




COBDEN WATER / WASTEWATER COMMUNITY MEETING

October 10, 2024 - 7:00pm



Welcome to this community meeting.
Our goal is to update you on everything we
have learned so far, as well as the progress we
have made in the past year to address our
increasing water/sewer bills.

Thank you for attending and taking part
in our mission to reduce the financial
impact our water/sewer bills have
on our community.

INTRODUCTIONS

➤ Concerned Citizens of Cobden

- **Anne Guest**, *Retired Teacher, Cobden Homeowner*
- **Robyn Voisey**, *Local Real Estate Agent, Cobden Homeowner*
- **Ben Blommesteijn**, *Retired Federal Government Employee, Cobden Resident*
- **Cari Schauer**, *Business Owner, Cobden Resident*
- **Donald Deer**, *Engineer, Former Resident*



AGENDA

- **Background**
 - Water & Wastewater Systems
 - Cobden Water/Wastewater Bills
 - Rate Increase History
 - Water & Wastewater Unit by Category
 - Impact on the Community
 - Early Investigation
 - Water / Wastewater Chart
- **Concerned Citizens**
 - Early Investigation
 - Wastewater Treatment Plant Construction
 - Timeline
- **Taskforce**
 - Members
 - Summary
 - Meeting Overview
 - Water Meters
 - Recommendations

BACKGROUND: WATER AND WASTEWATER SYSTEMS

Whitewater Region operations and maintains three drinking water systems and one wastewater system.

All plants, distribution and collection systems are owned by the Township and operated by the *Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA)*

Cobden

Water Users: 455

Wastewater Users: 425

Beachburg

Water Users: 458

No wastewater plant

Haley Station

Water Users: 34

No wastewater plant

Please note that the Cobden Wastewater system is paid for by Cobden residents using the system only. None of the charges for the upgrades and renovations are being paid for by the residents of Beachburg or Haley Station.

BACKGROUND: COBDEN WATER / WASTEWATER BILLS

➤ **Billing frequency changes:**

- Prior to 2022, our water/wastewater bills were sent to us on a quarterly basis.
- We began receiving them bi-monthly coinciding with a 30% fee increase.

➤ **Billing amount increases:**

- Cobden water/sewer bills for individual households have increased from \$1753.56 per year in 2019 to almost \$3100 this year.
- Our bills are forecasted to substantially increase for the next five years under the advisement of *Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.*, with the approval of Whitewater Region Township.

➤ **Rate Structure:**

- Flat rate with the exception of 3 metered units in Cobden

BACKGROUND: RATE INCREASE HISTORY

Water Rates

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025-2029 proposed
Increase	21%	9%	2%	9.3%	8.5%	7.8% - 5.9%

Wastewater Rates

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025-2029 proposed
Increase	20%	30%	5%	12%	12.55%	4.8% - 4%

**Please note that the proposed rates may change as task force recommendations are implemented and the pending rate study is completed.*

BACKGROUND: WATER & WASTEWATER UNIT BY CATEGORY

Category	Weighting Factor	# of Units Water	# of Units Wastewater
Residential	1.0	892	387
Small Commercial	1.0	50	36.5
Medium Commercial	1.5	22	14
High Commercial	2.0	23	10
Multi Residential	0.8	113	79
Metered	n/a	3	3

