

Rainstorm shuts down sewage plant

By Peter Richardson

Last Friday's torrential rain storm was purportedly a 1 in 100 storm.

That is once in 100 years does it happen, and that would be just fine with the Public Works Department and the operators of the sewage treatment facility.

The storm, which dumped over four inches of rain during its visit to Shelburne resulted in 42 inches of water pouring into the basement of the sewage plant. The water completely covered three pumps and almost rose above the electrical panels that power the entire operation.

As it was, the plant was completely shut down over the weekend, as emergency crews rushed to restore functionality.

All that water, and more from outside the plant had to be pumped into the holding ponds and contained until it could be treated and returned to the receiving stream, in addition to all the regular sewage flowing into the plant.

Mayor Ken Bennington said he was pleased to announce to Council that all systems worked perfectly and no raw sewage leaked from the plant.

Town Planning Engineer Jack Tupling had high praise for the workers from Aqua, Public Works and Bellwood Electric, who were able to control what could otherwise have been a catastrophe of epic proportions.

With only a single pump now operating, the facility was at 100 percent operating capacity by the time of Monday's Council meeting.

The remaining two pumps, are presently being rebuilt and will return to service shortly.

Jack credits the amazing return to normal, with only a single pump, to the new filters which the Town had recently installed at the plant.

Although the exact origins of the flood water has yet to be determined, it may have come from the neighbouring soccer pitches or overflow from the Besley Drain.

Efforts continue to source the problem and effect method to prevent further occurrences of this kind.

Discussions are also being had as to the possible installation of an emergency alarm system, which would alert authorities when water was detected above a certain depth on the basement floor.

This would enable staff to combat the issue much sooner and so prevent another such episode from happening.

Council also turned its attention to the contentious issue of the Town crosswalk once again.

This time, it was to approve the installation of secondary solar powered crosswalk lights on the poles where the walk buttons are located.

These lights, set at eye level for drivers, would flash, in sync with the overhead lights, to alert drivers of a pedestrian presence in the crosswalk.

Council received a quotation of \$11,359.53, plus tax, for the purchase of said lights. However, as this amount exceeded the Town's procurement regulations, which restrict, singular source, purchases to a maximum of, \$10,000, Council voted to defer the purchase until their next meeting, so as to procure additional quotations.

When installed, these lights will make the crosswalk highly visible, both at night and during the daylight hours.

In other business, Council voted to allow 1st Shelburne Boy Scouts, to hold their annual "Apple Days" on October 14 and 15 of this year. They also approved a request from the Sample family to have a bonfire at their private family event in Fiddle Park, July 7-9.

A motion was approved, to allow for a sign to be placed on the Natasha Paterson Memorial Pavilion, which was officially opened on Monday evening, that would be visible from the street.

The motion, put forward by Councillor Randy Chambers, allows for a sign of the same design, as that of the Shelburne sign currently displayed in the train station mural, on the building on the West side of Victoria Street, opposite Town Hall, in keeping with the theme of the pavilion.

And finally, Council approved the continued support of the Science, Music and Arts Awards at Centennial Hylands Elementary School. These \$75 Awards are presented to Grade 8 graduating students at both Centennial Highlands and Highland Heights schools.