

## **Report of Council Meeting (Committee of the Whole) on March 2, 2011**

Several major motions or decisions were hotly contested.

-Councilor Séguin submitted that travel, meals and accommodation expenses by Council be published. Adopted

-Councilor Séguin also submitted a scale of expenses for Staff and Council. Some councilors agreed with proposal which they found very fair by comparison with other institutions; some councilors argued strongly that they could not be sustained, be forced to eat less healthily or at least be out of pocket money especially in Toronto meetings. Motion was deferred.

-Councilor Séguin submitted motion to have an Integrity Commissioner hired. Four Councilors opposed the motion, arguing it was not needed and that furthermore some members of Council are presently under investigation for harassment of staff and that since someone would be hired to do this, nothing more is required.

-In CAO'S report, written invitation by CAO to four lawyers firms, 2 from Toronto, 2 from Sudbury, to submit contract to investigate harassment complaints to Labor Board was opposed by four councilors; some asked why there had been no advertising in regional media and why Mr. Swiddle had not been invited to submit since he had been hired recently to review amendment to harassment policy concerning harassment of staff by council members. The CAO expressed that Mr. Swiddle was not at arms length from Council. Councilor Bigras said it was the prerogative of Council to hire. Mr. Monette, the CAO, agreed but explained it is, under the procedure, the prerogative of staff to choose the method of soliciting submissions for contracts, if under \$10,000. Councilor Séguin stated that Mr. Swiddle is not a lawyer and that she had placed a complaint with the Law Society to investigate this.

-Councilor Garbutt , on a question of privilege, warned Council at length, citing details of the case, laws, by-laws and established procedures, against approving Gordon William Drive for assumption by Municipality at municipal cost and requested the Chair, vice mayor Hébert, presiding, to declare the motion on that road not receivable, which she did. Frustration on the part of several councilors was palpable. Therefore motion to upgrade Gordon William Drive at Municipal cost, assume it as a public road and offer winter maintenance did not proceed. Later, during comments, Mr. Lowitt, a resident of Gordon William Drive expressed his displeasure.

-Motion submitted by councilor Garbutt to request staff to prepare development

procedures for new subdivisions and new condominiums to lessen or avoid future conflicts over land development was passed.

-Motion submitted by Councilor Séguin for Municipality to avoid advertising in media which harass municipal staff or council members was hotly debated with councilors defending their own contribution to a publication. Motion defeated

-Motion submitted by Councilor Hébert to petition Federal and Provincial Governments to study and consider fair and equitable financial contribution toward all softwood operators in our area. Adopted. This motion followed receipt of a letter from Fryer Wood Products Ltd for financial assistance from Ministry of Northern Development, Mines and Forestry.

-During Announcements, Gérard Carrière, interim chair of newly formed French River Citizens Association, announced the recent creation of the Association. Its mandate: to keep citizens interested in local public affairs, to encourage Council to promote our area and exercise power wisely, responsibly by following rule of law, respect of by-laws and established procedures. He invited citizens to join and declared that the Association would take means to inform members and citizens regularly.

#### Report of Town Hall Meeting - March 9th

The assistance was small largely because of the stormy weather. Three board members of your Citizens Association attended the meeting.

#### Budget Meeting and Process

On the budget meeting, the Mayor and Councilor Bigras reported that the meeting had been cordial and that all members of Council had co-operated.

However they reported that all councilors had expressed the difficulty of setting priorities in order to effect necessary cuts to keep budget and taxes at a reasonable level.

In small group discussion at the end of the meeting , some citizens expressed to the mayor the view that the people best qualified to lead council in this process are the CAO and the treasurer since they work in this field full time.

When asked if we could expect a tax hike in a year of serious rising costs for all citizens due to gas prices, the Mayor said he didn't know at this time where taxes were going since priorities in the budget had not been set nor any cuts made yet. Some citizens requested more frequent reports, possibly quarterly, to citizens during the year concerning budget and expenses.

While some citizens thought the budget process should be improved, others felt that there was a process in place and that Council should ask their senior staff to lead them in the process.

For a councilor, the numbers are so staggering that leadership from senior staff is necessary and Council must accept and request this leadership from administration. Mayor Bouffard stressed that Council has recognized a need for higher budget for Economic Development Committee (EDC) advertisement.

When asked if Council knew where they were heading on the economic development dossier, Mayor Bouffard, stressed that the EDC members are the ones looking into the possibilities and they report to Council for approval and action. Some citizens requested more on going reporting on projects being considered or studied by EDC.

### **Industrial Park**

When asked where they stood on the Industrial Park and Co-generation, Mayor Bouffard and Councilor Bigras said they would consider the question again, however they stressed that many citizens from the Alban Area, as expressed in the election, were opposed to the proposed location. This project could come back to EDC, if the election controversy did not totally compromise its future.

Further studies by the Ministry of Transport of Ontario are to be done concerning traffic in the Park's vicinity.

The previous Council had also planned further studies about the environment.

Mayor Bouffard was asked why he had made a motion to cancel plans to purchase from the Ministry of Natural Resources a lot adjoining the Industrial Park. Mayor Bouffard simply answered that it would not be his decision and that the motion had been sent back to EDC for further study.

Mayor Bouffard announced that a concrete manufacturing firm was considering a plant at the Park pending the results of negotiations with the Municipality of Greater Sudbury

### **Alban Library Branch**

Library Board Chairman, Colleen Carriere asked Mayor Bouffard about his position on extension to Alban Branch of the French River Public Library. One member of the Library Board had reported that Mayor Bouffard was set on this extension although present library use statistics do not warrant such a decision at this time. The question arises from the fact that in the past citizens of the Alban area had raised or donated funds toward the extension of the Alban Library. The Library Board Chair reported that a meeting will be held soon with the people concerned in order to clarify the situation and ask the contributors what they would like to do with the funds.

### **Public Information**

Members in attendance stressed the need to better inform the public about issues and general municipal affairs.

Many hope the Municipality will make greater use of its Web Site as well as the press. Seasonal bulletins were also suggested. Some suggested that multiple sources of Media were needed to ensure objective reporting and varied views. Some expressed the need for Rogers to put up a planned tower to improve telephone and internet access.

Objection to inflammatory statements in one local paper about the CAO and other Municipal questions was raised.

One citizen raised concerns about information in the public concerning topics discussed at in-camera meeting of the Council, revelations made in unsigned articles on the internet.

### **Municipal Lagoons**

Harold Duff who sits on the Senior Lodging Project Board raised a point about the municipal lagoons and the construction of a Seniors Residence. Mr. Duff was relying on a report dating back a few years in which the consulting firm Trow had expressed concerns about the health and capacity of the present lagoons. Colleen Carriere, former Councilor, stated that further studies and corrections to the lagoons operations brought about by the previous Council established last year that the Lagoons were in much better condition than expected considering their age and could allow for further development in the Municipality, although further studies needed to be completed for the future.

Mr. Duff complained about lack of information and the need to request special information. He also raised the possibility of heavier rains or snow may have a detrimental effect on the lagoons. He also mentioned the voluntary corrections requested by the Municipality of residents having connected surface water sewers to the lagoon system.

Mrs. Carriere asked Mr. Duff to verify the facts about the lagoon, to get the updated information from municipal staff ; she also stressed that the surface water disconnection project was not voluntary, but compulsory, that several citizens had complied and that it was a work in progress. Mr Duff asked that the present state of that project be checked and the public be informed. Mayor Bouffard said he would check and report on this.

### **Extension of Municipality**

Mayor Bouffard expressed that several citizens of the Monetville area would prefer to be within the Municipality of French River rather than West Nipissing. The taxation base of that area would be an asset for French River. Any change in municipal boundaries would have to be decided by a petition from the citizens

living in that area.