WATER / WASTEWATER CHART

RESIDENTIAL WATER & WASTEWATER RATES											
March 24, 2024. Donald .W. Deer / Anne Guest /Robyn Voisey											
Town	YEAR	METERED or FLAT	Water Monthly Consumptive Rate /m3	Water Monthly consumptive cost	Water monthly base charge	Water monthly total	Wastewater monthly consumptive rate/m3	Wastewater Monthly consumptive cost	Wastewater monthly base charge	Wastewater Monthly total	Water &Wastewater Annual Cost
ARNPRIOR	2023	Metered	\$1.78	\$23.73	\$30.49	\$54.22	\$1.22	\$16.26	\$21.95	\$38.21	\$1,109.16
BANCROFT	2024	Metered	\$3.24	\$43.19	\$17.29	\$60.48	\$6.49	\$86.51	\$28.28	\$114.79	\$2,103.25
BANCROFT	2024	Annual Flat				\$758.74				\$1,264.80	
BARRYS BAY	2023	Metered	\$4.86	\$64.78		\$64.78	\$5.21	\$69.45		\$69.45	\$1,610.80
BRACEBRIDGE	2024	Metered	\$1.99	\$26.53	\$24.81	\$51.34	\$2.78	\$37.12	\$7.32	\$44.44	\$1,149.34
CHALK RIVER	2024	Flat Bi-monthly				In waste water				\$211.10	\$1,266.60
COBDEN	2024	Flat Bi-monthly				\$195.56				\$316.96	\$3,075.12
DEEP RIVER	2023	Annual Flat				\$813.82				\$603.03	\$1,416.85
EGANVILLE	2024	Flat up to 17m3/month	\$65.26			\$65.26	\$65.26		\$65.26	\$130.52	\$1,566.24
GRAVENHURST	2024	Metered	\$1.99	\$26.53	\$24.81	\$51.34	\$2.78	\$37.12	\$7.32	\$44.44	\$1,149.34
HUNTSVILLE	2024	Metered	\$1.99	\$26.53	\$24.81	\$51.34	\$2.78	\$37.12	\$7.32	\$44.44	\$1,149.34
LAKE OF BAYS	2024	Metered	\$1.99	\$26.53	\$24.81	\$51.34	\$2.78	\$37.12	\$7.32	\$44.44	\$1,149.34
MUSKOKA LAKES	2024	Metered	\$1.99	\$26.53	\$24.81	\$51.34	\$2.78	\$37.12	\$7.32	\$44.44	\$1,149.34
Muskoka Region	2024	Flat Monthly				\$104.42				\$123.53	\$2,735.40
OTTAWA	2023	Metered	0-6m3:\$0.9/m3. >6-25m3:\$1.79	\$28.49	\$15.28	\$43.77	0-6m3:\$0.83.>6m3-25m3:\$1.66	\$26.39	\$25.32	\$51.71	\$1,145.82
PEMBROKE	2024	Metered/Quarter	\$1.99	\$76.90		\$76.90	\$3.82	\$147.89		\$147.89	\$899.15
PEMBROKE	2024	Flat /Quarter				\$143.93				\$229.26	\$1,492.76
PETAWAWA	2023	Flat Annual				\$400.41				\$489.12	\$889.53
PORT CARLING	2024	Metered	\$1.99	\$26.53	\$24.81	\$51.34	\$2.78	\$37.12	\$7.32	\$44.44	\$1,149.34
RENFREW out of Town	2023	Metered	\$2.75	\$36.66	\$44.84	\$81.50	\$2.44	\$32.53	\$49.42	\$81.95	\$1,961.31
RENFREW	2023	Metered	\$2.75	\$36.66	\$24.42	\$61.08	\$2.44	\$32.53	\$24.71	\$57.24	\$1,419.75
THUNDER BAY	2023	Metered	\$1.94	\$25.92	\$27.53	\$53.45	\$1.75	\$23.33	\$24.78	\$48.10	\$1,218.59

NOTE: In the metered column I've put in RED what the rate covers , i.e. annually, quarterly or monthly. All others are monthly. I've used 430 litres /day per household in Ontario as per Ottawa in order to compare equally. Also note that the Flat Rates for Bancroft only apply to a location that only uses either water or wastewater service not both. Muskoka Flat rates are Grandfathered and are for people that have only water or wastewater or both. In Muskoka all rates are the same. Ottawa has an annual base rate for water, wastewater, fire supply and stormwater which I converted to monthly included in the base charge. Metered monthly is based on a 31 day month except Ottawa is a 30 day month. Chalk River residents have to make a payment of \$834.64 in 2024 or a payment of \$ 443.31 in 2024 and 2025 for a capital purchase.

