

■ NEWS

400,000 CANNABIS ORDERS MADE SINCE LEGALIZATION

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and Minister of Finance Vic Fedeli, the province was forced to change gears because the federal government has "dropped the ball" with issuing licences for licensed producers.

"Sadly the federal government has not kept up (on issuing licences) and there is now a shortage of cannabis right across the country," he said. "Stores on the east coast are laying off staff, in Quebec many are only opening up for a few hours a day and in Alberta they have now stopped issuing any kind of licences."

The decision to implement the lottery, in which interested retailers were invited to submit expressions of interest between Jan. 7 and 9, is the province's temporary response to the shortage, he told the News.

The initial 25 licences are being distributed throughout five regions; five for the East Region, six for the Greater Toronto Area, two for the North Region, five for Toronto and seven for the West Region. Our neighbours to the south in Muskoka sit within the east, while Almaguin, North Bay and Parry Sound are in the north.

For the north, this means that the only options for initial retail locations were allotted to North Bay, Greater Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie or Thunder Bay. Lottery winners, selected from 17,000 applicants provincially, were announced on Saturday, Jan. 11 and the majority appear to be entrepreneurs, not corporations. Applicants paid \$75 each, netting the province \$1,275,000 from the application process. The two winners in the north are listed as Anton Lucic and Saturninus Partners but no further information, including what community they are from, is provided.

"We decided on 25 stores because that is the amount of cannabis we have received, it's not enough for 30 or 50, but 25," Fedeli continued. "And, we have best allocated those 25 based on population."

There have already been 400,000 orders placed through the Ontario Cannabis Store website since legalization day and this, he said, helped to allocate the licences because they were able to determine where people have been buying from and how they believe the province will best be served by brick and mortar locations initially.

"When we learned that we only had enough for 25 stores we decided to locate them in places with a population of over 50,000 people in order to combat the illegal

market as effectively as we can," he said. "Retail stores will be placed in larger communities for now to increase accessibility and as soon as the federal government gets their act together and get more licensed producers, we will open up the market."

Fedeli did not provide an exclusive timeline for when that may happen, but essentially stated that it is in the hands of the federal government at this point as to when the supply might be available.

Parry Sound-Muskoka MPP Norm Miller says he would have preferred to see small urban and rural communities eligible to submit expressions of interest for the licensing lottery.

"Of course, I'd like to see all sized communities available to be able to participate, but it's just not the way it was designed," he said.

Locally, municipal representatives do not seem terribly surprised or concerned at this stage in the game.

Callander, Chisholm, Nipissing, East Ferris, Burk's Falls, Kearney, Armour, Magnewan and Sundridge have all opted in to the idea of having a retail operation but none seem convinced that it will happen in the region any time soon. Armour reeve Bob Macphail said the process was a little disappointing but said that he has faith it will roll out to townships like those within Almaguin in due time.

"It was rolled out too quickly on a federal level and now the province is scrambling to get things done, but I'm not too concerned. It will happen how it happens," said Burk's Falls reeve Cathy Still.

Kearney Mayor Carol Ballantyne stated that perhaps if the retail industry kicks off in the larger centres, some of the bugs will be ironed out by the time smaller, more rural communities are home to a brick and mortar location. All three pointed to the fact that regardless of when it comes - it is going to be a very expensive endeavour. The Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario is gearing up for all stores to open up by April 1, and the selected winners have five days from the announcement to submit formal applications with a \$50,000 letter of credit and a \$6,000 non-refundable fee.

- With files from Alison Brownlee

■ COMMUNITY



Laurel Campbell photo

Powassan historian Mary Heasman searches a copy of an old map to research how William Clark continues to own land when he has been dead for almost a century.

DECEASED OWNER CREATES DIFFICULT SITUATION

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the Crown Patent transfer dated Aug. 7, 1886, according to a report from MPAC presented at the Jan. 8 council meeting.

"This is a deeded title so we can't do anything with it until we get this figured out," said McLissac

"We're going to have to get advice on how to move forward. I really don't know how this is going to work now. We may have to track down a long-lost relative."

William Faulkner Clark died in 1927 at the age of 91.

Powassan historian Mary Heasman said there is a great-great-grandson living in the Powassan area, but other than that the Clark family is no longer represented in the commu-

nity.

Heasman has looked up old survey records that indicate "the block, where the Catholic Church now sits, had not even been surveyed at the time the deed was issued to Clark."

The property is part of a larger surveyed plot, Lot 15, that Heasman says may even have been located in the former South Hims-worth Township.

Lots 15 and 16 were the original Crown grants for the land that, today, makes up the nucleus of the Town of Powassan.

In addition to severances and sales of portions of property, the original land within the Lot 15 was also impacted when the Ministry of Transportation four-laned Highway 11 and put in the Clark Street over-pass and exits. The Minis-

try of Transportation of Ontario (MTO) appears to be the owner of the property abutting the vacant land on the west side.

"It's certainly an old piece of property," said Coun. Dave Britton, "but I was sure surprised to learn the late Mr. Clark still owned it. I don't know how we go about straightening this out but we have to do something."