### **Request to film Council Meetings**

Jeremy Seguin, a resident of French River requested the permission to video tape Council meetings. He wishes approval from all councilors if this is to proceed.

*Concilor Bigras stated that during Claude Mayer's term as mayor, years ago, the Council meetings were recorded on tape and played back for the public.*

The proposed system would use the Internet and there would be no cost for the service. Most municipalities offer such a service to better inform the public and to allow citizens to better know their members of council.

**General impressions:** a worthwhile meeting with several valuable requests, some information and clarification.

**It is important for citizens** to attend Council meetings, to stay informed about your municipal affairs, to ask questions, to ask for information, to expect all members of Council to work for the welfare of the whole Municipality of French River, to do it openly, transparently and with respect for all citizens.

A Council must act wisely, mindful of the needs of all citizens. Respect for the rule of law, clear and fair regulations and procedures tend to guarantee better government

### **Téléjournal Radio Canada**

Téléjournal Radio-Canada (Wednesday March 16th 2011): <http://www.radio-canada.ca/audio-video/pop.shtml?urlMedia%3Dhttp://www.radio-canada.ca/medianet/2011/cjbct/letelejournalontario201103161759.aspx> entre 12:12 et 14:23 (between 12:12 and 14:23)

Téléjournal Radio-Canada Clip # 2. (Wednesday March 16th 2011 during council meeting) <http://www.radio-canada.ca/audio-video/pop.shtml?urlMedia%3Dhttp://www.radio-canada.ca/medianet/2011/cjbct/letelejournalontario201103171759.aspx> entre 10:20 et 12:25 (between 10:20 and 12:25)

## **Report of Regular Council Meeting - March 16th 2011-06-03**

- Generally the meeting went well with all present agreeing on most motions. Your representatives of the French River Citizens Association would like to point out the following items of interest and share a few comments.

- The Police Report mentioned a rash of thefts in Sudbury East in the past month.
- The CAO read a lengthy document regarding procurement policies (regarding requests for offers of services) before resolutions were read. In the previous Council Meeting, some councilors had disagreed with the CAO about the procedure taken to seek offers of services by legal firms to investigate harassment complaints to Ministry of Labour made by staff concerning some council members.
  - o After the CAO's report, Councilor Bigras said he would vote in favour of the motion, but felt Councilors should have been informed of the process of procurement before the CAO proceeded. Councilor Hébert pointed out that the municipal procedures on procurement of services were clear, that the CAO had applied the rules diligently and had sought offers of services according to our municipal rules.
- Council adopted a resolution on a Memorandum of Understanding for the creation of a Monetville Environmental Studio. This concerns a property to be donated to the Municipality; the CAO is to follow-up with the land owner.
- Four Council members were appointed to a Communications Committee: Seguin, Garbutt, Bouffard and Bigras.
- There was Municipal Approval of Hydro One's Preliminary Design for Lakeview Estates Subdivision.
- Resolution - Tax Sale Registration of properties in third year arrears read - a few questions were asked - carried.
- French River Métis Tribe, 7th Annual Rendez-Vous Request for a reduced rental rate for a charitable fund-raising event read - no questions - carried
- Request from the Regroupement Communautaire de la Rivière des Français

for the use of the Alban Community Centre for a public forum on March 24, 2011

read - no questions - carried

- Resolution - Approval of approach to take to fill the vacant seat on the Economic Development Committee        read - no questions - carried
- Resolution - French River Resorts Association -Request for partnership for an economic initiative as a continued branding of the French River  
read - Municipality's contribution is \$2,500 - carried
- Resolution - French River Delta Association  
Request for support against the proposed hydroelectric dam on the Wahnapitae  
River Read - carried
  - o Municipality of Killarney requested the use of the Alban Community Centre for May 25, 2011 1:00 p.m. information meeting with Xeneca.  
- CAO will confirm if centre is available for that date.
- Resolution - West Nipissing/East Sudbury Veterinary Committee  
Request for contribution for the years 2010 and 2011  
Read - Municipality's contribution is \$400 and goes towards the Veterinary Committee re: assistance to local farmers - carried
- A resolution was passed to appoint an Investigator under the Workplace Violence & Harassment Policy. The legal firm of Mason Porrato-Mason LLP Barristers and Solicitors was retained as the investigator.
- Resolution - Unapproved travel expenses to be approved by Council at Regular Council Meetings Motion submitted by Councillor Lise Séguin  
read - no questions - carried
- Motion - Direction to staff to prepare development procedures Motion submitted by Councilor Ronald Garbutt at previous meeting had been deferred.
  - o Councilor Martin-Cross questioned the validity and believes this is a duplication of procedures as the Planning Board already covers development issues and this is not required; also objects to charging development fees as this would be sending a negative message to

land developers. Councilor Seguin differs and feels the Municipality should have their own set of Municipal procedures and staff should explore this demand. Motion to defer was suggested and carried.

- o **Your Association's Comments:** recent approval of a development project brought out areas of disagreements between Municipality's subdivision by-laws and procedures and some of present council members position. Councilor Garbutt's proposal would give the developer and the Municipal staff one clear document concerning land development within the Municipality. Let's realize it: we no longer live in unorganized territories where development was often unregulated and wild. All members of Council were provided by our Association with a Canada-wide study indicating reasonable charges by municipalities toward developers. Councilor Martin-Cross disagrees with what is considered by most Canadian municipalities as fair and reasonable charges toward developers. French River is presently a very attractive region for land development. Citizens should be aware that there may be costs passed on to their tax bill such as park and recreational development if developers are not required to pay their fair share. We hope that this deferral of the motion will lead to serious consideration about fair development and that staff and Council can look at this question with an open mind toward the developers, the staff and the citizens.

- A resolution gave direction to staff to proceed with Victor Road sale of land to abutting landowners.

Motion submitted by Councillor Ronald Garbutt  
read - no questions - carried

- A resolution was passed to petition the Federal & Provincial Governments to study and consider fair and equitable financial contribution towards all softwood operators in our area. Motion submitted by Councillor Monique Hébert

- A motion submitted by Councillor Lise Séguin proposing recording of Council meetings was deferred for one year.

- o Councilor Bigras did not feel good at this time to allow video recording be webcast via the Municipality's website since there are several delicate and personal issues at the moment and these should be dealt with before proceeding with video recording.
- o Mayor Bouffard did not object to video recording, wasn't sure if the

- finances would permit the purchase of equipment, but was in favour to defer this motion and suggested a one-year deferral.
- o Councilor Seguin feels webcasting the public municipal meetings would be beneficial to all taxpayers and the Snowbirds could follow local politics; it would show transparency.
  - o Motion to defer. Councilor Seguin requested a recorded vote on the deferral: AGAINST Hebert, Seguin / FOR Bouffard, Bigras, Martin-Cross, Sharp

#### **FRCA'S CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS**

As chairman of the French River Citizens Association, I would like to thank members of the Board and other members for helping with the tasks of following our Municipal Council's activities and reporting to the members. We are very pleased with the response we have received from citizens about our bulletins on municipal affairs and about joining the Association.

Let us remember that true democracy flourishes where and when citizens stay interested in municipal affairs, accept to get informed and to participate to the best of their ability. Your comments are welcome and appreciated on our Facebook site: Simply research French-River-Citizens-Association-ACRF on Facebook.

Gérard Carriere, chairman, FRCA-ACRF

A reminder: **Municipal Budget Meeting** on Tuesday, March 22, 2011 at 5:00 PM  
Public meeting

#### ***BUILDING FRENCH RIVER TOGETHER***

***Pas de budget ce soir ! à la Rivière des Français***

**par Gérard Carrière, président  
Association des citoyens de la Rivière-des-Français**

Le Conseil municipal de la Rivière-des-Français s'est rencontré brièvement pour une deuxième réunion touchant l'approbation du budget municipal 2011. Après l'adoption de l'ordre du jour, le maire Bouffard a rapidement repris la parole pour soulever un point d'ordre.