The chart of water/sewer bills across Ontario can be emailed to those requesting a copy.

IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

The rate increases have caused an enormous impact on those with fixed incomes, seniors and single parent families in our community.

Selling a home in Cobden is difficult as many buyers considering a move to our town are not willing to pay the huge water/sewer bills.

We currently pay more than any other municipality in Ontario!

EARLY INVESTIGATION

- Cobden homeowner, Anne Guest, began writing articles in the now defunct *Whitewater News* expressing her concerns about the huge increases to the town's water/sewer bills.
- Donald Deer, a former citizen of Cobden began responding to the articles, providing feedback regarding his experiences when our Wastewater Treatment Plant was built.
- Together, Anne and Don began investigating the increases, discovering many discrepancies during the planning, approval and construction phases of the project.
- A survey was signed by many property owners in Cobden during August 2023 with the intention of drawing awareness to the issue and gaining community support.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT CONSTRUCTION

- In September 2017, a group of citizens from Cobden including two *Whitewater Region* employees, a representative from JP2G, Bob LeCraw and Don Deer travelled to Port Carling to visit their newly constructed wastewater treatment plant. This plant was comparable to the plant that needed to be constructed in Cobden.
- During this visit, Janet Collins was told by a plant operator that it cost \$8.5 million to be constructed. With overruns and errors, the cost ended up closer to \$16 million. She put this in her report to council. Don Deer estimated the project at \$13 million.
- JP2G offered their services to *Whitewater Region* providing an estimate of \$9,246,668 without knowing what was going to be built.
- *Whitewater Region* applied for grants based on this estimate without getting a second opinion. During August 2015 JP2G indicated their estimate was realistic.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT CONSTRUCTION

- Municipal, Provincial and Federal grants were applied for based on *JP2G's* estimate.
- Grants totalling \$6,272,954 were received.
- *JP2G* was awarded the contract based on their designs and estimates.
- The total cost of the new Whitewater Treatment Plant ended up being almost \$13,000,000 - almost exactly the same amount of Port Carling's construction costs.
- The difference between the grant money received and the total amount for the project ended up being almost \$6,000,000.
- Cobden property owners were left to carry the burden of paying for a debt of almost \$6,000,000. Amortized over 30 years with a 2.98% interest rate, our total debt to be re-paid is \$9,118,149.

Water In Cobden, Too Expensive

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To whom it may concern:

I just received my latest water/ sewer bill and the rate has increased to \$461.85 every two months. I am quite sure that we pay more for this service than any other area in the province!
When I first moved here, I paid

\$189.00 every three months and then the bill was switched to bi-monthly with a noticeable increase in rates. I contacted the town office in December to ask why the bill kept increasing and I didn't receive a plausible explanation. Anyone on a fixed income, or a landlord paying for several apartments must be struggling to pay this exorbitant rate. My Hydro bill and gas bill don't add up to my water bill. I am hoping you will print this article because I know how unhappy the people in this community are!

Sincerely, Anne Guest

Delegation of Concerned Citizens to Present at September 5th Council

Alexander Leach, Editor

A delegation of the Concerned Citizens of Cobden will present to the Township of Whitewater Region Council on Tuesday, September 5th at 1pm, regarding the growing water costs incurred due to the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

presentation by the community, and not a public meeting on a bylaw.

The 2019 Council approved the plan for the Wastewater plant, shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic.

Anne Guest of the Concerned Citizens of Cobden will bring

For clarification, this is a public

Continued on Page 2...

Water Costs in Cobden

Continued from Front...

forward the presentation amid growing concerns of increasing water costs incurred by residents of Cobden.

"I'm pretty sure we're over 200 signatures." Anne Guest said, referring to a petition circulated in Cobden businesses. "There's a lot of people who are going."

"It's not just seniors who are suffering, I have a disabled friend, she has to draw from her dead husband's pension fund to pay her water." she said. "I'm looking at it from a personal aspect. I know people who are retiring who say there's no way they'll retire in Cobden."

Guest expressed concerns about the Council's representation of Cobden in the Council, as well.

"There is not one Council member who lives in Cobden, so

It seems to be that if we're amalgamated area, we should have one person from this area."

Guest claims that the Wastewater plant's cost for construction was estimated without solid information.

Residents have sent in letters to the Whitewater news about water costs, and resident Donald Deer has provided context in previous issues regarding the plant's development.

Water costs in Cobden have increased steadily over the last three years, with recommended rate increases in 2022 being \$35.94.

Cobden's proposed water rate for residential and small businesses in 2023 was \$1,081.41 over the year, nearly double Pembroke's rate of \$544.65, according to Whitewater's February 1st Council draft budget and <https://pembroke.ca/en/living-here/water-and-sewer-services.aspx>.

Whitewaternews.ca (Alexander, 416-702-9478, editor@whitewaternews.ca)

Cobden Residents Demand Relief for Water Costs



Alexander Leach. Anne Guest (Left, by podium microphone) at the September 5th Special Council Meeting with Cobden residents.

Anne Guest spoke on behalf of the delegation for Concerned Citizens of Cobden and called for relief for the increasing water costs for Cobden.

Deputy Mayor Cathy Regier was present remotely due to an injury.

Councillor Chris Olmstead was not present at the meeting.

"We need an explanation for the enormous increase to our water/sewer rates." She said. "Originally, we were paying our bills on a quarterly basis and then went to

bi-monthly and in 2022 we saw an increase of 30 to 50 percent."

Guest said the rate had increased to double the amount of the rounding error.

"When JP2G finished the cost of building the treatment plant in 2012, understanding the estimate, which is estimated to have an accuracy of -30% to +50%," she said. "The estimate should have been approved as a project as a rate."

Continued on Page 2...

Whitewaternews.ca - Wednesday, April 17, 2024

Editorial Page

Letter

Cobden's wastewater plant fiasco

Dear Editor:

In December 2014 Whitewater Region council decided to apply for a grant through the Small Communities Fund (SCF) for the proposed new Cobden Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP).

Unfortunately not knowing what the cost was going to be WW got a cost estimate from an engineering consultant.

In June of 2015 Whitewater received notice their application was successful and the grant amount would be \$6,272,964.00 - two-thirds the total estimated cost of the plant.

To give Whitewater Region council some confidence the estimate was fairly accurate, in an August 19, 2015 council meeting the engineering consultant doubled down and stated the \$10,448,757 including HST was in his words: "a realistic cost estimate"

Of course it wasn't because when you don't yet know what you're going to build you can't give a number right to the dollar.

However in a September 16, 2015 council meeting council passed a by-law accepting the SCF Agreement and signing it. About 15 minutes later Whitewater, without going out for bids, sole sourced the Environmental Assessment and Project Management to the engineering consultant.

However, not going out for bids completely violated the terms of the SCF Agreement. The Ministry of Infrastructure tells me it's up to the recipient of the grant to make certain the rules are followed.

Unfortunately that didn't work out well for the residents in Cobden.

Fast forward to October 2017 in a meeting the engineering consultant indicated the intention to sole source the supplier of the Membrane Bio Reactor (MBR) to a company called H2O Innovation. A company that as far as we know had zero experience using MBR technology in wastewater treatment plants.

When the engineering consultant issued the tender document in May 2018 they doubled down and sole sourced the main equipment from H2O Innovation. This, of course, was in violation of the terms of the SCF Agreement.

