

Beaver Bank - Kinsac Community Centre to be re-built after fire

(Friday, September, 25, 2009) - Thursday was a devastating day for the Beaver Bank - Kinsac communities, as many residents watched in shock while fire destroyed their community centre.

Some of those same community members in their role as volunteer firefighters worked side by side with firefighters from surrounding communities to fight the blaze, but it quickly became apparent that the centre could not be saved.

"I want to acknowledge the hard work of the fire crews who battled this fire, including the many volunteer firefighters from Beaver Bank and surrounding communities who left home for the night to help out," said District 2 (Waverley-Fall River-Beaver Bank) Councillor Barry Dalrymple.

Constructed in 2004, the Beaver Bank - Kinsac Community Centre was operated as a not-for-profit facility by area volunteers. It included a local RCMP Community Policing Office, a C@P site, the Beaver Bank Volunteer Fire Department, as well as a large multi-purpose room, full kitchen, boardroom, children's programming room, two adjoining lounges, and a community lounge.

"It was clear during my visit to the site and conversations with residents that this community has suffered a tremendous loss," said Mayor Peter Kelly. "This municipality will work hard to expeditiously build a new centre that will again be a source of pride and a gathering place for people in the Beaver Bank - Kinsac area."

At the time of its construction, the 22,000 square foot Community Centre/Fire Station cost approximately \$3,000,000. It is too early to determine at this stage what the rebuild will cost, but HRM will work closely with the community and the Beaver Bank - Kinsac Community Centre Board to have a new centre in place as soon as possible.

The fire wall that separated the Fire Services' apparatus bay from the community centre saved it from serious damage. Although the investigation of the building's condition is ongoing, every effort is being made to maintain the function of the Beaver Bank Volunteer Fire Department at this site. For the time being, the trucks will be kept outside and firefighters will respond as usual with the expectation that the fire station can be returned to operation in about two weeks.

To ensure the safety of the site it has been secured with 24/7 security and auxiliary lighting. In the upcoming days parts of the building deemed unsafe to remain standing will be demolished.

As in the first construction, HRM will seek the input and guidance from the community on the new Beaver Bank - Kinsac Community Centre. Programs and services located within the community centre are in the process of finding temporary locations.