

Local Rotary Club to move forward with \$300,000 splash pad project

Written By PETER RICHARDSON

Following the playing of the National Anthem, Council got down to business listening to a presentation by the Rotary Splash Pad Committee, concerning their efforts to date and what they expected to get from the Town.

The issue was presented by Alexandra Georgakopoulos, from Shelburne Family Chiropractic and Kristy Sarauskys, of Lighthouse Small Business Support, with Rotary co-chair Sandra Gallagher and Bob McLarty from Park n Play Design.

They showed a short AV presentation, depicting a first look at one design and detailing their approach and planned schedule, as well as estimated costs to date and suggested locations.

A Splash Pad has long been on the want list of Shelburne residents and is a relatively inexpensive addition to the Parks and Recreation facilities in town. Relative, however, does not mean cheap. As outlined, in the presentation, the pad, as proposed, would require an outlay of some \$300,000 to purchase and build, followed by as yet undisclosed maintenance and services costs.

When asked by Council, Mr. McLarty explained that water, drainage, and hydro connections were not included in the estimated \$300,000 outlay and neither were any ancillary costs that may arise. The CAO Denyse Morrissey, pointed out that these costs would include things such as the added load on public washrooms, ongoing supervision of the facility, grass cutting, lighting and necessary repairs to the splash pad and of the surrounding park lands.

The committee, however, was amply prepared to address these issues. To date, they have raised \$75,000 towards the \$300,000 and they are fully confident, in their ability, to fund the entire \$300,000 cost. Their proposed schedule, is for the pad to be operational for the summer 2021 season, depending upon Council determining where it should be located and agreeing to their part of the project.

That part, as outlined by the committee, would be the ongoing maintenance and annual costs as well as some financial support. One would assume, that that support would be in the use of Public Works employees in the building of the facility and providing the necessary connections. Council was also asked to choose the final location and to provide a staff reference as a liaison person, for the committee to approach concerning permits, insurance issues and grant applications

The proposed design, included a nod to Shelburne's rural heritage, with a tractor figure being prominent in the water works.

Encompassing a total of 3,500 square feet, the splash pad would be an ample size to accommodate all ages of participants and a nod to that, was the inclusion of features better suited to older children, as well as those for the younger visitors. The committee had selected three possible parks to be home to the new attraction. These were Greenwood Park, Fiddle Park and Hyland/Natashia Paterson Park near CDDHS. Councillors then offered up the CDRC as another option. The committee responded that they had been told by the CDRC that there was no room there for the splash pad, but they were more than willing to have Council explore that venue further. Since the swimming pool is already at the CDRC, it would make a convenient home for the Splash Pad as well.

The committee explained, that in their search, they looked for a park that was easily accessible, had good parking and was already possessing added facilities to add to the experience of the splash pad. They noted that Fiddle Park lacked some of these features, but as it was an underused facility and was evolving steadily, they felt it should be included.

Included in the \$300,000 dollar figure, was the structural quote from Park N Play and all the administration and marketing costs for the project.

At this point, Council raised a point concerning using a sole source supplier for the structure. Town policy required at least three separate quotes for an expenditure of this magnitude. The committee said they were unaware of this but that in previous incarnations

of the committee, other companies had been approached and their quotes were in line with the quote provided by Park N Play.

The Mayor interceded, to state that policy was policy, however, depending upon how the finances were administered, an accommodation would be possible for a single source quotation. After the meeting, he explained that if the committee were to spend the \$300,000, to purchase the structures and then turn them over to the Town, they would not be bound by the Town's requisition policy, as it was not a Town purchase.

Bob McLarty, from Park N Play, and a resident of Shelburne, outlined the two types of systems that could be used for the Splash Pad's water supply. The first and initially the cheapest to utilize, was a single use system, whereby the water was pumped onto the pad and then ran off into the sewers and went to the treatment plant. This is a common system throughout Ontario.

The second system was a recirculating one. Here, the water is captured, treated and reused multiple times, similar to that of a swimming pool. The initial costs of this system are noticeably higher, however the savings are dramatic, over time, due to the use of less water and a very reduced demand on the water treatment facility, which as everyone knows is in need of and scheduled for, major improvements.

In discussions after the meeting, Mayor Mills felt that, in his opinion, the recirculating system would be the better way to go for Shelburne. Not only because of the reduced strain on the treatment plant, but also the more environmentally friendly approach to water volume consumed. He noted that although a volume of water would eventually go to the treatment facility, it would not be near the amount of the open system.

At the time of the presentation, neither water volume required nor annual costs were available to Council, due to the lack of concrete examples of either one.

The Mayor said that as the Budget process was currently starting, Council and staff would include the splash pad in their deliberations. He asked Jim Moss to be the temporary liaison with the committee.

Road resurfacing

Moving on, Mr. Moss then reported that the road resurfacing that has been going on is almost complete and would be completed by Oct. 9. Coun. Walter Benotto asked if the OCIF Connecting Link Grant had been re-applied for and if there was any money left to repair sidewalks in town.

CAO Denyse Morrissey assured him they had replied and Mr. Moss stated that sidewalks were a separate line item and that work would commence on those in the next week. He noted that most of those repairs would be done in 2020.

Strategic Priorities Plan

The CAO provided a report to Council regarding the adoption of their Strategic Priorities Plan.

In essence, this is a plan outlining what Council wants to see done in Shelburne during their tenure in office. It is, a considered a blueprint of how Council will make thoughtful decisions about the Town's future, to ensure success.

The Council established a vision, a mission, values and goals for the plan. Their vision, guiding the Town, their mission is what they do, their values are their core beliefs that underpin their activities and the goals are what they want Shelburne to be known for, reflect and represent, They are, 'Sustainable, Engaged and Livable'.

The details of the plan are available on the Town website, under the Council Agenda package for Oct. 7.

Other business

Council passed a new Corporate Donation and Sponsorship Policy, outlining what you will and will not be able to receive for your expenditure.

The new Shelburne and District Fire Department Agreement , between all the municipalities availing themselves of the Fire Service, was received by Council but was not ratified.

The Fire Department, is currently governed by the Fire Board, on which all municipalities have an equal vote. However, Shelburne bears the brunt of the cost, 52 percent in fact. Coun. Benotto, a board member and the Chair, wants to see this changed. In fact, he would like to see the Board dissolved. Shelburne is one of only two Ontario Fire departments that are governed by a Fire

The surrounding municipalities are all serviced by multiple fire departments, who either bill for each fire call or have negotiated a set fee per call. This system allows these departments to reduce their budget requests from their home municipalities and helps keep costs in line.

By legislation, all communities must have a fire service and if they do not want to establish their own, they must make other arrangements. Coun. Benotto wants to see Shelburne's force run by Shelburne and is tired of being out voted by the Board on matters that matter to Shelburne, but not necessarily to the surrounding municipalities.