

The latest news, views, and announcements

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FEB 19, 2024 FAMILY DAY CELEBRATION WITH SKATING, SLIDING, FIRE AND FREE FOOD.



## Message from the Mayor

-- by Richard Gould

We were all saddened in January of last year when Deputy Mayor Debbie Adams suddenly passed away. Ms. Adams had started her term with energy and enthusiasm and her influence was missed by staff and council. A month later, Bill Moreton became the Deputy Mayor and in March, John Manson filled the empty seat on council.

The last twelve months have seen a lot of changes in Calvin Township, and the number one focus has been on administration and finances. Day-to-day operations were impacted by the backlog of tasks and priorities had to be established, deciding what needed to be done first. This is still a challenge for council and staff.

Nevertheless, it is important that we have pride in the spaces where we live and work. If you visit the Calvin Township office you will see that it is more open and modern and that the recreation centre has been improved. The rusted radiators and damaged ceiling tiles have been replaced. Areas have been repainted and organized. The north-end bathroom has been renovated and now meets AODA code requirements. (continued on next page)



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Outdoor changes have occurred as well. The worn hockey nets have been replaced and there is now a heated washroom replacing the unsanitary washrooms that were on site. The flooring in the changeroom will soon be replaced and an energy efficient heater has been installed along with new windows. In the autumn it was nice to see the grass maintained, new flower gardens, and a generally welcoming environment. Drop by for a visit. Best of all, the cost for these repairs was mostly covered by CCBF funds that would have been lost if they had not been used by December 31<sup>st</sup>, four years after they were received.

Because of many factors, financial records from 2022 and 2023 were confused and troubled. The Township's accounting and reporting software had been replaced by Quick Books in 2022 and then by Excel worksheets. The good news, however, is that after a phenomenal amount of work by the staff, Vadim (a municipal software) is being reinstalled and the audited financial statements for 2022 have been accepted by Council. Work is now underway for the 2023 year end. Council is confident that we are in the end stages of bringing the financial situation in order, but it will likely take until the end of this year to truly catch up.

Council has been busy with a number of committees. Deputy Mayor Bill Moreton was appointed to the executive of the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority Board and he continues to work on the Police Services Board which is going through some major changes. Robert Latimer has been keeping an eye on the Talon Lake Dock project and the newly formed agency that has been set up to rebuild this resource. Dean Grant and I are on the Planning Board where we hope to see many new land severance applications from Calvin Township property owners. And lastly, I am on the Physician Recruitment Committee which has had great success in recruiting new physicians to commit to come to the Mattawa Hospital in the next few years.

The Calvin Fire Department now has a Chief. Mariel Labreche has been working very hard to tighten up the department. Mariel brought a resolution forward in a council meeting to support Bill C310 and it was supported unanimously. Her participation was noted in Baytoday.ca. "People don't realize how little volunteer firefighters actually make for the time they put in," Chief Labreche said, "we don't even make minimum wage." Bill C310, if it passes, would increase the tax credit for volunteer firefighters from \$3,000 to \$10,000. The Fire Department organized the Family Skate Day on February 19, 2024 and there will be a Spring Breakfast (continued on page 3)

## Words from Bill

■ By Bill Moreton, Deputy Mayor

While it has been an eventful first year, and a bit, in Office, I would like to thank the Calvin Residents for supporting various community events. These events are meant to help bring the community together. Staffed by the Calvin firefighters and with much appreciated donations from several Calvin Firefighter's wives, Maxwell Pottery and Tim Horton's in Mattawa the following events took place. A Family Fun Day was held in 2023 and 2024, and in 2023, a Spring Breakfast, Baking and Plant sale, A Spring Clean Up day, and a Breakfast with Santa.



Several people expressed the desire to have a game night, or even an afternoon at the municipal Hall. Euchre is always popular and the Hall is usually available on Wednesday evenings. While I had hoped to begin this activity in 2023, it would appear that the earliest will be the fall of 2024. The ice rink has been used a fair bit with the closure of the Mattawa rink. Staff have been cleaning the ice and the Fire department has been flooding it. The ball diamond (continued on page 3)

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(Mayor's message continued from page 2)

in April and Township Cleanup in May. We can't thank the firefighters of Calvin enough for their many contributions.

At our last council meeting we brought forth another fire related resolution. This time to put pressure on the federal and provincial governments to work together to more effectively fight forest fires in Canada. Calvin contains a great deal of forest and last year's smoky skies were a grave warning of the danger posed by uncontrolled forest fires. The resolution was passed and sent to all 444 municipalities and to the Prime Minister, the Premier of Ontario and to various ministers. Information about this was published in the North Bay Nugget Extra on February 15th of this year under the title: "Calvin Township sparks national wildfire measures."

