

## **Report to Public after 1<sup>st</sup> Year**

**I am very pleased to report on many of the issues that have confronted this Council during our first year. I would also confirm that the opinion expressed in this report is that of the Mayor. Although success is usually measured in the eyes of those doing the evaluation; I will comment on the issues and I would also recognize any feedback from the public. I will try to outline the issues in order of how they occurred and not by importance to Council or the public.**

- 1) The issue of the Messenger being edited by an outside source was addressed very quickly. The contract was paid and terminated in July 2012 and this was applauded by the public at the public meeting when announced.**
- 2) Council recognized that the Hong Kong Veterans deserve the recognition they have earned. The establishment of a committee who will be responsible for the development of the memorial and with Council approving a maximum donation, this issue was put to rest.**
- 3) The Regional Service Commission was settled by Belledune being affiliated with Region #3. The decision was very business orientated and will have benefits for Belledune in the future.**
- 4) Council had many discussions concerning the fire department. Meetings were held with legal, financial, Revenue Canada and all parties to find some common ground. After much consultation, a decision to proceed with an “incorporated” non-profit organization has been decided. All parties will work towards improving moral within the department.**
- 5) Council had many discussions on the 2013 budget and we look forward to all the issues that will be addressed in the very near future.**
- 6) The Strategic Plan for our community has been reviewed and will need to be adjusted to our community needs.**
- 7) The new “Messenger” is now being sent each month and will continue to develop a new identity. The development of this has been positive and we look forward to the future issues.**
- 8) The village bus has been repaired and will be back in service A.S.A.P.**

- 9) A student program has been adopted by Council to beautify our community. This is a new program, the results of 2013 will determine if we repeat the program in 2014.

The future of our community is an ongoing issue and as a Council we must work towards finding solutions to address these issues. I have seen what making political decisions has done to our community, province and country. If this Council is to achieve any success we will need to use common sense. There always seems to be obstacles in the way however determination to work towards the desired results will always be the goal. Council is determined to work towards a better community and like any group we have seen some working harder than others. Council is now aware of what is expected of them, what is involved to be an effective elected representative of our municipality and how problems need to be addressed. Each member of Council will need to evaluate their own contribution to the successes or failures we have experienced this year. Each member of Council will no longer be in a position to say they are new to the experience which is why even more will be expected of Council. The question of where are we headed in the future:

- 1) Developing the community Strategic Plan.
- 2) Budget planning so as we are prepared for unforeseen events in the future.
- 3) Evaluation of our arena so as to be more efficient and value positioned.
- 4) A long term plan for roads, ditching and repairs.
- 5) Planning for what needs to be done for space within our municipal office.
- 6) Develop a plan to address moral issues within the fire department.
- 7) Work closely with the businesses within our community to be aware of what will develop in the future.
- 8) Work closely with the Port of Belledune for future development.
- 9) Position Belledune within the Regional Service Commission to be an active member who is aware and involved in the regional development.

I will conclude with the statement that Council has worked very hard to maintain an image of doing our due diligence on all issues. I am convinced that it will not be the decision that will be an issue, but the process to the decision that will be our greatest defence. I personally do not believe that Facebook and Twitter are very strong ways of communication. Many of the comments that are expressed on these avenues are always from those who have negative issues to express, with no realistic solution that is economically viable. I believe that my time will be better spent on realistic solutions other than trying to defend issues expressed on “two face”. I also recognize that these comments may create some controversy however I will also comment that everyone is also entitled to their opinion and this includes Ron Bourque. I am also going to express that I have witnessed a major change in administration. Council has been very accountable for their actions and we will continue to make it clear that Administration will be only able to administer what we as a Council have approved. I do wish to emphasize that all members of Council will ask for advice, recommendations and guidance on some issue at one time or another however the decision will always be the responsibility of Council. I do wish to make it clear that our team of Administrative professionals have always done a very good job. They have administered what was asked of them honestly and professionally. Council is responsible to develop policy and allow our Administration to administer policy. We as Council members need to realize that we cannot have it both ways. I will advise Council to evaluate their performance using this analogy. I have spent the last year in the office. I can assure Council and the public that the Municipal employees are a group of dedicated professionals who do their job from day to day with the respect and dignity that we will continue with in the future.

Ron Bourque  
Mayor