



Staff Report

Report Title: Septic Inspection Program 2024 Budget

Prepared By: Jodi MacArthur, Treasurer

Department: Treasury

Date: Mar. 4, 2024

Report Number: TR-2024-03-14

File Number: C11

Attachments:

Recommendation:

THAT the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby receives for information Report TR-2024-03-14 prepared by Jodi MacArthur, Treasurer and;

FURTHER accept the 2024 septic inspection program budget as presented.

Background:

At the February 16, 2024 meeting of Council to review the 2024 draft budget there were some questions about possible changes to the septic inspection program. Some of the proposed changes suggested were:

- Suspend the program for one year,
- Discontinue inspection of septic systems in the rural area, or
- Exempt newly installed systems for a period of time.

Lisa Courtney from B.M. Ross & Associates will be present at the meeting to discuss the program and how potential changes would impact both the cost and the delivery.

Discussion:

The Township entered into an agreement in 2022 with B.M. Ross for Cycle 3 of the program, which is scheduled to run until 2030. The timing also aligns with the agreement to provide services under Part 8 of the Building Code and B.M. Ross uses staff resources for both programs. Therefore, making changes to either program would impact the ability to provide the other at the same cost.

Some other important reasons that the program was designed to include all septic systems, regardless of location, age or treatment type include:

- All surface water will eventually find its way to the lake and possible pollution of watercourse large or small could cause harm,
- Focusing the program to one geographic area might suggest a particular problem group when in fact there are many high age/high risk systems in both the rural area and along the lakeshore,
- Charging a portion of properties or calculating a fee based on age is administratively burdensome for staff and more challenging for budgeting purposes and program planning,
- If the reduction in corresponding inspections does balance out with the reduction in the numbers of properties charged, the annual fee may require adjustment for the remaining properties, and
- A temporary or permanent change in the program may affect the ability to draw conclusions or analyze trends from the data collected.

For these reasons, staff are satisfied that the current program is meeting the Township's needs and are not recommending any changes to the budget proposal.

Financial Impacts:

The 2024 program budget is \$219,500 based on \$70.00 per property, per year. The program is fully funded through the user fees.

Strategic Alignment / Link:

The information provided in this report is consistent with and in keeping with the municipality's Vision & Mission.

We are an environmentally conscious community that are good stewards of our natural environment by protecting our natural assets, using our resources wisely and being aware and taking responsibility.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Jodi MacArthur, Treasurer

Report Approved By:

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer