
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report CDP-10-2020 Emergency Expenditure – Septic Replacement – Wilson MacDonald Memorial School Museum



For Consideration by Council in Committee on December 8, 2020

OBJECTIVE:

To seek Council approval for funding related to an incurred emergency replacement of the septic system at the Wilson MacDonald Memorial School Museum.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CDP-10-2020 Emergency Expenditure – Septic Replacement – Wilson MacDonald Memorial School Museum be received;
2. AND THAT the Revised Budget, as outlined in Report CDP-10-2020, be approved.

Prepared by: Anne Unyi, Supervisor, Heritage & Culture

Reviewed by: Katrina Schmitz, Manager, Community Development & Partnerships

Respectfully submitted: Mike Evers, MCIP, RPP, BES, General Manager of Community & Development Services

Approved: Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On March 20, 2020, a major septic malfunction at the Wilson MacDonald Memorial School Museum (WMMSM) resulted in flooding of the basement which is the location of office/volunteer space, a kitchen, much of the Museum's collection and other artifacts and materials. Staff and contractors dealt with the immediate emergency quickly, including moving the Museum collection, files, office furnishings and supplies, kitchen equipment, etc. upstairs into the schoolhouse, cleaning and remediating the space and developing a plan to conduct interior repairs through an insurance claim.

Staff from Facilities Capital & Asset Management (FCAM) assessed the condition of the septic system and determined it should be replaced on an emergency basis in order to ensure further flooding and damage to the facility did not take place. Permission was received from the General Manager of Community & Development Services, to proceed with an emergency replacement in accordance with the Procurement Policy 2013-02. In keeping with Section 4.03 k(ii)(c) of the Policy, a report to Council must be presented to outline the nature of the emergency expenditure and receive approval of the funding source.

At this time, staff recommend that the emergency costs in the amount of \$39,300 (plus non-rebateable HST) be funded from CRR - General.

BACKGROUND:

Wilson MacDonald Memorial School Museum (WMMSM) is Haldimand County's one-room schoolhouse museum, located just outside Selkirk. Designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act*, WMMSM is dedicated to preserving the history of rural education, the heritage of the surrounding community and the memory of poet Wilson Pugsley MacDonald, who was born in the neighbouring hamlet of Cheapside and attended the schoolhouse as a young boy.

The current septic system was installed in 1991 and was scheduled to be replaced in 2021.

ANALYSIS:

In March 2020, during unrelated renovations to create an accessible washroom, the septic system failed causing major damage to the basement area. The Manager of Facilities Capital & Asset Management (FCAM), in discussion with a plumbing inspector, determined that issues related to the septic system at the WMMSM included saturation of the field bed and problems with the level of the tank. Upon examination staff noted the septic bed had settled and leaned toward the building, hindering proper flow through the system and contributing to the septic overflow.

Approximately \$28,000 in repairs, covered through insurance, have been completed to either restore or replace everything in the basement. Some cost savings were realized through the replacement of furnishings with furniture from the former Cayuga Haldimand County Administration Building. Several artifacts and archival material sustained severe water damage and were unable to be salvaged, resulting in their removal from the collection. Replacing the septic system:

- (i) eliminated the potential of another malfunction impacting the health and safety of staff, volunteers and visitors to the facility;
- (ii) ensured the significant repairs/replacements completed were not compromised; and
- (iii) protects the WMMSM collections storage area.

Costs associated with the emergency purchase of a new septic system—at \$39,300—were in keeping with the anticipated \$40,000 replacement budget earmarked for 2021 in the Capital Budget and included labour and materials related to the septic tank, pump chamber and new filter bed. Replacement of the system will be completed by the end of December 2020.

Staff had considered utilizing other maintenance and repair budgets to complete the emergency replacement; however, insufficient funds were available. As well, staff do not recommend deferring other capital projects—or the septic bed replacement itself—given the potential impacts to the repairs which have already been completed should another flooding situation occur (which is a greater likelihood going into fall, winter and spring).

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

The 2020 – 2029 Tax Supported Capital Budget and Forecast included this project in the year 2021 for \$40,000 to be funded from CRR - General. A revision to accelerate this project to the current budget year is required (including non-rebateable HST):

	Current Approved Budget	Proposed Revised Budget
Project #761-784001 – WMMSM Septic System Replacement:		
Septic Bed and Tile Replacement	\$0	\$40,000
Total Expenditures:	\$0	\$40,000

Financing:		
CRR - General	\$0	\$40,000
Total Financing:	\$0	\$40,000

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

Review and repairs associated with this incident—including the interior flooding damage resulting in an insurance claim as well as the originating failure of the septic system—involved the following Divisions: Facilities Capital & Asset Management and Legal & Support Services. Further assistance was provided by staff in Facilities, Parks, Cemeteries & Forestry Services and Finance.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: Yes

Policy: No

ATTACHMENTS:

1. None.