government to address the recommendations in the TRC Calls to Action. The statutory holiday was established to address recommendation #80 to ensure public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools.

"This day provides an opportunity for us all to recognize and commemorate the tragic history and ongoing legacy of residential schools," said Warden Christa Lowry (Mississippi Mills Mayor). "It is also a day to honour and remember the survivors, their families and communities who continue to bear witness to these tragedies."

The county has raised the "Every Child Matters" flag for the month of September at the Lanark County Administration Building and plans are underway for a ceremony on September 30. A presentation on municipal/Indigenous relations was also slated for the community services committee meeting later in the evening. For more information, contact Leslie Drynan, Clerk/Deputy CAO, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502.

Speed Limit Adjustments on Markle Road: Council has authorized a by-law to reduce speed on County Road 12 (Markle Road) near Lanark Village from 300 metres west of Argyle Street to a point 1.2 kilometres west.

Public Work Manager Sean Derouin recommended to the committee last month that the existing reduced speed zone in that area be extended westerly for 900 metres. The speed limit in the existing section will be 50 km/hour and the new section will be 60 km/hour. Speed limits on the road were evaluated and established using the Transportation Association of Canada's guideline tool. Derouin said a review of the corridor following several public complaints determined the recommended speed should be 60 km/hr. "To ensure the safety of all road users, traffic using this section of road must move at a reduced speed because of geometry and numerous entrances," he said.

A by-law authorizing speed limits for the road was also amended to reflect the change and Lanark County OPP will be notified. For more information, contact Sean Derouin, Public Works Manager, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 3194.

Undertaking RFP to for Andrewsville Bridge: Council has passed a motion to proceed with a request for proposals to complete an environmental assessment study to investigate preferred options as the Andrewsville Bridge in Montague Township nears the end of its useful life.

This follows a report by Public Works Manager Sean Derouin to the committee last month, who outlined its history and the repairs undertaken over the past 16 years. The bridge is more than 100 years old and spans the Rideau River, providing access to the Parks Canada swing bridge that crosses the Rideau Canal at Nicholson's Locks. Lanark County and the United Counties of Leeds & Grenville (UCLG) share jurisdiction for the bridge, which has had a 5-tonne load limit since 1952 and is used by fewer than 200 vehicles per day. Since 2018 it has closed to traffic each year from Dec. 1 to March 1 to prolong its lifespan by eliminating further corrosion from de-icing materials being tracked across it.

The bridge has long been a source of debate at the Lanark County Council table, and a recent enhanced wading inspection has brought issues forward again. "Structural inspections have identified that the bridge has outlived its normal service life, noting the original steel superstructure continues to deteriorate at an ever-increasing rate," Derouin explained. "The other concern is the stability of the 70-metre drystone retaining wall on the south approach that is at risk of collapse." The inspection report has recommended closing the bridge within five years, and to complete the EA study to investigate the further options for the bridge.

The motion also notes that any work completed shall be conditional upon partnership with UCLG, which will be taking the recommendation to its council as well. Results of the RFP bid submissions are to be presented to the public works committee on Sept. 22. For more information, contact Sean Derouin, Public Works Manager, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 3194.

Establishing Climate Action Work Plan and Emission Targets: Lanark County Council has passed motions related to activities undertaken by its Climate Action Committee.

Councillor John Fenik (Perth Mayor), who chairs the committee, presented the report that outlined the proposed work plan for up to the end of 2022. It includes target setting, gathering climate action ideas from local municipalities to be shared and creating the draft Community Climate Action Plan, which would involve public review leading to adoption and implementation. Council passed a motion to support the work plan.

Council also passed a motion supporting the Lanark County Climate Action Plan greenhouse gas emission reduction target to be 20 per cent, with a goal of achieving a greater target. The county's corporate plan is based on activities related to county offices, Lanark Lodge and fleet. The county is a member of the sustainably.eco program through Sustainable Kingston, which provides members with a full carbon footprint analysis and a climate action plan. A team reviews greenhouse gas emissions and calculates emission reductions using different strategies. With anticipated advancements in technology over the next 10 years, the draft plan suggests a minimum 20 per cent reduction target is possible. "The corporate plan is a living document that will be reviewed regularly to achieve the highest GHG reductions possible," the report indicated. "When available, new projects and technology will be incorporated."

County Council has been committed to climate change for a number of years and to date has already lowered emissions at County facilities by 15% through LED lighting retrofit for County Administration and Engineering Buildings, Installation of Energy Efficient Windows in the County's Administration

Building and Installation of a Building Automation System at Lanark Lodge. Lanark County's new commitment reflects an additional 20 percent reduction of greenhouse gases as a corporation.

For more information, contact Michelle Vala, Climate Environmental Coordinator, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 3114.

Upcoming Meetings: County Council, Wednesday, Sept. 22, 5 p.m.; Public Works, Sept. 22 (following County Council); Economic Development, Sept. 22 (following Public Works). **County Council, Wednesday, Oct. 13, 5 p.m.;** Community Services, Oct. 13 (following County Council); Corporate Services, Oct. 13 (following Community 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!

– 30 –