



MAYOR'S REPORT – JANUARY 28, 2019

FORMER COUNCILLOR JOHN MAYNE

On Friday, we lost a great community supporter with the passing of former Ward One Councillor John Mayne.

John was very passionate about Port Colborne with his many volunteer activities within the community, especially serving as a volunteer firefighter for 25 years, retiring as Captain in 2008.

He represented the constituents of Ward One for 4 years and sat on the many committees including Accessibility, Committee of Adjustment, Economic Development, Heritage, Library, Operations Centre and Property Standards during his term.

Never afraid to speak up or ask a question, you always knew where you stood with John.

Our prayers go out to his wife Mickey and family. Our flags have been lowered in John's honour.

WARMING CENTRES

There is no question that the City of Port Colborne is a compassionate and caring community.

We witness this 365 days a year and in particular this time of year with the harshness of winter.

During this recent extreme cold spell there have been a number efforts made during this across all sectors – including community, organizational as well as municipal level to alleviate the difficult conditions that local residents who are living in rental units or homes without heat or hydro, or are couch surfing because they don't have a place of their own, or are on the brink of becoming homeless or are.

Late last week the City announced that all local residents seeking warmth and shelter are welcomed and encouraged to go to all city owned buildings during operating hours– including the Vale Centre and library as well as here at city hall.

Since becoming Mayor and being appointed to the police board, I am fully aware of the incredible work that goes on day in day out in this community by our frontline police and social service personnel working as an interdisciplinary team to reach out to Port Colborne residents who are at risk - many who face addiction and mental health issues and are in extremely difficult situations including living in inhabitable conditions.

This team has been working hard seven days a week to make sure people are helped and properly housed.

They are the eyes and ears of those most in need in our city.

I have also learned an incredible amount about the work of Port Cares and its Reach Out Centre to help those in need— including what Port Cares can do to keep residents from becoming homeless because they don't have heat or hydro as result of not having enough money to pay their utility bills.

I appreciate all the assets and resources that we have in Port Colborne to help those at risk and those at greatest risk during times like these.

However, collectively we have to get beyond the stop-gap measures and knee jerk reactions.

We need real, workable and impactful solutions to wrestle down the housing crisis – solutions that in one year, two years, five and ten years mean we don't have to rely on opening up buildings so our residents can have comfort for a few hours a day.

As Canadians – we want more – we want everyone to have a safe home.

We know full well that the availability of safe, affordable housing is increasingly shrinking – this is the case in Port Colborne along with nearly all municipalities in the region.

However, we need to work TOGETHER – TRULY TOGETHER, not just as a municipality but as a COMMUNITY, to move far past the stop gap measures that deal in the moment of what's happening at this moment or today when the weather takes a bad turn to longer term strategies and solutions which will ultimately eliminate stop gap measures.

While we know full well that the answer to the situation ultimately rests in increasing the stock of safe affordable housing – both rental and owned in our city.

This won't happen overnight nor can the city alone address the issue.

To this end, I am seeking the assistance of the Social Determinants of Health Committee, as well as our Planning and Economic Development Departments to work with me to deliver long-term effective strategies.

SPORTSFEST

A reminder to residents that the weekend of February 8-10 is SportsFest, a family-friendly **Festival of Sports** event, which attracts participants from across Niagara, with proceeds donated to various charities.

The Mayor's Cup Invitational Hockey Tournament, indoor Volleyball Tournament, FREE Family Skating & Swimming, Music Trivia, Sno-Pitch & Outdoor Ball Hockey are just some of the events that are offered to the community.

Providing a sense of community pride and greater awareness of each community group, SportsFest offers activities for all ages, promotes a healthy lifestyle, and an opportunity for organized fundraising within the City of Port Colborne.

SNOW PLOW OPERATIONS AND PARKING ON CITY STREETS

During a snow event, we remind the citizens of Port Colborne to refrain from parking on the street and NOT to park in a way that interferes with snow removal.

A snow-clearing event is when our plows are dispatched, and they move the snow from the travelled portion of the roadway to the edge or sides of the road allowance.

All vehicles that interfere with this process by causing the creation of windrows, parking on the road allowance and/or parking in removal areas for the snow to be displaced from the highway, will receive:

- a \$75 ticket.
- a purple tow tag
- have their vehicle towed

All of these actions may take place within the hour, depending on the severity of the snow.

Therefore, to avoid actions from our By-law Enforcement Division, please refrain from parking on the highway and allow our plow operators to clear the snow in a safe and timely fashion.