

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

- **Sending Letter of Support to be Pilot Program Community:** Council passed a motion to send a letter to the provincial Minister of Community and Social Services, Dr. Helena Jaczek, indicating support for the three-year Basic Income Pilot to be rolled out with Lanark County as a pilot site. This comes following a lengthy discussion at the community services committee of the whole meeting earlier in the month at which councillors noted the county has a rural demographic and issues that would make it an excellent choice as a pilot community. Several councillors commented that basic guaranteed income promotes health, education, economy, innovation and an opportunity for people to excel. Children's Services Manager Mary Lou White said the concept has been discussed for decades. "You have to decide if you want people living in the community in poverty," she said. "Poverty is one of the leading social determinants of health. When people have more money, they do better, which impacts the whole community. When people don't have to worry about whether they have enough money for rent or food, they can look towards the future. It's about returning dignity to people and destigmatizing." The province is expected to determine the pilot communities this spring. For more information, contact Nancy Green, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 2101.
- **Support for Dental Health Access Motion:** Council passed a motion to support a resolution from the Lanark County Planning Council for Children, Youth and Families with respect to dental health access. The resolution calls for the expansion of provincial publicly funded dental health programs for adults with low incomes as oral health is essential to maintaining overall health. It noted evidence showing a link between poor oral health and number of diseases, as well as incidents of untreated tooth decay, gum disease and tooth loss resulting in social and psychological suffering and interference with employment opportunities. Public funding covers some aspects of oral health, but not teeth and gums, and almost a third of Canadians do not have public or private insurance to help pay for this. Ontario currently has public dental programs for low-income children, but not for low-income adults or seniors, and coverage for Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program recipients is limited. The resolution asks that oral health be part of the province's primary care transformation initiatives and to expand public oral health programs with prime consideration for low-income children, youth, adults and seniors. For more information, contact Leslie Drynan, Clerk, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502.
- **Upcoming Meetings: County Council, Wednesday, Feb. 8, 5 p.m.;** Community Services, Feb. 8 (following County Council); Corporate Services, Feb. 8 (following Community Services). **County Council, Wednesday, Feb. 22, 5 p.m.;** Economic Development, Feb. 22 (following County Council); Public Works, Feb. 22 (following Economic Development). All meetings are in Council Chambers unless otherwise noted. **Open Houses/Public Information Sessions for Ottawa Valley Recreation Trail (former CP Line) – all from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.:** Jan. 26, Beckwith Township Office (Council Chambers); Feb. 2, Carleton Place Arena (upstairs); Feb. 16, Almonte Old Town Hall. For more information, contact 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502. Like "LanarkCounty1" on Facebook and follow "@LanarkCounty1" on Twitter!