Thursday, September 7, 2023

...gouged, I

burg's not paying the same, Westmeath's not paying the same," Moore replied.

shouted prompting the council

"Westmeath doesn't have water," Moore said. "They only have the three (other) services."

ould be

"Where is the benefit of amalgamation for people in Cobden?" Guest said.

lled it

"I was part of that amalgamation too. I was a rate payer and I'm still a rate payer." Moore said. "I didn't agree with it then and here we are now."

g.

Mayor Nicholson said he wanted to schedule a followup meeting with Guest about their requests and their expectations.

CAO Ivan Burton said that they would come back with a 'fulsome report' for the first meeting in October.

CONCERNED CITIZENS: TIMELINE

- September 5, 2023 - Anne Guest made a presentation to town council on behalf of the citizens of Cobden addressing concerns about the increasing water/sewer rates and the financial impact on property owners.
- October 18, 2023 - Council received a presentation from the Public Works Manager regarding the systems, user fees and next steps. A motion was passed that included the following:
 - Letters are issued to the *Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)*, and the *Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA)* outlining our challenges.
 - Meeting with our MP, MPP and *County of Renfrew* Warden to be arranged.
 - Staff to provide a report on options regarding efficiencies and revenue generation

CONCERNED CITIZENS: TIMELINE

- December 6, 2023 - Motion passed to support investigating our unaffordable water and wastewater rates including advocating to the County of Renfrew and establishing a Task Force.
- January 17, 2024 - Taskforce Terms of Reference approved.
- February 7, 2024 - By-law established to appoint members to the Task Force.



TASK FORCE

- ▶ Task Force Members
- ▶ Summary
- ▶ Meeting Overview
- ▶ Water Meters
- ▶ Recommendations

TASK FORCE MEMBERS

- **Anne Guest**, *Resident*
- **Robyn Voisey**, *Resident*
- **Julie Hennessy**, *Resident*
- **Randi Keith**, *Resident and Former Whitewater Region Employee*
- **Jim Labow**, *Resident and Former Whitewater Region Mayor*
- **Chris Olmstead**, *Member of Council*
- **Mike Moore**, *Member of Council*
- **Lane Cleroux**, *Manager of Public Works*
- **Deanna Nicholson**, *Environmental Services Superintendent*

SUMMARY

- *Whitewater Region Township* formed a Task Force in response to our increasing water / wastewater rates and the impact on our community.
- The Task Force conducted a thorough evaluation of our water and wastewater systems focusing on:
 - **Operational efficiency**
 - **Financial sustainability**
 - **Long-term viability**
- Our focus was to ensure our current systems remained reliable and capable of meeting our community's needs moving forward, as well as many discussions regarding affordability.

SUMMARY

- The Task Force convened seven times which included six sessions at the township office and a tour of the water and wastewater treatment facilities in Beachburg and Cobden.
- Individuals who contributed and presented during the sessions included:
 - Neil Nicholson, *Mayor Whitewater Region*
 - Ivan Burton, *Chief Administrative Office, Whitewater Region*
 - Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) *Staff*
 - Kurtis McGonegal, *Treasurer, Whitewater Region*
 - Daryl Abbs, *Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.*

MEETING OVERVIEW

➤ March 7, 2024

- Overview of water and wastewater systems in Cobden, Beachburg & Haley Station
- Review of current rates and current water and wastewater billing structure
- Summary of Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) presentation

➤ April 4, 2024

- Plant Tours (Cobden Wastewater/Water, Beachburg Water)

➤ April 22, 2024

- Water and wastewater financials presentation by the Treasurer
- System rate comparisons and challenges

MEETING OVERVIEW

➤ May 8, 2024

- Water and wastewater rate study and water financial plan presentation by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

➤ June 24, 2024

- Development of recommendations

➤ July 23, 2024

- Editing and voting on recommendations

➤ July 25, 2024

- Established priority and timelines for implementation of the recommendations

WATER METERS

- Switching to a metered system in Cobden was discussed.

