

Here are the highlights from the regular Lanark County Council meeting held Wednesday, April 25.

- **Lanark County Isn't Quite Slim Enough:** Lanark County was within 37 pounds of retaining its champion status in the 2012 Slim Till You Win competition against Renfrew County. The friendly competition ran from Feb. 1 to the end of March and is comprised of a Community Challenge and a County Council Challenge. It was coordinated by the paramedic chiefs of Lanark and Renfrew counties in conjunction with the Ottawa Heart Institute (Prevention and Rehabilitation Centre). The goal was to encourage participants to embrace a health-wise lifestyle. It offered support to help people to lose weight and modify lifestyles in order to keep it off. The county collectively losing the most pounds would win the coveted "Slim Till You Win Cup." This year, 156 participants (78 from each county) took part in the Community Challenge, while 11 participants from each county took part in the Council Challenge. Although Renfrew County had the biggest losers overall, Lanark County garnered the County Leadership award plaque for the most pounds lost by political leaders (29 pounds). Ed McPherson, deputy chief for the Lanark County Ambulance Service, coordinated the competition for the county and enlisted the help of local fitness clubs and members of the "Get W.I.T.H. It" walking programs, along with his paramedics, to complete monthly weigh-ins at various sites. He presented the plaque to Warden John Gemmell (Perth deputy mayor) at council. As part of the competition, Warden Gemmell has committed to planting a tree in Renfrew County and to carrying Renfrew County Warden Bob Sweet's golf clubs during the annual Lanark County Warden's Golf Tournament this summer. For more information, contact Cathie Ritchie, Director of Clerk's Services/Clerk, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1501. **Presentation photo available upon request.**
- **Seeking Status Quo:** Council passed a motion asking the Ontario Electoral Boundaries Commission to maintain the status quo for Lanark County's boundaries within a single riding in the upcoming redistribution. The request follows a visit to council in February by Lanark-Frontenac-Lennox and Addington MP Scott Reid, who explained the process of the redistribution of electoral boundaries that occurs every 10 years after the census. The next changes would be in place for 2015. In the last process, the county was split between two ridings, with Mississippi Mills becoming part of Carleton-Mississippi Mills. The county asked Mississippi Mills to indicate its position on the redistribution, and Councillor Val Wilkinson (Mississippi Mills) indicated the town voted against supporting a motion asking for the entire county to be reunited within one riding because the majority of the town council was content with the status quo. As a result, the county's resolution aims to discourage even further divisions of the county. The process is based on population and electoral quotient, which tries to ensure every vote has the same representation. During his presentation Mr. Reid said he expects there will be shifts in eastern Ontario. More info about the process can be found at [www.elections.ca](http://www.elections.ca). For more information, contact Cathie Ritchie, Director of Clerk's Services/Clerk, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1501.
- **Supporting Gas Tax Bill:** Council passed a motion urging other municipalities in Ontario to support an amendment to Bill 27, the Public Transportation and Highway Improvement Act. The amendment would permit the minister to enter into agreements with municipalities to provide gasoline tax rebates for purposes related to public highways under their jurisdiction. Currently, municipalities that do not offer rapid or public transportation do not qualify for gas tax rebates. Lanark County receives rebates to help fund the Lanark Transportation Association, which is a not-for-profit agency providing community-based transportation for residents in the county and the Town of Smiths Falls. The amendment would also allow rebates based on the number of inhabitants and the total distance of public highways under the jurisdiction of the municipality. The motion is being widely distributed. For more information, contact Peter Wagland, CAO, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1101.
- **Council Supports Renovate Lanark Program:** Council passed a motion establishing components for Renovate Lanark, which is the local Ontario Renovates component of the Investment in Affordable Housing in Ontario Program. For 2012, council approved \$220,000 of a three-year provincial allocation for Renovate Lanark, which is designed to assist low- to moderate-income households to maintain safe, affordable housing. There are two components to the program: home repair and accessibility modification. Households with an annual income of less than \$74,700 are eligible for both components, and homes valued at less than \$250,000 are eligible for repair. The accessibility modifications element applies to homeowners or landlords who have, or will have, a unit occupied by a person with a disability whose income and rent are below allowable thresholds. They can receive a grant of up to \$3,500 to adapt their home/unit to eliminate physical barriers or imminent safety risks in the home. The home repair program offers a forgivable loan to low- to moderate-income homeowners to repair their home to bring it to acceptable standards and to improve energy efficiency. The program starts as of May 1 and information and eligibility criteria will be advertised to the public. For more information, contact Sandy Grey, Social Housing Manager, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 2401.
- **Upcoming Meetings:** County Council, Wednesday, May 23, 7 p.m. Community Development, May 2, 5 p.m.; Public Works, May 2 (following Community Development). Community Services, May 16, 5 p.m.; Corporate Services, May 16 (following Community Services). Special Corporate Services and County Council, May 17, 5 p.m. For more info, call 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1501.