Il a déclaré qu'il lui incombaît comme maire de garantir l'ordre dans les

réunions du conseil et le respect des décisions. Il a ajouté qu'à la réunion du conseil du 16 mars dernier, une résolution avait été adoptée pour refuser les enregistrements vidéo des réunions publiques du Conseil et de ses comités et qu'une telle permission ne serait reconsidérée qu'après un délai d'un an.

Pour sa part, le conseiller Bigras avait soulevé dans une réunion précédente que des situations embarrassantes existaient au Conseil et qu'on devait attendre que ça se règle avant de permettre le filmage; d'autres conseillers avaient soulevé les coûts reliés à l'achat de l'équipement et à la réalisation du service d'enregistrement et de publication au site Web par des employés du Conseil. Cependant, dans ce cas, un citoyen lui-même enregistrait la séance avec son propre équipement sans coût pour le Conseil.

Le maire a ensuite procédé, sans permettre aux autres membres du conseil de s'exprimer, à demander à M. Alan Séguin de retirer sa caméra vidéo. Quand M. Séguin, a refusé, le maire Bouffard a demandé au greffier de voir à ce que M. Séguin soit exclu de la salle de réunion. Après un moment d'hésitation, le greffier Monette a affirmé : je peux demander à M. Séguin de quitter, mais je n'ai pas le pouvoir de l'enlever physiquement. M. Séguin a alors déclaré qu'il avait en sa possession un avis légal statuant qu'il avait le droit d'enregistrer les réunions publiques et qu'il refuserait de quitter. Le maire a donc demandé au greffier ce qu'il pouvait faire et M. Monette a répondu qu'en de telles circonstances, la réunion pouvait être ajournée. Le maire Bouffard a donc immédiatement imposé la clôture de la réunion.

Une quinzaine de citoyens, venus assister aux discussions budgétaires, s'attendaient à voir des progrès après une première réunion qui avait

concentré sur l’information du nouveau Conseil face aux demandes des divers services municipaux. Des employés responsables des divers services étaient présents et disponibles pour répondre aux questions et commentaires des membres du Conseil.

Les divisions évidentes au sein du Conseil sont réapparues. Des avis légaux pourraient aider les deux factions à clarifier les droits et responsabilités de chacun; une décision claire fondée sur la loi et des règles de procédure appropriées est urgente afin de permettre au Conseil de se calmer, d’approuver un budget et de se mettre au travail de servir toute la Municipalité.

No budget tonight ! in French River

**by Gérard Carrière,  
chairman of French River Citizens Association**

French River Municipal Council met Tuesday March 22 for its second budget meeting. After adoption of the Agenda, Mayor Bouffard quickly stated he had a point of order.

He went on to say that the Mayor has the duty to ensure orderly meetings and respect for council decisions. He then pointed that, at the March 16 meeting, Council had passed motion 10.5 stating that video recording of public council and committee meetings would not be allowed and that a decision to allow such had been deferred for a year.

While Councilor Bigras had mentioned, in a previous meeting, that there were embarrassing situations to be cleared before such publicity was allowed, others had mentioned costs of buying video equipment by the Municipality and of providing its own service of recording and making it available on the Municipal Web site. However, in this case, a citizen was

doing the recording with his own equipment at no cost to the Municipality.

The Mayor then proceeded without allowing the opinion of any other member of Council to ask Mr. Alan Séguin to remove his video camera. When Mr. Séguin refused, Mayor Bouffard asked the CAO to see that Mr. Séguin was removed. Mr. Monette, the CAO, said: I can ask him to leave, but I have no authority to remove Mr. Séguin physically. Mr. Séguin said aloud he had a legal document that stated his right to videotape public meetings and that he was refusing to leave. The Mayor then asked the CAO what he could do and Mr. Monette told him that, in such a situation, the meeting is usually adjourned. Mayor Bouffard immediately declared the meeting adjourned.

Some 15 citizens had come to witness discussions on the budget; expecting progress could be made since the first budget meeting had concentrated on informing the new Council. Employees in charge of various departments were present and available for questions and comments by Council.

Clear divisions on Council are still clearly demonstrated. Legal advice may help both sides to clarify rights and duties; a clear decision based on law and proper procedural rules is urgent to allow Council to settle down, approve a budget and start working for the entire Municipality.

#### Enregistrement vidéo de réunion publique

Association des Citoyens de la Rivière-des-Français  
French River Citizens Association  
Noëlville, ON P0M 2N0

En tant que membres et représentants de l'Association des Citoyens de la Rivière-des-Français, nous sommes très concernés par le désir de

membres du Conseil de préférer leur agenda personnel au bien-être de la Municipalité et par le manque de volonté de travailler ensemble à bâtir l'avenir de notre Municipalité.

Nous sommes convaincus que les citoyens qui ont voté pour des candidats de leur choix croyaient voter pour des gens intelligents et justes qui géreraient leurs affaires municipales. Nous savons tous que la démocratie est basée sur un idéal de respect mutuel et d'engagement à servir tous les citoyens honnêtement. Dans un tel système, il est évident qu'on ne peut gagner sur tous les fronts, mais qu'on doit être prêt à chercher des consensus ou des compromis afin de pouvoir gouverner . Or il nous apparaît que souvent les membres actuels du Conseil placent le pouvoir, leur pouvoir personnel, au-dessus du bien de tous et de la Municipalité. Une telle attitude est extrêmement contre-productive.

Évidemment nous savons tous que les individus perçoivent et interprètent de façons variées ce qui se passe; c'est naturel et correct, mais il doit exister une volonté de compromis, d'écoute de l'autre afin de comprendre et de s'entendre sur des façons de travailler ensemble.

C'est pourquoi nous demandons ce qui suit :

1 - Que le Conseil obtienne un avis légal immédiatement au sujet de l'enregistrement vidéo de réunions publiques, incluant des cas bien documentés d'autres municipalités de l'Ontario; ces cas existent. 2 - Que le ministère des Affaires municipales et du logement soit invité à donner un avis. 3 - Que la Police provinciale soit invitée à clarifier, par écrit, leur position et leurs responsabilités en ce domaine. 4 - Que le Conseil rende publics sur le site Web de la Municipalité pour tous les citoyens les documents demandés et que les citoyens soient informés objectivement, à la prochaine réunion du Conseil, des clarifications obtenues. 5 - Que le Conseil reconsidère sa résolution selon les

renseignements obtenus, si c'est justifié; s'il n'y a pas consensus, que le Conseil suspende l'application d'un règlement qui n'est pas clair. 6 - S'il était établi que le droit à l'information est tel que le Conseil n'a pas le droit d'empêcher l'enregistrement vidéo, qu'une méthode soit trouvée de faire réaliser l'enregistrement par une personne ou une organisation impartiales qui devrait se soumettre à des règles spécifiques pour assurer l'impartialité, ex. aucune coupure ou seulement pour éliminer les passages de pure routine qui allongeraient trop la vidéo ou dans le cas de situations trop gênantes pour un individu et qui n'apporteraient rien au processus démocratique. Les opinions et les recommandations du Comité de communications nouvellement formé pourraient constituer une garantie d'équilibre dans les cas de coupures jugées appropriées.

