

Highlights of the Amherst Island Community Alliance (AICA) Town Hall Session held

September 22, 2019 at the Lodge (3:00 – 5:00 pm)

Molly Stroyman (on behalf of the AICA) welcomed those in attendance and explained that the purpose of the session was to find out what projects various Island groups may be working on and associated challenges that they may be facing. One of the efforts of the Alliance is to identify common goals and synergies that may exist and possibly assist groups and/or individuals in working toward common goals and interests. Below is a list of highlighted points mentioned by the groups and is not meant to be a complete narrative or exhaustive list:

Amherst Island Women's Institute

- Part of a national network that promotes leadership through education
- The fundraising efforts of the Island Chapter focuses on benefitting Amherst Island
- Examples of projects that have been supported by the Island Women's Institute in the past are the Dry Stone Wall Festival, the Back Kitchen, School Trips, 4H Club
- In January 2018 the Women's Institute determined that they would take on the task of supporting the development of washrooms at the Sand Beach
- In April of 2018 they contributed \$4,000.00 to Loyalist Township, the Township included \$16,000.00 in the Capital Budget for a total of \$20,000.00
- In May of 2019 the Township issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the washroom project but received no responses
- The Women's Institute is in the process of following up with the Township to determine the status of the project

CJAI Radio Station

- Current focus/project is to establish a 100-130 feet tower
- Currently raising funds for a 4000 watt transmitter that will expand their coverage area to an enlarged oblong shaped area
- Looking for relocation possibilities for the radio station
- Current advertising rates are \$700.00 per year; however the rate for Island groups and not for profits is \$350.00 per year
- Currently they have 61 hours of live programming and are in need of a DJ for Tuesday morning airtime

Amherst Island Recreation Committee

- The Purpose of the Committee is to support recreation on Amherst Island
- Have identified the need for an outdoor multi-purpose pad on the Island that could be used for various recreational activities such as Pickle Ball etc.

- Have identified the need for improvements to the existing Baseball Diamond
- Committed to fundraising through hosting events on Amherst Island
- Canada Day activities remain a focus of the Committee

ISLE (Island School Liaison Enthusiasts)

- The Purpose of the group is to financially assist in extra-curricular activities that are not covered by the School Board
- The group also sees a need for a multi-purpose pad on the Island
- The group also provides hot lunches to the students (2 per week for 8 – 10 weeks)
- Past/ongoing projects include upgrades to the outdoor space (play-ground etc.)
- ISLE is not tied to the School board and should not be confused with the School Advisory Council (SAC) that is tied to the School Board

AIMS (Amherst Island Men's Society)

- The purpose of the group is to meet and greet new male members to the Community and to support the Amherst Island Community
- An ongoing project of the group is the beautification of the Village of Stella by supplying and maintaining the hanging flower baskets
- The group also provides drivers/transportation to people that need rides to appointments etc., drivers to pick up prescriptions and will generally assist in any way they can
- Saturday Morning Market Cart
- When funds permit they donate to Amherst Island initiatives such as the Waterside Series and the Emerald Music Festivals, School Trips etc.
- While the group can always use more members/volunteers just as other service groups can, AIMS continues to do fine

Amherst Island Agricultural Society

- Have recently re-established
- 9 members on their Board
- New Constitution aligns with current legislation and the Fairground Act etc.
- Currently have over 60 members so qualify to apply for government grants
- The society property is approximately 7 acres in size
- Have recently put in a parking lot behind Centennial Park in conjunction with the Township
- The Township currently leases Centennial Park from the Agricultural Society
- Camping was permitted on the site during the recent Stone Wall festival
- They have a broad constitution that supports enhancing rural life and are open to suggested project ideas from residents of Amherst Island

The Back Kitchen (Amherst Island Community Café)

- A not for profit established in 2016, run by a Board of Directors
- Hire students and young people to work at the restaurant during the summer
- Have qualified for Canada Summer jobs grants to support the hiring of students
- Focus on buying local
- For the past four years they have “ended in the black” (surplus)
- As a not for profit, any surplus goes back into the operation
- Purchased the Back Kitchen in 2019
- Currently focused on paying off the resulting \$31,000.00 loan
- An accessibility ramp will be built in October of this year
- Will upgrade equipment and building as funds permit
- Need engaged volunteers for various jobs (cooking, cutting grass etc)
- Their goal is to make everyone feel welcome
- The group wants to give back to the community by supporting initiatives like the Seniors Christmas Dinner and school lunches etc.
- Who owns the Back Kitchen? – Anyone that believes in the mission is an owner and welcome at the Annual General Meeting
- It is run by the Board of Directors

Following the presentation by the groups, Kirk Corkery presented the Strategic Framework that has been developed by the AICA Board of Directors based on the results of the recent survey that was conducted.