

Synopsis of Report: A report regarding the implementation of a septic system inspection program.

Overview:

At the August 2, 2016 meeting of council the following resolution was passed directing staff to gather information relative to implementing a septic system inspection program.

Moved by: Deputy Mayor Moher Seconded by: Councillor Landsmann

That the Township move towards the recommendations and timelines presented by Don Evelyn, Environment Council of Clear, Ston(e)y and White Lakes, to consider the cost of the implementation of a septic re-inspection program and public education program in coordination with Peterborough Public Health and the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority and that staff be requested to consult with the Municipality of Trent Lakes and Selwyn on the programs they have instated. Carried

At the present time, North Kawartha and Trent Lakes have implemented a septic system inspection program. North Kawartha opted out of the last County agreement with the Peterborough County City Health Unit and are managing all septic systems with internal staff- including the inspection program. To carry out the inspection program they hire summer students to do the inspection. The cost of this program is part of the annual levy payable by all property owners- all systems will be inspected.

Trent Lakes has just started in 2016 a septic inspection program- the Health Unit is doing the inspections for them at the current rate of \$270.00 per system. They are anticipating doing approximately 300 systems per year. Trent Lakes manages the program by providing the listing of properties to be inspected and the Health Unit does the research and field inspection and provides an annual report back to the township. In speaking with their CAO they are finding about 10% of the systems need some type of remedial work. Any remedial work is under the jurisdiction of the Health Unit. Trent Lakes as well is incorporating this into their annual levy- all systems will be inspected and all properties pay a portion of the cost based on assessment.

Selwyn Township has just recently decided to implement a similar program as Trent Lakes- all systems will be inspected and the Health Unit will provide the inspection services. They are financing it through a user pay system, whereby only property owners with septic systems will pay the cost. The annual inspection fee will be added as a charge on the tax bill for the properties that received an inspection in the prior year and collected as taxes. The new fee that the Health Unit is proposing for this is \$350.00.

The agreement that the Health Unit has with the County for the provision of septic inspection services (mandatory and non-mandatory) expires on December 31, 2016. A report from the Health Unit is scheduled to be on the December 16, 2016 County Council agenda to renew the contract for a further 5 years. The new fee of \$350.00 is incorporated into that proposed agreement.

The majority of the townships that are doing an inspection program or are proposing to do so, are doing such on a 10 year cycle and septic systems that are less than 10 years old are not inspected.

Conclusion:

Given the differing concepts for implementation and paying for a septic inspection program a decision needs to occur on which is best for our township is an inspection program is implemented. In the North Kawartha and Trent Lakes models, all properties (including vacant, commercial, industrial, managed forests, etc.) all pay a portion of the costs. Under the Selwyn model, only those properties that have septic systems pay the inspection fee.

If there is a decision to proceed with a septic inspection program in 2018, then council should decide very shortly so that we can start (with the 2017 interim tax bill insert) the education process to make our property owners aware that this is coming.

Recommendation:

That the report to Council, dated November 30, 2016 regarding the implementation of a septic system inspection program be received and that council provide direction to staff on how to proceed.

Financial Impact:

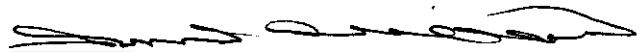
On a 10 year cycle, the annual cost to implement this program utilizing the Health Unit as the service provider, would be in the neighbourhood of \$117,250. This would not include the additional internal costs associated with the model that council decides on- the Selwyn model will require considerably more internal resources than the Trent Lakes and North Kawartha model relative to the collection of the cost of the program.

Strategic Plan Applicability:

This recommendation is consistent with the Environmental Goal *"to preserve and enhance the natural features and resources of the Township"*.

Sustainability Plan Applicability:

This recommendation is consistent with the Water Theme of the plan wherein we have agreed to *"protect watersheds to ensure healthy water quality and quantity"*.



David Clifford,
C.A.O.