Our roads department is still doing a great job keeping the Township in a condition that is the envy of neighboring municipalities, but one of the two dump trucks also used for plowing had been allowed to become unsafe and unusable. Its condition was known, but it was still in use. It had to be taken off the road. An emergency meeting of council occurred to discuss the situation and an RFP for its replacement was issued. Luckily the weather has been helping and with the assistance of the Acting Road Superintendent, a new truck has been ordered. This truck is currently being fitted and it should come into service in the near future.

The truck recently removed from service, and other equipment that was previously taken out of service in roads and fire departments will soon be advertised for sale. Check our website soon for listings -- [www.calvintownship.ca](http://www.calvintownship.ca).

We appointed a new Integrity commissioner, Guy Giorno, and the relationship has been very positive. John Manson, Robert Latimer, Dean Grant with the help of Deputy Clerk/Records Management Coordinator Teresa Scroope continue to work on the Code of Conduct by-law. Their meetings are published on the Calvin website.

Bylaws continue to be an important task facing council. In previous years, the Township through E4M, allowed the implementation of copyrighted bylaws. These bylaws cannot be modified, rewritten or copied without the risk of copyright violation. Normally bylaws are created in-house, or brought in from other municipalities, modified and where necessary, approved by legal counsel, but copyrighted bylaws are owned by the copyright *(continued on page 4)*

(words from Bill continued from page 2)

has been maintained by staff in the summer and a regular group show up on Friday nights for pickup games. It is not unusual to drive by the play area at the back of the town hall and see families using the swings and apparatus.

As council was all new to the job, there were many learning curves and we appreciate your patience as we progressed through our learning. Our job is not done, but we can see a light at the end of the tunnel. We have finally been able to secure the services of a CAO that is helping Council to move the Township forward through the dense backlog of work. Donna Maitland has put together a staff team that we, on council, feel will be successful.

We will continue reaching out to Calvin citizens in this format as some people may not have access to the Calvin website.

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## What's Coming

- April. Spring pancake breakfast at the Community Center. There will be a bake sale and plant sale. Contact the fire department if you wish to volunteer or donate.
- May. Calvin Environmental Clean up Day. Register to participate. Let's keep Calvin beautiful.
- Attend a council meeting. You're always welcome.
- Info at [www.calvintownship.ca](http://www.calvintownship.ca)
- Find us on Facebook at Municipality of Calvin.

*(Mayor's message continued from page 3)*

holder and they cannot be copied or modified. Council with staff's help has the gargantuan task of repealing these bylaws and replacing them. Council and staff are working on the Procedural, Code of Conduct, and Fees and Charges bylaws, but there are many dozens of bylaws that also need to be re-worked. Again, this is a task that has been added to the priority list.

## **MOVING FORWARD**

Cassellholme is still an ongoing issue and there have been a number of meetings with more to come in the immediate future. This is still a fluid situation and one that will hopefully be discussed in open session in April of this year.

Calvin is currently undertaking an operational review to assess the level and mix of staffing requirements for the Township. This is necessary to meet the needs and goals of good governance. Both council and staff are committed to ensuring public services are delivered in the most effective and efficient manner. When completed, this independent review will be brought before council with ideas about efficiency, economy, and succession planning. The review is also important in light of the ongoing Union collective agreement bargaining activities initiated by former and some current hourly employees.

Two of several reports and studies mandated by the Provincial government were presented to Council in mid-late 2023. The 2022 Asset Management Plan was not completed and council had not seen or adopted the 2022 Bridge Management Plan, but again, while dealing with backlog, these reports have now been completed and accepted by Council. The results along with the annual Accessibility Compliance Report, a mandatory Landfill Capacity Assessment, and a Closure Liability Report are to be completed in 2024. These reports represent a sizeable amount of work and they have implications on the Municipality's short- and long-term budget planning.

Council and staff are anxious to get to work a strategic plan, which will guide the direction for the next few years. Part of the plan is to get as much public input as possible. This project will have to wait for a few months at least as there are other items higher on the priority list.

Tax notices are now going out to residents for the 2024 year. Current staff have responded to a great number of posting errors from previous years and they have resolved all the issues that have come to their attention. We look forward to a smoother 2024 tax year. A reminder that MPAC determines the value of your property in Calvin Township. If you have questions about your tax evaluation you can find information on the MPAC website by going to [www.mpac.ca](http://www.mpac.ca) or by calling them at 1 866 296-6722. There is a factsheet that will tell you more about the MPAC that can be found at <https://www.mpac.ca/en/News/FactSheet/MPACFactSheet>

In closing, I would like to thank all the staff for their hard work during this time of rebuilding and prioritizing. All staff in the office have been working hard to handle the day-to-day responsibilities while dealing with an enormous backlog. The roads staff have been working hard with older equipment, repairs, and clean up, while keeping the roads up to date. The landfill and labour staff have been working hard to beautify and update our facilities. There is a real sense of community growing in the Township. We look forward to a positive future.