



# Wingham Advance Times

Thursday, August 24, 2023

\$1.50 per copy (includes GST)

## Maitland Family Dental

334 Josephine St.  
Wingham

519-357-2021  
519-357-2728



## Howick to begin budget process in September

MELISSA DUNPHY

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter  
mdunphy@midwesternnewspapers.com

HOWICK – At its Aug. 15 meeting, Howick council approved changes to the 2024 budget process.

A report presented by Clerk Caitlin Gillis outlined the proposed changes, as well as a timeline for the upcoming budget process.

“The annual budget, in part, sets the pace to deliver on council priorities. The Township of Howick is a thriving, independent community with high-quality services. As the community’s expectations and needs shift over time, it will be important for the township to be agile and collaborate with surrounding municipalities, local businesses, organizations and other levels of government. 2024 offers a unique opportunity for council to set ambitious goals and align appropriate resources and budget to make a positive community impact,” explained Gillis in her report.

“The township faces a number of opportunities and challenges as it heads into the 2024 budget process, which will impact budgets and services across the organization.”

The report explained that Howick council “expressed interest” in starting the budget process in the fall in order to pass the budget early in 2024. They also have interest in gaining more involvement in preliminary budget discussions, so with the upgrades to the township’s website as well as the new social media accounts, it “should help to facilitate more learning opportunities and public consultation in the 2024 budget.”

Attached to Gillis’ report were the proposed 2024 budget process timeline and 2024 draft budget survey.

The proposed timeline begins this September, with a resident budget survey, outreach to boards and committees, a Budget 101 presentation posted online, and department heads to start compiling 2024 operational budget and capital requests.

October will be the corporate strategic plan kick off.

In November, budget survey results will be presented to council, strategic priorities forecasted and added into budget discussions, budget

See **HOWICK** on page 9



Dan McNee Photo

**FAIR FEAST** – Teeswater’s Max McKague, 3, offers a cheeky grin to his parents during the Saturday afternoon watermelon-eating contest at the 167th Teeswater Rural Fair, Aug. 17-20. Despite a brief cold snap on Friday, the fair was a complete success, as the hot summer weather returned for the remainder of the weekend much to the delight of attendees taking in a wide variety of events and attractions. See more photo coverage inside.

## ‘Not a widespread issue’

*Deloitte claims duplicate, late responses to DGR survey limited to ‘one/two people attempting to discredit the process’*

MIKE WILSON

mwilson@midwesternnewspapers.com

**SOUTH BRUCE** – A representative from Deloitte says that claims to discredit the survey regarding the proposed DGR project in South Bruce are unwarranted.

Rita Groen, who ran for mayor in the 2022 municipal election, has publicly stated she does not support the DGR project. In a letter to the editor, which can be read in this week’s paper, she spoke of the “glitch” regarding the PIN codes for the survey provided to residents in South Bruce,

and claimed that the survey could still be completed after the Aug. 11 at midnight deadline.

“The survey was still available two days after the deadline and you could submit your survey. Is this survey only a show to get the outcome they want?” asked Groen in her letter.

Midwestern Newspapers reached out to Steve Travale, acting community engagement manager for South Bruce, to find out if the claims made by Groen were true. Travale referred the questions to Chris Bandak, a managing director of Deloitte who is the administrator of the

survey.

Bandak told Midwestern Newspapers that the survey was due to close at midnight on Aug. 11 “and therefore we normally leave it open until we are back in the office first thing Monday morning to close down the system.”

“Dates are put in place not as a methodological stop point, but merely to encourage participation within a timely period,” he explained. “We would not have any issues if a legitimate citizen wanted to participate between midnight Friday and Monday morning. If we didn’t include an end date people would naturally procrastinate and the project timeframe would extend substantially.”

See **DUPLICATE** on page 2

## Upward trends in North Huron home sales continue

MIKE WILSON

mwilson@midwesternnewspapers.com

**NORTH HURON** – Sales activity in the North Huron real estate market continued its upward trend in July.

According to data released by the Huron Perth Association of REALTORS recently, nine homes sold in North Huron last month – a 200 per cent increase over July 2022.

The average sale price of the nine homes was \$516,111 – an 18.1 per cent increase over July 2022.

The total dollar amount of the homes sold was \$4.645 million.

Of the nine homes sold in the township last month, six were in Wingham. The average price of those six homes was \$492,250. Two homes sold in Blyth, with an average sale price of \$510,750.

And the good news for potential buyers? There are still plenty of homes to choose from on the market.

See **HOME** on page 9

## Huron County Plowing Match deemed a success

MIKE WILSON

mwilson@midwesternnewspapers.com

**HURON EAST** – Organizers of the 2023 Huron County Plowing Match are calling the event a success.

The match, which ran Aug. 17-18 at the farm of Pete and Leisa Albers on Browntown Road, may have been dampened by rain but not in spirit.

“Yes, it was a little bit wet but that didn’t deter the plowers from plowing,” said Brian Wiersma, president of the Huron County Plowmen’s Association. “The people who wanted to be there to see the match, they were there.”

“Overall, it was a successful event.”

“It was a really good couple of busy days,” added Leisa Albers.

Albers recalled a conversation she had with Jeff McGowan on Friday, commenting on the wet conditions. She said McGowan looked at her and said, “That’s a plowing match.”

Not only were people there for the plowing, which featured 14 4-H competitors on Thursday and 41 plowers (including two horse plowers) on Friday, but for the Princess and

See **PLOWING** on page 8



Mike Wilson Photo

**HORSE POWER** – John Dielroon and his duo of horses were one of two horse-plow competitors in this year’s Huron County Plowing Match.