Nous comprenons que certains conseillers sont réticents face à l'enregistrement, puisque personne peut-être n'en a fait l'expérience dans le passé. Cependant, les réunions sont publiques et vous avez tous paru en public. Depuis quelque temps, la démocratie à travers le monde s'est exprimée fréquemment dans les divers médias et par des manifestations, lorsque des gens croyaient que leurs droits et leur voix avaient été négligés ou ignorés. Il est essentiel que le droit à l'information soit respecté ainsi que d'autres droits, tels le droit à la vie privée, le droit d'assemblée, d'opinion, de publication, etc. Nous croyons, comme citoyens, que notre Conseil sortira gagnant, s'il permet l'enregistrement des réunions publiques. L'établissement de règles peut s'avérer nécessaire pour le maintien de l'ordre aux réunions et pour le traitement juste du contenu des enregistrements. Rappelons-nous que les lois sont assez sévères pour les abus de ce droit et les cas de diffamation. Nous croyons aussi que l'enregistrement des réunions pourra aider les membres du Conseil à remplir la promesse de transparence faite par un grand nombre de membres pendant la campagne électorale. Soumis avec respect, Gérard Carrière, président Association des Citoyens de la rivière-des-Français

## VIDEOTAPING OF COUNCIL PUBLIC MEETINGS

This is a letter sent to the Mayor and Council as well as regional media.  
French version to follow.

**French River Citizens Association**  
**Association des citoyens de la Rivière-des-Français**

**VIDEOTAPING OF PUBLIC MEETINGS**

As members and representatives of the French River Citizens Association, we are very concerned about the desire of members of Council to put their own agenda ahead of the Municipality's welfare and the lack of will to work together for the future of our Municipality.

Certainly citizens who voted for candidates of their choice expected that they were choosing intelligent fair-minded people to run their municipal affairs. We all know that democracy is based on an ideal of mutual respect and a commitment to serve all citizens fairly. In such a system, it is a given fact that one cannot win on all fronts, but must be willing to seek consensus or compromise in order to be able to govern. There appears to us that often the present members of Council are putting power, self power before the good of all and of the Municipality. This attitude is extremely counterproductive.

Of course, we all know that individuals are perceiving and interpreting what is going on differently; that is natural and fine, but there must be a willingness to compromise and hear the other side in order to understand and agree on some ways of operating.

Therefore we request the following:

1 - Council should seek legal advice immediately about videotaping of public meetings,

including well documented cases of other municipalities in Ontario; they are available.

2 - The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing should be contacted for their position.

3 - The OPP should be contacted for their position and responsibility.

4 - Council should make public to all citizens the requested documents on the Municipal

Web site and should inform citizens of all their findings at the next meeting of Council.

5 - Council must reconsider its resolution in view of the information received, if so

warranted, or choose not to act on the unclear resolution, if consensus cannot be achieved.

6 - If it should be found that the right to information is such that Council cannot prevent

videotaping, that a method be found to have the videotaping done by an impartial individual or organization with specific rules such as ensuring impartiality, no editing at all or only on routine matters which could make the reporting too long or in case of unduly embarrassing situations to individuals which would not serve any positive purpose in the democratic process. The opinions and recommendations of the newly formed Communications Committee could be a must where editing should be involved.

We understand some Councilors' reticence to videotaping, since likely none of you had to face such a situation in the past. However the

meetings are public and all of you have been exposed to public appearance. In recent past, democracy worldwide has often been expressed through the use of the Media, through demonstrations when and where some people believed their rights or opinions to have been neglected or ignored.

It is critical that the right to information be respected as well as other rights like the right to privacy, the right to assemble, the right to opinion, to religious freedom, etc.

We believe, as citizens, that our Council will gain in having the public meetings videotaped. Some rules may be necessary for orderly meetings and for fair treatment of the material videotaped.

We also believe that videotaping may help all members of Council in fulfilling the promise of transparency made by so many members during the election campaign.

Gérard Carrière

Chairman, French River Citizens Association  
président, Association des citoyens de la Rivière-des-Français

Rapport - Amberly Gavel Inc. sur des réunions à huis clos

**Bonjour Citoyens de la Rivière-des-Français**

En 2007, le ministère des Affaires municipales et du Logement a exigé des municipalités qu'elles adoptent un règlement touchant les réunions closes (huis-clos, in camera) afin d'encourager la transparence dans les affaires municipales et pour tenter de faire diminuer l'abus de telles réunions. Un Ombudsman provincial fut nommé avec mandat d'examiner les allégations

de conduite inappropriée en ce qui a trait à de telles réunions.

Suite à des plaintes reçues par l’Ombudsman de la part de membres de notre Municipalité, un enquêteur a été nommé et a mené une enquête dont les résultats doivent être rendus publics.

Le Rapport de l’enquêteur, suite aux demandes d’investigation au sujet d’allégations de réunions closes de notre conseil municipal, a été reçu par la Municipalité et est un document public.

Si vous voulez lire le document, allez au site Web de la Municipalité au [www.frenchriver.ca](http://www.frenchriver.ca) À la page d’accueil, vous allez noter dans le coin droit supérieur :

**Amberly Gavel Inc.**

**3/28/2011**

**Report on closed meetings**

Ouvrez-le et suivez les liens pour lire le rapport au complet.

L’Association des Citoyens de la Rivière-des-Français veut vous garder informés. Veuillez prendre un moment pour lire le rapport Amberly Gavel. Nous vous offrons les commentaires suivants après lecture du rapport.

Tel que mentionné dans le rapport, l’enquêteur nommé pour la Municipalité de la Rivière-des-Français, Amberly Gavel, explique que sa juridiction est limitée aux plaintes concernant les réunions closes. Cependant Amberly Gavel écrit que le problème des réunions closes semble faire partie d’un problème plus grand affectant le fonctionnement

efficace du gouvernement municipal de la Rivière-des-Français.

Trois plaintes concernant la réunion du 14 janvier du Conseil étaient basées sur des allégations touchant l'avis de Réunion spéciale du Conseil incluant le huis-clos, l'absence de membre du personnel à la session à huis-clos, le retour à la session ouverte du Conseil, la pauvre qualité du procès-verbal noté et que la proposition n'était pas valide.

Amberly Gavel a trouvé que les exigences minimales avaient été respectées en ce qui a trait à l'avis de Réunion spéciale du 14 janvier 2011. L'Association des citoyens de la Rivière-des-Français appuie la recommandation d'Amberly Gavel que le Conseil, à l'avenir, reconsidère la période d'avis pour les Réunions spéciales et qu'il considère les facteurs d'urgence et de transparence dans cette révision. L'Association des citoyens de la Rivière-des-Français croit que la Réunion spéciale du 14 janvier a été convoquée dans une hâte excessive sans considération en ce qui a trait à l'urgence et à la transparence que tant de candidats élus ont recommandée lors de la campagne récente.

Le maire, questionné au sujet de la décision rapide de convoquer une telle Réunion spéciale a déclaré que la question de la subdivision Lakeview avait duré beaucoup trop longtemps et qu'il croyait, comme maire, qu'il devait disposer de la chose promptement. Nous questionnons la hâte quand la prochaine réunion du Conseil à laquelle l'avocat, conseiller juridique du conseil, devait assister était planifiée pour le 19 janvier, seulement 5 jours plus tard. Le maire a aussi indiqué qu'en ce qui concerne «la question personnelle», il avait reçu un avis légal spécifiant que le sérieux de la question méritait une Réunion spéciale. Encore, l'Association des Citoyens de la Rivière-des-Français questionne le besoin de hâte quand une réunion régulière du comité plénier du Conseil était

planifiée dans les 5 jours suivants avec le conseiller juridique du Conseil disponible pour commentaire et conseil concernant les dossiers municipaux.

Amberly Gavel indique clairement, dans son rapport, que l'administrateur en chef avait raison d'avertir le Conseil au début de la session à huis-clos du 14 janvier 2011, quand le maire lui a demandé de quitter la réunion, qu'un membre du personnel devait être désigné et être présent pour rédiger le procès-verbal de la réunion. Amberly Gavel a examiné le procès-verbal rédigé par un membre du Conseil et a trouvé les notes sporadiques, difficiles à suivre et ne répondant pas aux normes.

L'investigateur croit que le retour à la réunion régulière ouverte s'est fait correctement, suivi de l'ajournement. Le rapport n'a pas critiqué non plus la version amendée de l'intention de passer à une réunion à huis-clos.

Cependant, lors de cette réunion à huis-clos, une résolution a été adoptée. Amberly Gavel déclare que cette résolution n'avait pas été formulée comme une directive à un membre du personnel ou à un agent externe , ce qui aurait été légal; par conséquent, cette résolution ne répond pas aux normes de la Loi municipale. Donc cette résolution, bien qu'adoptée, devrait être considérée, selon l'investigateur, comme «sans conséquence».

Tel que précisé dans le rapport d'Amberly Gavel, d'autres présumées réunions secrètes du Conseil semblaient être des signes d'un plus grand malaise touchant des aspects politiques et de ressources humaines au sein du Municipalité de la Rivière-des-Français. Ces questions impliquent le ministère du Travail à la suite de plaintes de harcèlement au travail

reliées à la Loi sur la Santé et la Sécurité au travail. Ces questions sont présentement sous investigation et , tel que mentionné par Amberly Gavel, elles ne relèvent pas de la juridiction de ce rapport-ci.

---

Veuillez nous laisser savoir si vous avez trouvé ces renseignements utiles. Continuons à nous intéresser aux affaires municipales en suivant le travail de notre Conseil municipal afin d'assurer que tous les membres du Conseil travaillent pour les meilleurs intérêts de la Municipalité.

Report Amberly Gavel Inc. On closed meeting of Council

## HELLO CITIZENS OF FRENCH RIVER

In 2007, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing required all municipalities to adopt rules about closed meetings to encourage transparency in municipal affairs and to lessen abuse of such meetings. A provincial Ombudsman was appointed to look into allegations of abuse or improper conduct relating to such closed meetings.

Following complaints received by the Ombudsman's office from members of our Municipality, an investigator was appointed recently and he conducted an investigation which must be made public.

The Report of the Investigator into the request for an investigation into the **alleged closed meetings** of our Municipal Council has been received by the Municipality and is a public document.

To read this document in full, go to the Municipal Web Site at [www.frenchriver.ca](http://www.frenchriver.ca) On the home page of the Municipal Web Site, you

will note in the upper right hand corner,

**Amberly Gavel Inc.**

**3/28/2011**

### **Report on Closed Meetings**

Click on this and follow the links to read the report in full.

The French River Citizens Association wants to keep you well informed. Please take a few minutes to read the Amberly Gavel report. The French River Citizens Association offers the following comments in regards to this report.

As stated in the report, the appointed investigator for the Municipality of French River, Amberly Gavel, explains that its jurisdiction is limited to complaints in relation to closed meetings. However, Amberly Gavel, did state that the issue of closed meetings appears to be part of a much larger issue seriously affecting the efficient operation of municipal government in French River.

Three complaints relating to the January 14, 2011 meeting of council were based on allegations concerning the notice of this Special Council Meeting including the closed portion, no staff members being present at the closed session of the meeting, not resuming open session of this Special Council Meeting, the poor form of the minutes taken and that the motion taken was not valid.

Amberly Gavel found that minimal requirements with respect to notice were met for the Special Meeting called for January 14, 2011. The French River Citizens Association supports Amberly Gavel's recommendation that Council in the future reconsider the notice period for Special Meetings

and to consider both the urgency and transparency in such a review. French River Citizens Association believes that the January 14, 2011 Special Meeting was called with undue haste and with little regard for any test of urgency or transparency which was so highly focused on during and since the recent election campaign.

The Mayor, when questioned about the quick call for a special meeting, stated that the Lakeview subdivision issue was an ongoing issue that had dragged on for too long and he felt, as the new mayor, obliged to deal with the matter expeditiously. The French River Citizens Association questions the rush when the next meeting of council, one in which the municipal solicitor had agreed to attend, was scheduled for January 19, 2011, a mere 5 days later. The mayor also indicated that on the “personal matter” he had received legal advice that the seriousness of the issue deserved a Special Meeting . The French River Citizens Association again questions why such a need to rush when within 5 days the regular Committee of the Whole Meeting of Council was scheduled with the municipal solicitor available for comment and advice concerning municipal issues.

Amberly Gavel clearly indicates in its report that the Clerk/CAO was correct in advising Council, at the beginning of the closed session of Council held on January 14, 2011 when the Mayor asked the Clerk/CAO to leave, that a staff member needed to be appointed to take minutes. Amberly Gavel reviewed the minutes taken by a Council member and found them to be sporadic, difficult to follow and below standard.

Amberly Gavel believes the January 14, 2011 meeting to have been properly reconvened in open session and then adjourned. As well the

report did not criticise the wording, as amended, of the item disclosing the intent to go in camera.

However ,during this closed meeting a resolution was passed. Amberly Gavel states that this was not formulated as a direction to any particular staff person or outside agent and therefore does not meet the requirements of the Municipal Act. Therefore the motion passed, according to Amberly Gavel, should be considered “of no effect”.

As stated in the Amberly Gavel report other alleged closed sessions of Council were deemed to appear be part of a larger malaise in regards to political and human resource issues facing the Municipality of French River. These issues involve the Ministry of Labour as a result of workplace harassment complaints under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. These issues are presently under investigation and as stated by Amberly Gavel it does not relate to the jurisdiction of this report.

Please let us know if you found this information useful. Let us continue to be interested in municipal affairs, follow what our Council is doing and ensure that all members of Council are working for the Municipality's best interests.

Committee of the Whole - April 6th

**Points of Interest arising from  
Committee of the Whole Meeting of Council on April 6, 2011**

**General comments:** The meeting went relatively smoothly. A reporter of French CBC/Radio-Canada was present. Council members seem to be on their best behavior when Media are present.

Monique Hébert, deputy-mayor, was presiding.

Two young people, Kelsey Cutinello and Justin Godin, requested permission from Council to erect a radio antenna at the Alban Community Centre. They plan to introduce a 50 Watts French River Community Radio Station, with hope of future growth. If successful in their plans, such a radio service could serve our area well if bilingual and truly representative of our main regional cultures. Council to study and make decision later.

In his report, Mayor Bouffard mentioned plans to hold a Budget Meeting on April 19 at 5:00 PM.

The mayor acknowledged receipt of report and summarized the recommendations of the Report made by Amberly Gavel, investigator, relating to closed meetings of Council following complaints made to the Provincial Ombudsman: To read this document in full, go to the Municipal Web Site at [www.frenchriver.ca](http://www.frenchriver.ca) As stated in the report, the appointed investigator for the Municipality of French River, Amberly Gavel, explains that its jurisdiction is limited to complaints in relation to closed meetings. However, Amberly Gavel, did state that the issue of closed meetings appears to be part of a much larger issue seriously affecting the efficient operation of municipal government in French River.

The recommendations in regards to closed meetings read by the Mayor were as follows.....

Notice of the January 14<sup>th</sup> Special Meeting was properly given in accordance with the Procedure By-law of the municipality.

The Council should review its notice period for Special Meetings to both members of Council and the public, and the frequency with which Special Meetings are being called. Consideration should be given to both urgency and transparency in that review.

A councilor should not have been asked to take minutes of the closed session portion of the January 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. Rather the Clerk should have been requested to delegate his minute-taking authority to either another staff person, or to an outside agent or consultant present at the meeting. Failing that delegation, an Acting Clerk should have been appointed by by-law, who was not a member of Council.

