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Shelburne council approves revised smoking and vaping bylaw

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LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Shelburne Town Council has approved a revised smoking and vaping bylaw.

During their meeting on July 25, Shelburne Town Council received a report from Clerk Jennifer Willoughby on a revised smoking and vaping bylaw and approved its enacting. A proposed smoking and vaping bylaw were originally presented to council at their June 30.

The initial proposed bylaw looked to ban the smoking and vaping of tobacco and other vaporizing substances on properties owned or leased by the municipality including municipal buildings, trails and walkways, parks and parkland, playground areas, outdoor recreation facilities, andspecial events.

At the time, councillors raised concerns on how the drafted smoking and vaping bylaw would affect community attendance at special events as well as whether council was impeding on a level of control by not allowing residents to smoke on sidewalks.

As part of the review process a public survey was conducted to gather residents' thoughts on the bylaw.

According to the survey, a little over 57 percent supported the proposed bylaw while 29.6 per cent opposed it.

One revision to the bylaw included a change to the definition of ?highway', which now address the passage of pedestrians and allows for smoking on sidewalk. The other edit, shortened the time frame that special events can get exemptions to have a designated smoking area, from 60 days to 45 days.

According to the survey, 64.5 per cent of respondents supported dedicated smoking areas during special events while 32.8 percent did not.

Coun. Kyle Fegan questioned the 45-day time frame and why the exemption process could not be shortened to two weeks.

?Our creation of council agendas is an ongoing process and so we continually work through each agenda,? explained Willoughby. ?There is a minimum 14-day requirement in advance of council agendas to be published. It allows us to place holders in for certain delegations or requests for council.?

?The 45 days is also beneficial for the event organizer to have notification of the decision of council,? added Denyse Morrissey, chief administrative officer. ?They then can plan according. You may not support some of the requests.?

Shelburne staff continually receive complaints regarding secondhanded smoke related to the downtown core area. The new smoking and vaping bylaw will enforce complaints regarding smoking reactively.