

SEPTEMBER 2026

Council Connect

Council Planning Council Committee of the Whole

Township Equipment Operators Place 1st and 3rd at Truck Safety Rodeo



The Mayor and Council congratulated two Township Public Works operators on their outstanding performance at the Muskoka Association of Road Supervisors Truck Safety Rodeo competition held on August 13 in Bracebridge.

The competition saw Muskoka municipal equipment operators competing on a challenging course, showcasing their precision, expertise, and commitment to safety.

Jon Smith finished the competition in first place, qualifying to represent all of Muskoka at the Association of Ontario Road Supervisors (AORS) Provincial Safety Truck Rodeo in Owen Sound later this month. Mike Douglas also had an impressive finish coming in third place at the Muskoka event.



Township of
Georgian Bay
MUSKOKA

Newsletter Highlights

New Generator for BWCC

Hotel Planning Application

Heat Pumps for Fire Halls

2026 Photo Contest Winner

follow us



IT Master Plan

Blackline Consulting presented Council with the Information Technology Master Plan.



The consultants noted that IT is generally functioning well across the Township – with feedback from staff being quite positive.

The Master Plan sets out a framework and road map for the Township's IT strategy for the next five years. The Plan takes the previous focus of bringing in new systems and shifts to maximizing the value derived from existing resources.

The steps identified in the Master Plan are divided into four core principles: optimizing core systems, information and processes; expanding digital and mobile service delivery; governing IT investment and delivery; and securing and sustaining technology foundations.

The full IT Master Plan can be read in the [September Council Agenda](#).

Investment Policy Statement Annual Review

Council reaffirmed the Township's Investment Policy Statement, with no changes made since its original adoption last year.

Council adopted the Prudent Investment Standard and approved the Investment Policy Statement in October 2025, allowing the municipality to join the ONE Joint Investment Board and begin investing under the prudent investor framework in January 2026.

Heat Pumps at MacTier and Honey Harbour Fire Halls

The MacTier and Honey Harbour Fire Stations will have new heat pump systems installed, following the approval of a reallocation of budgeted funds for the project.

Council approved \$41,000 for each station for ventilation and building upgrades in 2025 following an air quality report identifying air quality issues related to humidity and mold at the station in MacTier.

Subsequent testing has found that the portable air conditioning units installed as temporary mitigation measures improved the air quality.



Director of Operations, Mara Engel, presented Council with the updated information and the recommendation to approve using the existing approved funds to install heat pump systems in both halls to tackle the root of the problem - humidity. Director Engel added that the use of heat pump systems brings the added benefit of the comfort of air conditioning in the fire halls.

Backup Generator for Baxter Ward Community Centre

The Township will purchase a new permanent backup generator for the Baxter Ward Community Centre, creating the capability to run a warming centre at the facility in the event of emergencies and prolonged power outages.

The estimated cost of purchasing and installing the new generator is \$175,000. Staff have secured \$75,000 worth of funding - \$50,000 from the Ontario Emergency Management Community Grant and \$25,000 from the Hydro One Community Partnership Grant – bringing the net municipal contribution towards the project to \$100,000.

Council approved the project, pre-authorizing the \$100,000 from the 2027 Capital Budget. The project was previously identified as part of the Township's 10-Year Capital Plan in 2026, following a review of the Township's response to the March 2025 ice storm.

Council Direction and Future Reports

The following items were discussed in the New Business portion of September Council:

- Council directed staff to proceed with the slated repairs to the Honey Harbour Launch Ramp and dock replacement.
- Council directed staff to request that the District of Muskoka implement a bag tag program in the Township to address waste disposal issues for water-access-only properties.
- Council directed staff to prepare a report exploring the creation of a private road grant program. The report will be brought forward in 2027.

Insurance Policy Annual Renewal

The Township will renew its insurance for the year at a premium of \$503,412, a roughly four per cent increase from the 2025/2026 premium.

Deputy Treasurer, Candace Waslenko, highlighted to Council that the primary factor affecting the increased insurance cost was the updated replacement values from the Facility Condition Assessment (FCA). The FCA updated the replacement value of Township facilities from \$45.5 million to \$74.8 million. Waslenko explained that while this increased replacement value did lead to increased insurance costs, it also ensures that the Township has adequate insurance coverage, reducing financial risks to taxpayers.

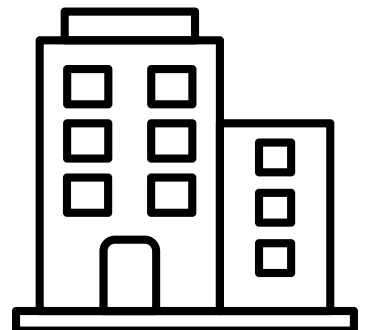
Hotel Application

A Planning Act public meeting was held to discuss an application being made to build a 5-storey hotel on Lone Pine Road.

Planning Council heard a summary of the application from Township Planner, Shania Wonfor, as well as the planner working on behalf of the applicant.

Members of the public and Council had the opportunity to discuss concerns regarding the size of the development and the municipality's ability to service it.

The comments received from the meeting will be taken into consideration before Township planning staff return to Planning Council with a recommendation report at a future meeting.



By-laws Enacted

2026-069 - Confirming Council
September 14 2026

2026-070 - SRA Closing (4303
Severn River Shore)

2026-071 - Confirming Planning
Council September 15 2026

Upcoming Meetings

Refresh Mactier Advisory Committee

Monday, September 28 at 3:00 p.m.

Council

Monday, October 5 at 9:00 a.m.

Planning Council

Tuesday, October 6 at 9:00 a.m.

Committee of the Whole

Tuesday, October 6 following
Planning Council

Committee of Adjustment

Friday, October 9 at 10:00 a.m.

Inaugural Council Meeting (first meeting of the 2026-2030 term of Council)

Monday, November 16 at 1:00 p.m.

Volunteer Firefighters Launch Peer Support Program

Volunteer Firefighters from Georgian Bay Fire and Emergency Services presented Committee of the Whole with the Service's newly implemented Peer Support Team, an important initiative towards increased mental health awareness and support for firefighters.

The Peer Support Team is firefighter-led, and supports the goals of the Fire Master Plan, Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief Chad Dowell said.

Municipal Law Enforcement Officer and Volunteer Firefighter, Joshua Bondar, presented the Committee with information on the Peer Support Team, and the role it will play within the Fire Department. Bondar highlighted that the Peer Support Team will offer confidential conversations and check-ins with firefighters following traumatic incidents, and help them navigate other resources should they need them. He also reiterated that the Peer Support Team does not provide counselling, therapy, or medical advice.

The Peer Support Team is comprised of one firefighter designated for each of the Department's three stations, plus the team leader.

2026 Georgian Bay Photo Contest Winner

Council recognized the winner of the 2026 Georgian Bay Photo Contest.

Robert Larson's submission, 'Approaching Storm', taken in June on Mackay Island in Georgian Bay, was voted as the winner unanimously by Township staff.