In the circumstances of the case, the January 14<sup>th</sup> meeting was properly reconvened in open session and then adjourned.

The agenda item disclosing the intent to go in camera at the January 14<sup>th</sup> meeting was properly worded, as mentioned.

The resolution moved and carried in the closed session meeting held on January 14<sup>th</sup> was not formulated as a direction to any particular staff person or outside agent and accordingly did not meet the requirements of the Municipal Act and should be considered “of no effect”.

The complaints relating to the alleged closed meetings that occurred 1) on or about February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2011 2) on or about February 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 and 3) on February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2011 are denied for the reasons given above.

**In his report , the CAO, Michel Monette, reported that investigation of harassment complaints made by Municipal staff against some members of council had begun.**

The CAO mentioned that Seniors housing had submitted a request to be approved for septage (connecting to Municipal septic lines & lagoons). Such approval would raise the use of Municipal lagoon system to 77% of its capacity. Ministry of Environment requires a 20% safety allowance to protect against overflow. The request would necessitate the Municipality to start planning for enlargement or improvement of the lagoon system.

Estimated costs to the Municipality would be in the vicinity of 650,000.00 \$.

Some members of the French River Citizens Association (FRCA) wonder if development charges on new lots and subdivision agreements for septic improvement need to be considered to partly offset these costs.

The CAO announced that a \$75.00 a day allowance for meals for staff and councilors on trips is being recommended and is in line with other municipalities.

**Comments of FRCA:** Citizens should be aware that this limited and very fair allowance was proposed to keep expenses reasonable for members of Council & staff attending conferences and meetings.

Mr. Monette also advised that no new provincial funding had been announced for municipal infrastructure.

In his report, Fire Chief Jacques Bouffard asked Council to remove from fire by-laws provision for burning during the day in enclosed incinerators or barrels and to limit the burning period to only 8:00 PM and 8:00 AM.

Seeing the length of Department reports, Mayor Bouffard suggested that reports be posted on Municipal Web site and that only major points be presented mostly for Council's decisions when warranted or in case of high community interest.

French River Head Librarian announced new and more advertisement by the Library Services, a new daytime book club and the upcoming meeting of the Library Board on April 12, 2011 at 5:30 PM at Town Hall.

**Marc Pellerin, Economic Development Officer**, reported the election of Raymond Monette as chair and Bill Bacon as vice-chair of EDC. Public meetings of EDC to be held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month. There is still one vacancy on EDC. Mr. Pellerin also reported that cleaning of public exercise room at Ecole Rivière-des-Français will be a problem during summer months when school is closed. It is hoped that membership fees can cover costs.

### **Under Correspondence**

In a letter, Mr. Robert Thibert requested to be exempt from sorting fees at the landfill site. Mr. Thibert had been advised by the Chief Building Official, 2 years ago, at the time he obtained a building permit for his new building, of the Provincial regulations mandated by the Ontario Building Code, to get a demolition permit from the Municipal Building Official. He was also advised of the costs of tipping at the Landfill site. He ignored all this advice until the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, when reminded by the contractor he hired, that his demolished building could not be taken to the landfill, without a demolition permit.. Then during the Christmas Break, when Municipal offices were closed, he requested and was given a letter by Mayor Bouffard with permission to dump materials from the old cottage being demolished. This permission should only be given by the Chief Building Official in the form of a demolition permit. The Mayor's letter created an abnormal situation where landfill personnel accepted Mr. Thibert's unsorted demolition scrap. While we believe Mayor Bouffard made a mistake in bypassing the Building Official, the mayor admitted giving the letter and staff was scolded for lack of proper procedure. Surely the Mayor knew about proper procedure, having demolished the Corner Store two or three years ago and having likely paid dearly for tipping. Municipalities are required to ensure proper disposal of

building materials at landfill sites, a costly service for all citizens of the Municipality if not charged to the people requiring this service.

In view of this information shared with members of Council by writing, the CAO had recommended that Mr.Thibert pay full costs. Councillor Garbutt expressed the dangers of not respecting procedure.

However, Council voted with the Mayor, recommending to cut the tipping charges in half.

Mayor Bouffard, let's recognize a mistake was made, period. Let's not blame staff. No citizen should knowingly be allowed by Council to circumvent the procedures. Mayor Bouffard, we ask you respectfully to trust your staff, ask them for comments and advice on issues, familiarize yourself with municipal by-laws and procedures, in order to prevent serious mistakes and get this Municipality moving forward?

**NOTE: Although Council voted to recommend cutting the tipping fees in half for Mr. Thibert, the final vote is not in yet. Council will once again have the chance to revisit this motion when the final vote is taken at the Regular Council Meeting on Wednesday, April 20, 2011 at 7:00 PM. Plan to attend.**

Coopérative de santé et de logement requested confirmation of septage capacity for proposed residence

Motion adopted to updated the septage plan with revised usage amount before responding to Co-opérative de Santé et de logement.

Regroupement communautaire de la Rivière-des-Français asked Council

for a \$5,000.00 dollar donation toward repaying Board of Education for financing of exercise and physiotherapy gym at High School. Motion adopted to provide services in kind (registration of members and control of keys) for project but no funds at present. To be brought back in 2012.

Sudbury East Community Health Centre. Request for financial assistance to help fund the travel expenses of the healthcare providers. Approx. \$5000.00 yearly. Adopted.

Council confirmed reception of letter by president of French River Citizens Association concerning videotaping of public meetings. The letter was sent to newly formed Communications Committee for study. As president of FRCA, I addressed Council and the public at the end of the meeting to present to the public the contents of our recommendations to Council:

Therefore we request the following:

1 - Council should seek legal advice immediately about videotaping of public meetings,

including well documented cases of other municipalities in Ontario; they are available.

2 - The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing should be contacted for their position.

3 - The OPP should be contacted for their position and responsibility.

4 - Council should make public to all citizens the requested documents on the Municipal

Web site and should inform citizens of all their findings at the next meeting of Council.

5 - Council must reconsider its resolution in view of the information

received, if so

warranted, or choose not to act on the unclear resolution, if consensus cannot be achieved.

6 - If it should be found that the right to information is such that Council cannot prevent

videotaping, that a method be found to have the videotaping done by an impartial individual or organization with specific rules such as ensuring impartiality, no editing at all or only on routine matters which could make the reporting too long or in case of unduly embarrassing situations to individuals which would not serve any positive purpose in the democratic process. The opinions and recommendations of the newly formed Communications Committee could be a must where editing should be involved.

Full letter available on FRCA Web site.

### **Committee Recommendations**

Appointment of Raymond Monette as EDC Chair. Adopted

Priorization by Council of Road needs because of impending budget cuts.

Prevost Road Action Plan approved: plan to work with Municipal lawyer and Maurice Family lawyer to solve promptly last details of private part of Prevost Road being assumed by Municipality -Adopted

Crossing Guard in Noëlville for Ecole St. Antoine: Further information to be obtained and brought back to Council for consideration.

## **Announcements:**

**Wednesday, April 13, 2011 at 7:00PM - April Town Hall Meeting at Countryside Restaurant.** (French Federal Leaders Debate should be replayed later for those attending Town Hall Meeting.) Let's attend and share ideas with members of Council.

**Tuesday, April 19, 2011 at 7:00PM - Budget meeting scheduled at Town Hall.**

**May Town Hall Meeting rescheduled for May 25.** Please take note of date and plan to attend.

Submitted by Gérard Carrière, chair of FRCA / ACRF

Town Hall Meeting - April 13th 2011-06-03

### **REPORT AND COMMENTS ABOUT TOWN HALL MEETING of April 13 held at Countryside Restaurant**

The tone of discussions was generally positive Good attendance for a hockey evening.

In attendance: Mayor Bouffard, Councilors Sharp, Hébert, Bigras, & Martin-Cross.