"This makes you wonder if there are other pieces of property in the municipality that fall into the same slip stream," said Coun. Debbie Piekarski.

Deputy clerk Kim Bester said she is not clear on what would need to be done in order to have this parcel transferred to the municipality so that it could be subsequently sold, and McIsaac advised that "It may take a while to sort through this one."

"Unfortunately," he added, "we can only collect back taxes for two years, so we're not going to get rich off it."

GRADE REDUCTION IS ULTIMATE GOAL

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council accepted and are allowing Hill to move forward with, recommends increasing the size of the hidden intersection sign on Pearcey Road approaching the intersection to make it more visible, posting a "steep grade" sign on Halls Road East, changing the posted speed limit on Pearcey Road to 60 kilometres per hour and the speed limit on Halls Road East to 30 kilometres per hour.

"At the end of the day we do what our roads supervisor recommends, and if he recommended a four-way stop sign to be installed we would do that, but this is what he has come forward with and I think it will help," said Dunnett.

According to clerk administrator Andrew Farnsworth, Hall will also provide a report on safety issues at Halls Road East for discussion at the next council meeting at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 23.

The meeting is open to the public and anyone with firsthand knowledge of the safety issues are able to attend or provide written comment to the clerk in advance of the meeting.

THE ISSUE:
ROAD SAFETY CONCERNS IN MAGNETAWAN
LOCAL IMPACT:
RESIDENTS FEEL ISSUES NOT BEING ADDRESSED ADEQUATELY BY COUNCIL



STORY BEHIND THE STORY

A social media post surrounding concerns on Halls Road East piqued the interest of reporter Danielle Marr. After speaking to those concerned individuals, we decided to bring the issue further into the public eye in the instance that other residents could have similar concerns outside of this isolated case, and to get the municipality's side of the story.

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ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD NOTICE

Union Gas Limited has applied for approval of the renewal of a natural gas franchise agreement with the Corporation of the Township of McMurrich/Monteith.

Learn more. Have your say.

Union Gas Limited has applied to the Ontario Energy Board for:

- 1. An order approving the renewal of a natural gas franchise agreement with the Corporation of the Township of McMurrich/Monteith which would grant to Union Gas Limited the right to construct and operate works for the distribution, transmission and storage of natural gas and the right to extend and add to the works for a period of 20 years.**
- 2. An order directing and declaring that the assent of the municipal electors of the Corporation of the Township of McMurrich/Monteith is not required in relation to the natural gas franchise agreement.**

Union Gas Limited's current franchise agreement with the Corporation of the Township of McMurrich/Monteith expires June 7, 2019.

Effective January 1, 2019, Union Gas Limited and Enbridge Gas Distribution Inc. have amalgamated to become Enbridge Gas Inc.

THE ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD IS HOLDING A PUBLIC HEARING

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) will hold a public hearing to consider Union Gas' requests. At the end of this hearing, the OEB will decide whether to grant Union Gas' requests.

The OEB is an independent and impartial public agency. We make decisions that serve the public interest. Our goal is to promote a financially viable and efficient energy sector that provides you with reliable energy services at a reasonable cost.

CERTIFICATES OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY

In order to distribute natural gas in Ontario, a person must comply with the requirements of the Municipal Franchises Act. This Act requires that a person that intends to distribute natural gas within a municipality must first receive approval from the OEB, in the form of a certificate of public convenience and necessity. Where the OEB has issued a certificate for an area but there is currently no natural gas distribution service, another person can apply for a certificate to serve that area.

BE INFORMED AND HAVE YOUR SAY

You have the right to information regarding this application and to be involved in the process.

- You can review the application filed by Union Gas on the OEB's website now.
- You can file a letter with your comments, which will be considered during the hearing.
- You can become an active participant (called an intervenor). Apply by **January 28, 2019** or the hearing will go ahead without you and you will not receive any further notice of the proceeding.
- At the end of the process, review the OEB's decision and its reasons on our website.

The OEB does not intend to provide for an award of costs for this hearing.

LEARN MORE

Our file number for this case is **EB-2018-0344**. To learn more about this hearing, find instructions on how to file letters or become an intervenor, or to access any document related to this case, please enter the file number **EB-2018-0344** on the OEB website: **www.oeb.ca/participate**. You can also phone our Consumer Relations Centre at 1-877-632-2727 with any questions.

ORAL VS. WRITTEN HEARINGS

There are two types of OEB hearings – oral and written. The OEB intends to proceed with this application by way of a written hearing. If you think an oral hearing is needed, you can write to the OEB to explain why by **January 28, 2019**.

PRIVACY

If you write a letter of comment, your name and the content of your letter will be put on the public record and the OEB website. However, your personal telephone number, home address and email address will be removed. If you are a business, all your information will remain public. If you apply to become an intervenor, all information will be public.

This hearing will be held under sections 9(3) and 9(4) of the Municipal Franchises Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.M.55



Ontario

Ontario Energy Commission de l'énergie
Board de l'Ontario