

Hastings Helpers Meeting
November 11th, 2015 7p.m.
Hastings Civic Centre

1. Welcome and Introductions: Tonya McColl (representing Hastings Helpers), Kira Mees (representing Municipality of Trent Hills)
Goals of the Hastings Helpers volunteers were outlined by Tonya. The Hastings Helpers is a volunteer organization who's motto is "neighbours helping neighbours" during the bridge closure. A focus will be placed on our elderly citizens as well as those with accessibility needs.

2. Kira spoke of her conversations with Parks Canada and outlined the information provided to her:

- An accessible walkway will be installed in mid-December, but will not be available for use until the bridge closure.
- A mail out from Parks Canada is anticipated for next week
- signage along all major roads that lead to Hastings will be installed in early Decemeber
- Communication from the school to local families with be during the first week of December
- Busing students around using the detour is deemed the safest option in getting local students to and from school. Will require an earlier pick up time and later drop off time.
- The Municipality of Trent Hills is currently managing the parking on the South and North side of the bridge: lighting, patrolled at night, expanding the parking lot at Banjo's restaurant to ensure that there is enough space for people to park their vehicles for long periods of time.
- Kira provided maps of the detours
- Kira advised that Parks Canada has stated that the reason for a longer closure (as opposed to the 2 month closure) is due to the fact there is time built in for inclement weather
- Parks Canada will be providing updates on the Parks Canada website. The Municipality of Trent Hills also will have updates specific to the bridge closure on their website.

The question, "Where will the walkway be?" was forwarded to Kira. Parks Canada has not determined the exact location of the accessible walkway provided, but we do know that it will be accessible by the concrete portion

of the current bridge. It will be accessible to wheelchairs. Unknown whether it will be accessible by electronic scooter (Kira will advise).

The contractor will have the responsibility of snow removal.

Northumberland County will still be responsible for the snow removal on the concrete bridge.

Parks Canada will be placing signage on all major “artery” roads leading into Trent Hills in early December.

Community Care volunteers announced that they will be holding an event on December 1st from 10-2p.m. at the Hastings Civic Centre to “re-introduce” their organization to the community. It was suggested that the Hastings Helpers volunteers have a table set up there with information about the group as well as to answer any questions and take peoples concerns. Tonya will be taking part in this event on behalf of the Hastings Helpers.

A representative from Community Care Northumberland outlined different options that are available to residents from their organization. They have vehicles, accessibility vans and volunteer drivers already and it will be discussed in more detail how the Hastings Helpers work with Community Care.

Communication with local churches is vital. They already have plans in place for the bridge closure. The Hastings Helpers need to advertise their services and upcoming meetings with the different church groups. The members will be a very valuable asset when trying to identify people who may need assistance during the bridge closure. We will be inviting members of the churches to future meetings.

The Hastings Helpers mail out will be completed and sent to all residents of Hastings with a Post Office Box during the week of November 16th and it is asked that the completed forms are returned to the Hastings Helpers (either by mail or dropped off at the Hastings Legion Br. 106) by Friday, December 4th. A rough draft was passed around to those in attendance with their feedback taken. Churches has been added to the check list of possible need requirements.

Melody Macdonald was hired by the Municipality (about one year ago) to obtain information from residents who felt that they would need to access the Hastings Helpers during the bridge closure, as well as information from people who had the means and ability to assist. Kira (The Municipality of Trent Hills) has that information. It was also stated that the Hastings Helpers received funding through a grant that was applied for by the Municipality of Trent Hills and although there is no current funding available, the organization has paid in full for their website and certain promotional/marketing tools.

It was advised that volunteers who are willing to transport others in their own vehicles contact their insurance company to ensure that they have the appropriate coverage.

Community Care suggested that volunteers sign up as volunteer drivers for the Community Care organization as a way of working together.

3. Tonya has Criminal Reference Check forms, Volunteer Sector Check forms, and a letter stating that the applicant is a volunteer, available to anyone who may require. The check should be done sooner rather than later as it sometimes takes a while for them to be completed. It is recommended that if a volunteer already has one that it is less than one year old and won't expire during the bridge closure. The checks are at no cost to volunteers.

The next meeting of the Hastings Helpers will be held on Monday, December 7th at 7p.m. at the Hastings Legion Br. 106