In his introductory remarks, Mayor Bouffard stressed the need to work together and to keep our communications positive and respectful. Nobody can change the past. We must look to change things and move ahead.

## **Job opportunities**

Jeremy Séguin asked Council members whether any companies had

contacted the Municipality with interest in settling here and offering jobs. Councilor Sharp said she had had one contact and had established contact with a firm from Sudbury. Questions about mill rate for business were asked. Mayor Bouffard could not remember precise rate but added he remembered that our commercial and industrial rates were better than in Nipissing West, residential rates being similar.

### **Relevance of Town Hall Meetings**

Mayor Bouffard asked if people thought Town Hall meetings were worthwhile. Gérard Carrière said yes provided people were civil and positive while raising issues frankly.

### **French River Today**

Gérard Carrière spoke of a discussion he had had with Maria Michel, publisher of French River Today, in which both had expressed concerns about the negativity found in many articles and her dilemma about not wanting to curtail expression of opinions in a spirit of free speech. Carriere stressed that it is important to have free speech but that the negativity expressed in the paper could cause the very disappearance of the paper. Therefore all citizens must learn to express opinions in a spirit of openness and constructive criticism as opposed to personal attacks. None of us has received a vaccine against negativity. Therefore efforts must be made by all to be frank but also to attempt building French River together.

Maria Michel was thankful that the concerns had been raised and expressed her hope that the spirit in which she had created her publication could be regained and that Council could do something to

have publicity from the Municipality again since this is a major source of revenues for the paper.

Discussion on this point centered on the fact that Municipal staff is presently avoiding French River Today for municipal public notices since some members of staff perceive that they have been attacked repeatedly in articles and have decided to boycott the paper. Generally staff has the responsibility to choose the media in which municipal notices will be advertised.

Linda Duff asked: «To whom is staff responsible?» Councillor Martin-Cross answered that the CAO is responsible to Council and that all employees are responsible to him. That is policy.

On the topic of journalistic freedom, Mrs. Duff suggested she was sure The Globe and Mail do not edit their columnists. The president of FRCA has since researched this subject and found that almost all papers have an editor who does just that, edit the articles of their reporters and writers; larger papers even have an editorial committee to help ensure the mission of the paper is respected, that the paper is relevant to the community and that libel matters are avoided. This information is supplied here to encourage editorial policy and civil responsibility for all.

Mayor Bouffard said he would try to clarify the issue of municipal publicity and improve the situation.

## **Senior Housing**

Harold Duff, who represents the Senior Housing Committee spoke about the present work of the Committee and invited people who might be

interested in the project to contact them and to become involved in efforts to bring about the project of a Seniors affordable housing complex..

### **Adoption of Roads Committee Minutes**

Harold Duff also raised a point of procedure about accepting or the adoption of the Roads Committee report by Council. Mr. Duff claimed that council had not answered his request to Council for clarification on this point. Councilor Hébert explained that recommendations are brought forward from the minutes of all committees where warranted and voted on by council. Colleen Carriere noted that the CAO had supplied full details about these procedures at the Council Meeting following Mr. Duff's question and that Mr. Duff had been present at that meeting.

### **Procedures at meetings**

Mike Bouffard expressed concern over members of Council asking the CAO to read a motion three times before a vote. Deputy Mayor Hébert pointed out that the motion in question was long and difficult and that members of Council have a right to be sure they understand the motion and its consequences totally before casting their vote.

Harold Duff suggested a member of staff should be present at these meetings to help ensure continuity in action. Councilor Hébert replied that having more than three members of Council and a member of staff could be construed as an official meeting of council and against the rules of municipal government. Mr .Duff also questioned why staff was allowed to leave at the end of Council meetings before the public is allowed comments and questions. Councilor Hébert advised that staff are allowed

to leave since they are at this point not taking direction from Council or senior staff and are thus allowed to leave.

### Docking and wharfs in our area

Lengthy discussions followed about the need to have multiple and safe docking to have access to water for boating on all of our lakes and waterways for residents and for tourists.

The provincial government, in its downloading spiral, has gradually passed this responsibility to municipalities and private concerns in the past years.

Mr. Cross commented the Ministry of Natural Resources has recently cut access of the general public to many Northern lakes and that we should be concerned with this loss of access by the public.

Councilor Martin-Cross said there were several public wharfs and that Municipal parkland dedication or development charges was one way for the Municipality to raise funds to look after municipal services such as wharfs.

Parkland specialist hired by last Council noted the lack of access to French River was detrimental to area.

The Municipality does operate some docks, but maintenance, safety, damages and clean up as well as liability are concerns.

Several suggestions followed:

-Who could conduct a survey and supply a complete list of docks now available with particulars of costs of use, regulations, facilities, locations,

ownership, etc.

- Suggestions that one or several organizations look into the matter.
- Encourage owners on each lake to have their own Lake Association which could help maintain docks and control use.
- Have private businesses control docks, maintenance and fees.
- Have a local group such as the Regroupement communautaire coordinate the survey.
- Have the Economic Development Committee co-ordinate a survey to present dock situation and publish a leaflet made available for residents and tourists
- That residents get a card for free or special rates for use of docks if our taxes are involved.
- The Environment Committee could be involved.
- Work with French River Stewardship Council and Lake Nipissing Group to ensure respect of environment.
- Consult with FOCA (Federation of Ontario Cottagers Associations) which provides very useful information to members and the public on many issues concerning use of our lakes, associations, insurance, environment concerns.

Mayor Bouffard agreed to bring concerns to municipal staff and Council.

## Industrial Park

Fern Rochon asked Council when industrial lots would be ready, why progress on the Industrial Park was so slow and stressed that investors are impatient about clarification of the present state of the park. The Mayor and councilors mentioned the need for further studies to be done to ensure protection of the environment in relations to the Industrial Park since certain kinds of industries would require greater control if possible

pollutants were involved.

Council members stressed that EDC is working on the project and that information would be forthcoming.

### **Speed Limits within Municipality**

Susan Pokele raised concern over people exceeding speed limits on municipal roads and streets. She is concerned that, with the arrival of spring weather, bicycles and pedestrians will be threatened by motorists. Request that Council remind public of necessity for motorists to respect speed limits out of concern for safety of all. Certainly with recognized need of exercise by all, motorists should be mindful of safety for children, the seniors, bicycles and for the general public.

### **Landfill**

Concerns were brought forward about the short time lines to submit documentation in regards to the landfill site in light of the close proximity of a home which is very close to the footprint of the projected expansion of the land fill site.

### **Lagoons**

The need to study the lagoon system in the immediate future was raised. This being necessary in order to be able to finance such an expensive project and to meet the needs of the community in the future, given the proposed seniors housing complex and potential development on many approved building lots in the municipality. Councilor Sharp indicated that potential grants are available for expanding the lagoon system.

## **Role of CAO at Council and Budget Meetings**

Gérard Carrière mentioned he believed the Deputy Mayor, the Mayor and Council often did not make proper or full use of CAO's competence during Council meetings. He cited the case of tipping fees being partly waved in a recommendation of last Committee of the Whole. If the CAO had been allowed, as it can be done, to explain why he had recommended that full fees be charged, Council members might have arrived at clearer decision. Carrière also reminded Council that the CAO, by his position, had the responsibility and the competence required to indicate to Council how priorities should be set and recommend possible cuts in the budget. Council has the ultimate responsibility to approve budget, but without the advice of the CAO, Council will have much difficulty to set priorities and determine cuts. Full Council and staff must recognize each others' responsibilities and competences and attempt to work together positively for the welfare of the whole Municipality. That is called a will to build the future together.

