

Mayor Carolyn Amyotte Video Update January 1, 2022

Mayor's Video Update: 2021 in review!

Hi North Kawartha, Mayor Carolyn with another video update. It's my third annual year in review and I wanted to take a moment to share just a few of the many accomplishments for North Kawartha Township in 2021.

Despite the challenges of what feels like the never-ending pandemic, Council and staff worked diligently to safely serve our community, conduct municipal business and have made significant progress in a number of areas. Several road projects are currently underway including the reconstruction of Viamede Mt. Julian and Reid's Roads, the repair, resurfacing and widening of Jeff Rd. Plus, we are undertaking a Roads Needs Study to determine our future road construction and repair schedule.

Based on the results of our Service Delivery Review last winter and thanks to numerous grants and available funding we completed phase 1 of our Health Centre Renovations and are working on phase 2. We refreshed the Township website and have invested in a variety of software and tech items to modernize and streamline municipal processes. We have also hired a consultant to conduct our first ever municipal branding exercise and I am pleased to note that Council passed its' first ever Economic Action Plan.

Council updated several bylaws including expanding the permitted uses of tourist trailers and shipping containers in certain zones. We amended Building fees and charges, and updated the process and fees for Shore Road Allowance purchases. We also passed a bylaw mandating the use of clear garbage bags to help reduce the amount of material going into the Bensfort Landfill. We authorized our NK firefighters to enter motor vehicles to rescue and remove animals in distress and at our last Council

meeting of the year we approved a bylaw to regulate the use of fireworks on a one year trial basis.

We have been proactive on several environmental issues like the installation of signage identifying the invasive Phragmites plant. The township is updating and reprinting our Protecting and Restoring Healthy Shorelines brochure. Council will be creating a municipal grant program in support of boat cleaning sites for local lakes to help the fight against invasive aquatic plants. In addition to raising awareness, education and taking action, North Kawartha will be revitalizing Riverview Park on Eels Creek in Apsley with a focus on promoting sustainable, native and natural shorelines and creating safe public access to this very important watershed. The community feedback on Riverview Park was loud and clear and I thank you for helping Council make the right decision!

Speaking of feedback, Council and community response to the Ontario Geographic Names Board's renaming of a local lake without any community consultation has led to a new process that will ensure future public consultation will take place before local geographical names are changed. I have been told that further public consultation to change the new 'Raccoon Lake formerly known as Coon Lake' will be taking place early in 2022. Another positive result is that Council will be re-naming the bridge on McFadden Road to 'Coones Bridge' in honour of one of the original settler families in North Kawartha and in recognition of the contributions they have made to our community.

You know, one of my goals when I became Mayor was to be as open, transparent and accessible as possible. I wanted to engage with all of you and ensure that you could easily find out what's going on in North Kawartha. One of my most effective communication tools has been social media and my video updates. Beginning in January 2020, it was my intention to do fun, light-hearted videos with a variety of folks about all the great things in North Kawartha. Then the pandemic hit and my videos for the rest of 2020 were just my talking head providing ever-changing updates and status

reports and encouraging all of you to 'breathe deep... keep calm...be kind... stay where I can see you... LOL!

However, this past year has allowed me to get back to my original plan with these videos and I want to thank everyone who has assisted me along the way. Those

who joined me either virtually or in person, sometimes on location and even doing a live broadcast; each and every one of you have helped me to connect and engage with our community.

The video topics have been wide and varied. Everything from raising awareness about road safety on Highway 28 to the growing threat of invasive species in our lakes. Highlighting new businesses like The Eyrie and Leahy's Farm Market, and promoting significant attractions like the Apsley Autumn Studio Tour. Whether it was to provide critical updates on pandemic related matters or serious, tragic events like the loss of Sayers grocery store, my videos along with my social media posts and written articles have reached tens of thousands of people this past year.

Now I must admit I have been feeling a little depressed these past few weeks with everything that's been going on, and it was tough for me to get motivated to do this video. However, now that I have taken a moment to reflect, I am reminded that perspective is fluid and ever-changing and you can always find something good and positive, if you choose to look for it. Happy New Year North Kawartha! I wish every North Kawarthan good health, happiness and positive growth in 2022. As always, it is an honour to serve you as your Mayor. Thank you!