Advantages

Can collect more accurate data on consumption habits

More easily identify classes of customers

More accurate and equitable billing

Real time data tracking

Identify water loss to fix infrastructure

Water conservation savings

Water conservation savings

Identify water loss to fix infrastructure

Disadvantages

Added capital costs including installation

Added infrastructure and technology costs

Installation costs that will be the responsibility of the users (approx. \$300 - \$700)

Lack of understanding and support

Lack of understanding and support

WATER METERS

- There are many different types of meters including:
 - **Direct Read meters** inside structures that require manual reading
 - **Remote Pulser Read meters** outside structures that require manual reading
 - **Automatic Remote Read meters** which are read with an outside remote device that can be recorded by drive-by in a vehicle
 - **Radio Frequency Read meters** which are connected to a transponder unit transmitting data via radio frequency signal.
- The more advanced the meters, the higher the cost to the users to have them installed.

WATER METERS

- The township needs to re-coup the money owed due to the Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade, so costs will still be high for a while.
- Water rate structure options include:
 - **Flat Rate** - Bill rate remains the same no matter how much is consumed.
 - **Constant Rate** - Bill increases in direct proportion to consumption.
 - **Declining Block** - Bill increases at a slow rate as volumes increase.
 - **Increasing Block** - Bill increases at a faster rate as volumes increase.
 - **Hump Back Rate** - Bill increases at a faster rate at the lower consumption amounts and then slows as volume increases.



TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are on the Whitewater Region Town Council agenda, to be approved on October 16, 2024.

A copy of the Task Force Final Report can be forwarded to those who would like to have a copy.

RECOMMENDATIONS – WATER QUALITY

Water Quality			
	Recommendation	Priority	Timeline
1.1	Increase proactive public education on water system quality issues (e.g. THMs, manganese, flushing, outages) using targeted community mail-outs (such as The Current and water billing inserts), the Township’s website, and social media channels.	High	Immediate
1.2	Improve public communication by implementing an automated notification system that users can sign up with to receive notifications of water quality and quantity-related issues or emergencies.	Medium	1-3 years
1.3	Develop a policy for public engagement when water quality issues occur.	High	Immediate
1.4	Examine the timing and frequency and communication of water quality issues and track their occurrence.	Medium	1-3 years
1.5	Investigate local weather stations to track and correlate weather impacting water quality for long-term trending and forecasting.	Low	3-5 years

RECOMMENDATIONS – WASTEWATER SYSTEM CAPACITY

Wastewater System Capacity Cont'd

	Recommendation	Priority	Timeline
2.1	Undertake a public education exercise on advertising what not to flush.	High	Immediate
2.2	Seek out and support water conservation opportunities, such as providing financial support for rain barrels at cost or discounts and increase public education on water conservation.	Medium	1-3 years
2.3	To encourage water conservation, enact year-round outdoor watering restrictions (for lawns, gardens and other outdoor water use) through a water and wastewater bylaw.	Medium	1-3 years
2.4	Include conservation requirements/policies in a water and wastewater bylaw that requires new construction and major renovations to include water conservation measures (e.g., low-flow toilets).	High	1-3 years
2.5	Require all new development to include stormwater management infrastructure in urban areas.	High	Immediate
2.6	Investigate the feasibility for all road reconstruction projects to include stormwater management infrastructure in urban areas.	Medium	Immediate

RECOMMENDATIONS – WASTEWATER SYSTEM CAPACITY

Wastewater System Capacity Cont'd

	Recommendation	Priority	Timeline
2.7	Implement a policy in a water and wastewater bylaw requiring the removal of roof leaders and sump pumps from sanitary connections in all existing buildings and new construction.	Medium	3-5 years
2.8	Include a strategy in the Township's Strategic Plan to address infiltration and inflow into the Cobden Wastewater Treatment Plant.	High	Immediate
2.9	Include wastewater effluent quality limits in a water and wastewater bylaw to ensure the continued and uninterrupted operation of the Cobden WWTP.	Medium	1-3 years
2.10	Include policies in a water/wastewater bylaw permitting the municipality to require engineering controls (e.g. holding tanks, pre-treatment) to ensure effluent discharges meet quality/quantity limits.	High	1-3 years
2.11	Include fines in a water and wastewater bylaw.	Medium	1-3 years
2.12	Investigate and test effluent discharged from commercial properties to reduce negative impacts on the Cobden WWTP.	High	Immediate
2.13	Investigate how many sump pumps and roof leaders are currently tied into the Cobden WWT collection system.	High	1-3 years

