

Municipality Acts Following Snowmobile Accident



As has been widely reported in the media, on Friday evening, Feb. 21, 2025, a snowmobile accident occurred in the Poison Lake area of rural Cumberland County. A man in his 20's was reported to be seriously injured. As part of the emergency response the Collingwood & District Volunteer Fire Department (CDVFD), along with other first responders were dispatched to the scene. Sadly, this young man passed away.

This incident and one that followed have sparked outrage in the community and created serious concerns regarding the leadership of the Collingwood & District Volunteer Fire Department.

Municipal council met in a three-hour closed session on Tuesday, Feb. 25, 2025, to discuss a report from the CAO and Director of Protective Services regarding the actions of two of the members of the leadership group at the CDVFD.

Council held an emergency meeting earlier today, Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2025, to consider a number of recommendations included in the senior staff report.

Fire departments in Cumberland County are operated as independent societies. Chiefs and other officers are not appointed nor approved by the Municipality. A bylaw does allow for the discharge of a chief in certain circumstances. Chiefs are elected by the membership of the departments and are responsible for the day-to-day operation of their departments. The Municipality provides operating and capital funding to these departments, but chiefs and members are not employees of the Municipality.

This report and these recommendations, while they are very serious, are relevant only to the actions of Jerrold Cotton and Andrea Bishop subsequent to the emergency response to the Poison Lake incident. All findings of fact, potential charges and liability related to the incident in Poison Lake are the responsibility of the police, the

and Regulate the Fire Departments in the Municipality of the County of Cumberland and agreed that both should be discharged as Chiefs. Council justice system and the courts.

At today's meeting, Council accepted the conclusions included in the report that Chief Jerrold Cotton and Acting Chief Andrea Bishop breached the Code of Conduct in the Municipality's Bylaw to Establish also directed staff to ban Cotton and Bishop from the firehall property. Also, Council has asked for an external review of the department's response to the call.

Mayor Rod Gilroy, speaking on behalf of Council, said "We are heartbroken for the family of this young man and we extend sincere condolences to his family and friends. We trust that the police investigation related to the incident will come to a just conclusion. As Council considered these recommendations, related to the actions of the two chiefs subsequent to the incident, I want to assure everyone that we had the principles of respect for the victim and his family, ensuring the safety of the community, ensuring continuity of service and upholding the integrity and good name of the fire service across Cumberland County in the top of our minds. The Municipality acted swiftly and decisively to deal with the actions and inactions of the Chief and Acting Chief."

The senior staff report will be available on the Municipal website.

Honoured with Long Service Awards

The Municipality of Cumberland honoured 11 employees for their years of service to the residents of Cumberland County during an all-staff event at the Dr. Carson & Marion Murray Community Centre in Springhill on Thursday, March 27, 2025.

"As I look around this room, we all have one thing in common, we work for 23,000 bosses who watch us every day and keep an eye on everything we do and how we do it," Municipality of Cumberland Mayor Rod Gilroy told staff. "I want to convey my appreciation and that of council for what you do day in and day out and how you do, how much you care about it and how much it means to us and you. How you act and what you is clearly obvious to all of us."

Chief Administrative Officer Greg Herrett congratulated staff for its role in making the municipality a great place to work. He said groups such as the wellness committee and the social committee add so much to the fabric of the workforce.

"I want to thank each and every one of you for your efforts every day," the CAO said. "Over the last few years progressively fewer issues are showing up on my desk because you are dealing with them. The departments are very good at what they do. I know council appreciates that."

Herrett said he is proud of the work of the county's employees and they should be



proud as well.

"The municipality is a great place to work and we're doing that together," the CAO said, adding benefits of working for the municipality include a new pension plan, a wellness plan, an employee computer purchase program, the optional four-day work week and other initiatives.

Those recognized in 2025 include: 25 Years - Chris Clarke, Public Works supervisor (Parrsboro); 15 Years - Mike Gerrior, Water Distribution operator and driver (Springhill) and Steve Ripley,

driver (Springhill) and 10 Years - Allie McCormick, Director of Recreation and Community Services.

Those recognized in 2024 include: 35 Years - Steve Varner, facility maintenance and building official; 30 Years - John Burbine, Public Works superintendent (Upper Nappan); 25 Years - Fred Arsenault, Public Works superintendent (Springhill); 20 Years - Fred Chapman, community centre lead hand (Springhill); 15 Years - Chris Chapman, wastewater treatment plant operator (Springhill) and Mandy Hunter, community centre maintenance (Springhill) and 10 Years - Jaime Spicer, Bylaw and Canine Control officer.



FUNDY GEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

A PART of THE NOVA SCOTIA MUSEUM

WINTER HOURS:
Monday to Friday 10am to 4pm

fundygeological.novascotia.ca
Toll Free: 1-866-856-DINO



Another incredible view of the Ice Cakes and the Lighthouse. 'Free to see, and to sea, it's free.'



Whitehall Parrsboro has a steadily increasing pile of ice, the unrelenting cold weather keeps building up a steady supply. (Lawrence R Nicoll Photos)



6 McFarlane St., PO Box 250
Springhill, NS B0M 1X0

1-902-597-4039
Toll Free 1-833-597-8679
Fax: 1-902-597-3310

toryrushtonmla@bellaliant.com

TORY RUSHTON, MLA
Cumberland South

