

JULY 2026

Council Connect

Council Planning Council

Fire Department to Purchase New Auto Extrication Tool

The Fire Department will begin the process of purchasing a new battery-powered auto extrication tool following Council's approval to fund the purchase through the Fire and Emergency Services Reserves.

Director of Fire and Emergency Services/Fire Chief, Chad Dowell, presented Council with the request since the current auto extrication tool has failed twice, leading to the need for costly repairs on a tool nearing its end of life.

Often referred to as the "jaws of life", the tool cuts into a vehicle or other material, allowing firefighters to gain quick and safe access to trapped individuals following a motor vehicle collision or other emergency.

"It doesn't get used every car accident, but when it does get used, it saves lives," Chief Dowell said.

Expired Marine Flare Disposal

Council voted unanimously to pass a resolution seeking federal support for collection service for expired marine flares.

The motion was brought forward by Councillor Stephen Jarvis, who highlighted a gap in disposal services following the discontinuation of funding for the program from Transport Canada. Due to the hazardous nature of marine flares, the handling and disposal of expired devices requires proper care.

The resolution states the Township's support for reinstating a federally-supported collection program and will be sent to local federal and provincial politicians, Transport Canada, and other relevant municipal and boating organizations.



Township of
Georgian Bay
MUSKOKA

Newsletter Highlights

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2026 Municipal Election Voters' List

Council carried a resolution urging the Province of Ontario to prioritize ensuring the accuracy of the voters' list for the upcoming municipal elections, especially as it pertains to non-resident electors.

Historically, the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation has managed the data used and distributed to municipalities for the creation of the voters' list, however as of the 2026 elections, this is being managed by Elections Ontario. Over the last couple of months, some discrepancies in voters' list numbers compared to the 2022 election have been noted, especially in municipalities with a high number of cottagers, who qualify as non-resident electors.

Elections Ontario continues to actively work on pulling more data into its systems leading up to the distribution of the Preliminary List of Electors (PLE), at which point it is expected that these discrepancies will be drastically decreased.

The Township encourages residents and cottagers to check that they are registered to vote on the [Elections Ontario portal](#) before August 12. After the delivery of the PLE on August 14, the Corporate Services Department will review the list and ensure its accuracy. Revisions and additions to the voters' list after August 12 can be made with the Department up until the close of voting on October 26.

For more information on voting in the 2026 municipal elections, including instructions for registering a second property with Elections Ontario, visit the Township's [election webpage](#).



Register to Vote

To check that you are registered to vote, or add yourself to the voters' list, visit www.registertovoteon.ca.

Need help adding your second property to your voter profile? See this [Elections Ontario guide](#), available on the Township Election webpage.

Go Home Lake Pump

Director of Operations Mara Engel presented a report to Council outlining the history of the well pump on Go Home Lake Road, which has been out of commission since May.

The pump is located on Ministry of Natural Resources land and maintained by the Township as a source for non-potable water. In May, the Township was notified that the pump had sustained significant damage from a suspected collision.

Director Engel explained the options for the well, including repairing the well and installing protective barriers at a cost not to exceed \$10,000, repairing with no protective barriers at a cost not to exceed \$7,000, repairing and then transferring responsibility of the well to the Go Home Lake Cottagers' Association, and decommissioning and sealing the well.

Council deferred a decision on the well to allow staff to gather more information including the cost of decommissioning the well, and to hold discussions with the Go Home Lake Cottagers' Association.

Port Severn Park Playground Resurfacing

Council approved additional funds for the replacement of the poured-in-place rubberized surface at the Port Severn Park playground.

The existing footing has reached the end of its life and requires replacement to meet current Canadian Standards Association (CSA) safety requirements.

The resurfacing was approved as part of the 2025 budget with \$20,000 of funding earmarked for the project, but was deferred to 2026 due to staffing gaps. The lowest quote obtained for the work in 2026 was \$31,764.37, creating the need for an additional \$11,764.37.

Upon inspection this year, staff also identified hazardous tree roots that will need to be removed. An additional upset limit of \$5,000 was approved for the removal of the hazardous trees.

The additional funds for the resurfacing and for the tree removal will be drawn from the Operations Reserves.



MacTier Arena Architectural Consultant

The Township will engage Barry Bryan and Associates as the architectural consultant for the proposed upgrades to the MacTier Memorial Arena and Community Centre.

Council approved drawing an additional \$36,240 from the Working Capital Reserve to pay for the consultant, who will produce detailed architectural, structural, and interior designs for the space. The designs are a requirement of an application for provincial and federal funding for the project.



Backflow Preventers

Six new backflow prevention devices will be installed at Township facilities to protect the District drinking water system.

The District of Muskoka named 11 Township facilities requiring backflow prevention systems, five of which are already in compliance. The devices are required per a District by-law designed to protect municipal water.

The devices are to be installed at the Township's North Shop, Stewart Lake Park, MacTier Arena, MacTier Fire Hall, MacTier Library, and Bressette House, the total cost of which is not to exceed \$17,500. Council further authorized staff to award a three-year contract for annual compliance inspections of all Township backflow prevention devices in an amount not to exceed \$7,500.

By-laws Enacted

2026-050 - Confirming Council July 13

2026-051 - SRA Closing (68 Bear Lake Road)

2026-052 - SRA Deeming (68 Bear Lake Road)

2026-053 - OPA No. 30 (146 Prisque Road)

2026-054 - ZBA (146 Prisque Road)

2026-055 - OPA No. 31 (34 Curling Club Road)

2026-056 - ZBA (34 Curling Club Road)

2026-057 - Confirming Planning Council July 14

Upcoming Meetings

Sustainable Communities Advisory Group

Monday, July 27 at 10:00 a.m.

Refresh MacTier Advisory Committee

Wednesday, July 29 at 10:00 a.m.

Council

Monday, August 10 at 9:00 a.m.

Planning Council

Tuesday, August 11 at 9:00 a.m.

Committee of the Whole

Tuesday, August 11 following Planning Council

Committee of Adjustment

Friday, August 14 at 10:00 a.m.

Special Planning Council

Wednesday, August 26 at 9:00 a.m.

2026/28 Official Plan and Zoning By-law Review Update

Township planner, Jeff Kratky, provided Planning Council with an updated framework for the Township's 2026/28 Official Plan and Zoning By-law Review which had been put on hold in June following the passing of Bill 98 by the Province of Ontario.

The new framework will see the Official Plan Review taking place prior to a review of the Zoning By-law – reviews which were originally intended to take place concurrently. Kratky explained that Bill 98 makes it impossible for the Zoning By-law to be reviewed and updated until the Official Plan review and Bill 98 update has been approved.

The Planning Department will host a public meeting August 26 at 9:00 a.m., at which time staff will give a presentation to the public on the new official plan framework required by Bill 98 and receive comments from the public, Council, District of Muskoka, First Nations, working groups, and community groups. For information on the public meeting, please visit the Township website.

Affordable Housing

Councillor Stephen Predko brought forward a motion to Council opening discussion around affordable housing in the Township.

The accompanying report highlighted a recent publication from the Alliance for a Livable Ontario, containing recommendations including investing in non-market housing. Non-market housing is intended to provide stable, affordable housing to people on lower incomes, and is not run with the intent of maximizing profits.

Council passed a resolution directing staff to research potential opportunities and the feasibility of developing non-market housing on Township-owned lands. Council also requested that staff provide a list of surplus lands that may be suitable for affordable housing initiatives.