By Gérard Carrière, chairman of FRCA/ACRF  
in consultation with Board members available

### **Report of Regular Meeting - April 20th**

#### **Report and Comments**

on Regular meeting of council held April 20, 2011 at 7:00

General comment: meeting ran smoothly.

Points of interest

#### **Resolutions**

-Staff is directed to hire firm to investigate presence of mould in

basement of building housing Dentist Office and Art Gallery  
-Council confirms receiving Report prepared by Amberly Gavel  
Ltd. Related to investigation of closed meetings. (Available on Municipal  
Web site)  
-Approval of Prevost Road Action Plan, whereby legal counsels for  
Municipality and Maurice Family will meet with CAO and others concerned  
to clarify situation and make recommendations to Council for action

### **Correspondence**

Letter from Mr. Robert Thibert

Councilor Garbutt states he will vote against the motion to cut tipping fee  
by half for this case and requests recorded vote. Councilor Hébert  
requests to hear CAO's comments about this case. CAO presents normal  
procedure and costs for dumping building materials from demolition and  
its processing.

Council reverses its position adopted at Committee of the Whole Meeting  
and imposes full costs to Mr. Thibert.

Regarding Coopérative de santé et de logement request to be approved  
for septic connection to lagoon, Council proceeds to ask clarification for  
septage capacity for Seniors Residence.

Request for financial support of fitness and physiotherapy center at École  
Rivière-des-Français - Council offers contribution in kind by administering  
registrations of patrons. No financial contribution this year, will see in  
2012.

Narozanski North Realty Inc. - Council reconfirms it will keep Station  
Road open and plans for private commerce can go ahead.

French River Cultural Industries

Request to remove old sign and install new professional sign for Backstreet Gallery. Granted.

Sudbury East Community Health Centre - Request for financial assistance to help fund travel expenses of health care providers. Approved: \$5000.00

French River Citizens Association - Letter asking Council to clarify videotaping of public meetings. Council acknowledges receiving letter and sends request to new Communications Committee for study and recommendation.

Ontario Provincial Police - Request for donation towards costs of T-shirts for children`s program «I got caught wearing my life jacket» Approved: \$500.00

Lesley Cutinello & Justin Godin - Request for authorization to erect radio antenna at Alban Community Centre for community radio station. Motion to defer to allow negotiations with CIC was defeated and authorization approved with lease to be prepared.

Lynn Desrochers - Proposal to rent Arena Addition (former Youth Centre) for summer months. Approved : \$450.00 monthly plus HST

French River Stewardship Council - Receipt of report prepared for Economic Partners Sudbury East / West Nipissing

École secondaire de la Rivière-des-Français - Invitation to Council members to attend dinner on June 20 for exchange students program and

request for financial support or donation of objects to be included in souvenir gift baskets Approved : \$120.00

### **Motions / Committee Recommendations**

#### **Economic Development Committee**

- Appointment of EDC Chair Raymond Monette. Approved
  - Direction to EDC to take necessary steps to start process to acquire consultant for development of Economic Development Strategic Plan. Approved
    - Funding submission to Economic Partners for printing of producers map.
- Approved: \$5000.00
- Approval of Terms of reference for EDC

#### **Environmental Advisory Committee**

- Approval of Terms of reference
- Receipt of reports prepared by Canestoga Rovers and to instruct the Consultant to submit them for MOE approval for the Landfill site

### **By-laws**

- By-law prescribing times for setting fires, precautions to be taken and issuing of permits for burning  
Burning time will be limited between 8:00 PM and 8:00 AM. No exception for burning inside barrels

### **Santé et Logement**

Request for permission to conduct tests and measurements on Municipal

property for planned Seniors housing. Approved

### **Notices of Motion**

Direction to staff to make amendments to the Employee Policy Manual to have maximum amounts of reimbursements of accommodations and meals for Council and Staff

Maximums: 45 cents a km; hotel & taxi receipts are required; max. for meals: breakfast: \$15.; lunch: \$17.; dinner: \$43.

Crossing Guard in Noëlville - Request for part-time job at corner of St. David and Notre Dame streets; not budgeted; mention by Councilor Sharp that private citizen had agreed to cover costs from September to December, if necessary.

Resolution emanating from Closed meeting: appointment of Terry Young to EDC

Submitted by Gérard Carrière  
Chair, French River Citizens Association

### **Report – Budget Meeting April 19<sup>th</sup>**

#### **Report and Comments of Budget Meeting held April 19th, 2011 at 5:00 PM**

General observation: meeting went smoothly because Council had asked staff to prepare cuts in Budget for Council to consider. That is proper procedure since council members must rely on staff to make wise cuts as they have to work with their budgets.

The treasurer went through each department, outlining cuts and

recommended budgets at which staff under the direction of senior employees had arrived.

#### Questions and Comments from Councilors:

Councilor Sharp: How do we get ahead with our roads? Can we have a levy for roads across the board? Told levies are illegal.

Councilor Garbutt: 96.4 % of our taxes are residential. We need to move to a more balanced tax base with more industry and commerce in the area; commercial and industrial tax revenues have gone down by 10% in the past years, due to lower production and sales.

Councilor Martin-Cross asked if two bridges on Dry Pine Bay Road at Meshaw Falls were included in budget? CAO : yes

Throughout the meeting, the municipal treasurer, Brigitte Carrière, had supplied the numbers and the reasoning behind spending priorities. Councilor Martin-Cross said to the CAO: “You have been very quiet during the whole meeting. How do you see our situation, do you think taxes should be raised?”

CAO Michel Monette answered that Councilor Garbutt had hit the nail on the head with need for greater source of revenues from increase in industry and commerce. CAO said he did not support a tax hike. The CAO added both federal and provincial governments are looking towards regular and stable funding for municipalities rather than annual decision: Example: HST from gas and diesel; now getting \$175,000.00 from Federal Also mentioned by CAO Michel Monette was the fact that some municipal loans will be paid off in the near future.

Examples:

-2007 : ½ million \$ for roads for a 5 year period and will be paid in 1 to 2 years by 2013.

-loan for improvement to landfill should be paid by 2013.

When these loans are paid off, these funds can be applied to other needs of the Municipality.

CAO Michel Monette went on to give Council a clear description of the present financial situation of the Municipality and a picture of the next few years.

Tax revenues have increased by 5.4% because of higher assessment by MPAC.

Amount of \$176,000.00, in deficit, will come from 2010 surplus in various departments.

There may be an additional \$25,000 in surplus: to be verified when final calculations are in. Usually surpluses go to roads reserves.

Amount of \$2,500.00 already approved for tourist project

Mr. Monette explained that MPAC, the government agency which assesses the value of properties province wide, released its report on assessment of properties in 2009. The value of properties increased considerably in the Municipality. To spread the increase of taxes over several years and to diminish the shock to owners, the Municipality has reduced the Mill Rate by 4%.

Since the value of properties on water went up considerably (approx. 10%), owners may face a tax hike of about 5.4 % in spite of reduced mill rate by 4%.

Case: Property of \$202,000. went up by 10%: \$221,500.00; taxes up by 5%: \$135.00

Properties off water might see a decrease of approx. 1% in their taxes as the assessment value of such properties went up by 3% and the mill rate went down by 4%.

Next year will be the last year of tax adjustment as the Municipality will have the choice of reverting to its regular mill rate.

The CAO stressed that even small expenses have to be scrutinized as there is no gravy in the municipal budget.

Council approved the budget unanimously in principle to be voted on at Regular Council Meeting.

Councilor Martin-Cross `s question was most appropriate. Council members need to continue asking the CAO `s opinion on important matters. This is how the public gets to understand how our Municipality is being run and how our tax dollars are being spent. Mayor and Council need to take advantage of the expertise available to them.

Submitted by Gérard Carrière  
Chair, French River Citizens Association