RECOMMENDATIONS – FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications			
	Recommendation	Priority	Timeline
3.1	Engage in public outreach for larger upcoming projects.	High	Immediate
3.2	Continue to examine opportunities other than user pay to fund the water and wastewater system, such as OCIF.	High	Immediate
3.3	Establish a policy of ‘shovel readiness’ for major projects before submitting funding applications.	High	Immediate
3.4	Require the fire department to pay for access to year-round water with this revenue directed to the water budget.	Medium	1-3 years
3.5	Investigate the appropriate reserve levels to meet future obligations for water and wastewater reserves and set these levels in policy.	High	Immediate
3.6	Ensure continuous updating of 10-year capital plans / asset management plans.	High	Immediate
3.7	Investigate the affordability of the current system to use this information as part of the grants application process.	High	Immediate
3.8.1	Identify available programs that provide financial assistance to senior and low-income households that help reduce household expenses.	High	Immediate

RECOMMENDATIONS – FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implication Cont'd

	Recommendation	Priority	Timeline
3.8.2	Inform the public about financial assistance programs that help reduce household expenses.	High	Immediate
3.8.3	Advocate to the County or Province to develop and increase financial assistance programs that reduce household expenses, including tax reduction initiatives.	High	Immediate
3.9	Investigate septic dumping stations and bulk water sales to increase revenue for the water/wastewater reserves.	Medium	1-3 years
3.10	Investigate efficiency initiatives and potential funding for water and wastewater systems.	High	Immediate

RECOMMENDATIONS – RATE STRUCTURE

Rate Structure

	Recommendation	Priority	Timeline
4.1	Re-evaluate rate classes (groupings and multiplication factors) as part of the 2024 Water and Wastewater Rate Study.	High	Immediate
4.2	Meter all high commercial users.	High	1-3 years
4.3	Meter all municipal buildings.	Medium	1-3 years
4.4	Meter all users subject to the Township receiving full funding for the purchase and installation of water meters.	High	1-3 years

RECOMMENDATIONS – OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Other Recommendations

	Recommendation	Priority	Timeline
5.1.1	Investigate the bylaws and policies of other municipalities regarding water, sewer and storm infrastructure with respect to ownership and property lines.	Low	1-3 years
5.1.2	Define in a water and wastewater bylaw the ownership and financial responsibilities of underground water and wastewater infrastructure (such as water mains and sanitary and storm sewers) between the Township and system users.	Low	1-3 years
5.1.3	Communicate ownership obligations to system users.	Low	1-3 years
5.2	Investigate the cost of proactively enforcing water and wastewater bylaw-related issues.	Low	1-3 years
5.3	Advocate to the County of Renfrew to prepare an annual County-wide comparison report detailing water/wastewater rates in each municipality.	Medium	Immediate
5.4.1	Undertake an independent audit / 3rd party review of the Cobden WWTP project.	High	Immediate

RECOMMENDATIONS – OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Other Recommendations Cont'd

	Recommendation	Priority	Timeline
5.4.2	Request a legal opinion based on the results of the independent audit/3rd party review.	High	Immediate
5.5	Explore tendering the operation of the water and wastewater systems.	High	1-3 years
5.6	Explore the tendering or sharing of services/operations/staff with other municipalities.	High	1-3 years
5.7	Explore moving operation of water and wastewater systems in-house.	High	Immediate
5.8	Review the implementation of the water and wastewater portion of development charges.	High	Immediate



THANK YOU