

# New Library opens

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The library, he said was "open for business."

In the meantime, the old library at 100 Holland Court sits empty - but not for long.

At a Special Meeting of the BWG Facilities Committee, on May 24, Councillors decided not to wait until the province has a change of heart and agrees to fund a family health team in Bradford. Instead, the Town will look at transforming the old Library into office space to house Engineering and Water Services. "There isn't any funding on the horizon for any new family health teams," Town manager Jay Currier said. "The probability is we're not going to see funding for family health teams in the short term - or the medium term."

Engineering is currently crammed into offices at 31 Barrie St., with no room for an additional employee the department needs to hire. As well, a leaking roof has caused water damage - and the growth of mold, which will take an estimated \$50,000 to remediate.

The situation is as bad for Water Services: 5 staff members housed in a single room at the Public Works Yard, with one washroom for both male and female employees. "It's pretty substandard," Currier said.

Mayor Doug White proposed using the old library for Engineering and Water - solving the space issue, and using "what we've got to the best of our abilities."

Councillor Gary Lamb agreed, noting that the library building is only 20 years old. "I'm not certain you'll have to do any major renovation," he said, calling it "a turnkey operation ready to go."

But Councillor Ron Simpson noted that a health facility had been an election promise. "Are we letting our ratepayers down if we don't follow through with that?"

No, said Mayor White, because it's in the province's hands. "No funding is on the table." He noted it would be better for the library to be used, than to sit empty.

The meeting was called to consider the future of the town's "surplus" facilities; with the old library possibly earmarked for Engineering, the future of 31 Barrie St. is up in the air. Staff were asked to look at the best use of the building - which could include its sale, or demolition for a municipal parking lot. Other surplus facilities:

. **The Bradford Community Centre**, when the new Leisure Centre opens in 2012. One suggestion is to use the arena as a temporary indoor works yard, for the Town's heavy equipment, currently sitting outside. But Councillor James Leduc was opposed. "I think people would be upset... This is a big beautiful park. I think we could really enhance that - a great in-town green space."

Other proposals included using the arena as a indoor skate park; relocating the food bank, Coats for Kids and The Hub to the dressing room areas - or mothballing the facility as a future ice rink. Staff was asked to report on the options; Councillor Peter Dykie Jr. suggested asking the public for input.

. **The St. Mary's School**, 31 Frederick St. The building houses CrossTrainers and The Hub Youth Centre, Coats for Kids, Happy Sixties Seniors' Club, and next door, the Helping Hand Food Bank - but is aging, and run down. "That's definitely got to go," said Councillor James Leduc, suggesting it was an ideal property for redevelopment as condominiums.

But first, warned Councillor Del Crane, "There must be a place for all these (users) to go, and not a place that's out of town." Crane noted that over 300 people use the food bank weekly. "These people count on the food bank to keep them alive, and they don't have cars."

"I wasn't going to bulldoze the building with the people still in it," replied Leduc, noting that "there's definitely mold in that building, and we're going to have trouble with asbestos when it comes down."

Staff were asked to look at possible uses for the site - and where current users could be relocated in the downtown.

Finally, Council considered the need for a new 50,000 sq. ft. Administration building - and voted to ask for Expressions of Interest in a public-private partnership, to construct the building in downtown Bradford.