



WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY REPORT

Information ☐	Recommendation x ☒	Decision Request x ☐	Councillor Activity x ☐
--------------------------------------	--	---	--

To: (Name of Committee)

Submitted by: John A Smith, Councilor Falmouth District 9

Date: July 3, 2024

Subject: Sainte-Famille Cemetery Transfer of Ownership

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Municipal Government Act

Section 50 (1) A municipality may acquire and own property granted or conveyed to the municipality either absolutely or in trust for a public or charitable purpose.

Section (2) Where property is conveyed to a municipality in trust for a public or charitable purpose, the municipality holds the property according to the terms of the trust and may do anything necessary to carry out the objects of the trust.

RECOMMENDATION or DECISION REQUEST

CoTW recommends that

West Hants Regional Municipality take ownership of Sainte-Famille Cemetery to ensure that it is protected and maintained in perpetuity.

BACKGROUND

Property x ☐	Public Opinion ☐	Environment ☐	Social x ☐	Economic x ☐	Councillor Activity ☐
-------------------------------------	--	--------------------------------------	--------------------------------------	--	---

[2024-04-12 Sally Ross Re Request to take over ownership of the Sainte Famille Cemetery.pdf](#)
Letter of Request

Heritage Value of Sainte-Famille Cemetery

Description of the Assets of the Property

DISCUSSION

The municipality would incur the operating costs of cemetery upkeep. These costs are for grass mowing. There are no foreseen capital costs. The cemetery is not an operating cemetery so there are no administration costs for burials, and it is not open during the winter so there is no snow clearing costs.

Saint-Famille Cemetery is a historic site with many local, regional and international tourists visiting the site. It has a historic connection to Fort Edward and is part of the history of Acadian settlement and the Expulsion of Acadians.

NEXT STEPS

CAO to start proceeding to acquire Saint-Famille Cemetery.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Should the Municipality take over the Saint-Famille Cemetery, there would be costs associated with the annual operating expenses. In the current year, these costs would be unbudgeted for.

Additionally, Cemeteries are currently area rated in WHRM, meaning this would need to be area rated to the West Hants Tax Area Rate.

It is also important to note, that the two current municipal owned cemeteries have reserves that are used to help support the costs associated with the operations. It would be required to determine a funding source for this cemetery as well, if we did not want it to become a burden on the West Hants Community taxpayers.

ALTERNATIVES

Council may choose not to take ownership of the cemetery.

ATTACHMENTS - None

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW

The topic of the WHRM accepting ownership or carrying out maintenance responsibilities for additional cemeteries has been discussed in the past and is coming forward again through this report.

There are as many as approximately eighty-six (86) cemeteries in the regional municipality, including the four managed by the WHRM. Of the eighty-six (86) referenced it is unknown how many are inactive.

Staff await direction from Council on this specific request, but I will note that additional resources will be requested should this request be approved. It is further noted that other cemetery groups have expressed the need for support. What is the best manner for the municipality to support these groups?

In addition to the possibility of the WHRM taking over the noted cemetery it is also encouraged that the cemetery representatives apply for a community grant under the current grant policy to support the financial challenges associated with the care of the properties. Perhaps Council could reevaluate the grant policy as well to provide a specific financial allocation within the policy for cemetery operations and care.

Staff await the direction from Council on this matter.

Report Prepared by: _____
John A Smith, Councillor District 9

Report Reviewed by:  _____
Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer