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Beaver Valley Ratepayers hear from Mayor at meeting

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(by Don Crosby)

The Beaver Valley Ratepayers Association heard a municipal update from the mayor at its annual general meeting on Mar. 16 at the Kimberley Community Centre.

Elections were conducted, and a presentation informed homeowners of fire and other home safety concerns.

In his report, association President Tom Foster complimented the municipality for its efforts at economic development.

He also mentioned the need for zoned land for new homes, and the importance of the shared compacter at the joint Chatsworth-Grey Highlands landfill site.

The only concern he raised was about what the association sees as the need to restore the former speed limits on County Rd. 30 between Highway 10 and Hutchison's Corners and County Rd. 119 from Ravenna.

He said speed limits were reduced on these two roads during recent reconstruction to 60 km/hour.

But since the reconstruction has been completed, maximum speed limits on both roads have been set at 70 kilometres an hour rather than being returned to the former 80 km/hour.

He said the new speed limit was decided by the county, because of cyclists and obscured sight lines. He said people are being ticketed by police for travelling at the speed they were used to in the past, at 80 km/hr.

Foster brought members up to date on the proposed lift for the Kimberley hall. There's been a slight delay in awarding the contract for its construction. Only one bid was received for the project when it first went out to contract and it was a bit high. So a second round of request for bids will be made to see if a better deal can be made. Foster expects the lift to be in place for next year's annual general meeting.

Nine new directors of the BVRA were acclaimed; they include, Bruce Bunker, Max Clarkson, Tom Foster, Ward Fowler, Ray Macdonald, Wendy Macdonald, Brian McCulloch, Kathy Nicholson and Matt Webb-Smith.

Mayor Paul McQueen gave a summary of development events in Grey Highlands in the past year, touching on all of the new and proposed building

projects in the municipality.

These include the 315-lot housing development projects by Devonleigh and 79 proposed new homes by Stonebrook Development, a new "mega" Foodland grocery store and a Tim Hortons, as well as a new elementary school and the promise of a new hospital.

McQueen was quizzed for an update on Talisman. One member wanted to know if he resort owners were up to date on their property taxes and water bills. The mayor said that was privileged information that he wasn't at liberty to divulge. That would be the same for any ratepayer.

Another member wanted to know if the owners of Talisman were up to date on their annual payments for the purchase of the resort. Mayor McQueen said he would have to check to see what information can be released.

The 2014 purchase agreement was for \$1.8 million, with a \$1 million payment, followed by an annual payment of \$100,000 to make up the remaining \$800,000 owed.

The new owners of the resort have spent millions of dollars of their own money and are looking for investors to help out.

McQueen said the County of Grey officials have been helping owners to locate investors.

"Everybody would like to see it open; it would provide jobs," he said.

He also described efforts by Grey County to save Grey Gables as a long-term care facility, and the need to expand the building to include a fourth wing and more beds for a maximum of 100 for Grey Gables, as well as more beds for Rockwood Terrace in Durham.

McQueen also talked about the new app developed by the municipality, which provides valuable day-to-day information on Grey Highlands.

The mayor shared the plans this year by the county to upgrade County Roads 13 between Eugenia and County Road 4 as well as County Road 40 from County Road 13 to Chatsworth. That last project is worth \$4 million.

McQueen also discussed the municipality's soon-to-be approved official plan and plans to update the zoning bylaw. He also noted plans to draft a policy on campgrounds.

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