

Blind River mayor reflects on 2021

Sally Hagman reflected on the year that passed and looks forward to a better 2022

[Kris Sveta](#) Jan 7, 2022 5:13 PM



Blind River mayor, Sally Hagman, is sworn in to council in 2018. Kris Sveta for ElliotLakeToday

ElliotLakeToday has received the following note from Blind River Mayor Sally Hagman.

In it, the mayor points to pandemic restrictions that were part of everyday life in 2021 and required adjustments in the way Blind River managed its services and the way businesses and residents made their own adjustments as restrictions were strengthened and relaxed.

The latest is the Omicron variant which will follow all Canadians into this year.

The following is a full text of Mayor Hagman's remarks:

2021 was a very interesting year!

Lockdown measures continued into the spring as a result of the escalating numbers from COVID 19.

There was the introduction of the vaccine along with second and third booster shots. There were many rules to ensure that we stayed distant and stayed safe.

There was the Delta virus and then the Omicron virus.

There were a number of impacts on businesses both large and small. Throughout the year, the Town of Blind River Staff attempted to ensure that all protocols set out by the province and Algoma Public Health were implemented. The town wanted to ensure that we were looking out for the greater good of all our residents.

Some of the decisions of council have been challenged. Residents felt inclined to vent their frustrations on social media as opposed to going through the complaint/concerns Form available on the town website.

Other people rose to champion positive outcomes such as the fundraiser orchestrated by the Blind River Rotary for the Bea Jensen Memorial Pavilion at Seller's Park. Mandy Speer, Ellis Nyman and Judy Brown took on the large flower beds on Causley Street and made them truly spectacular!

Kristy Blanchet is to be commended for organizing the Witches Walk and 'Fall in Love with Blind River.'

Blind River Figure Skating Club is recognized for the coordination of the Santa Claus parade. We are fortunate to have so many 'angels' in our community who are not looking for a pat on the back but enjoy intrinsic gratification knowing that they have made someone's day.

(At the beginning of 2021, mayor Hagman issued her own challenge to residents urging them to come up with 21 things they could accomplish to help raise their positive outlook.)

This could be either something like exercising for 21 days or it could be coming up with 21 different challenges.

I gave examples such as phoning 21 different friends or providing 21 random acts of kindness over the course of the year. I went on to state that the possibilities are limitless and it will not only improve your overall outlook, it could make an impact on the lives of someone else.

We know that as the pandemic drags on, it is affecting people's financial, physical and mental well-being and it is important for all of us to take stock on how our overall well-being is handling this pandemic situation.

I whole-heartedly commend the town staff for soldiering on during these difficult times; moving forward with many initiatives such as the new walking path at the end of Youngfox Road, the new street signs, playground signs and stop signs that have been placed throughout the community, making our playgrounds accessible and inclusive, the community improvement projects for our businesses and the pavilion at the Marina. Staff were able to find grants allowing us to upgrade

the town baseball field with the assistance of the Jays Care fund. Trail signage was 100 per cent funded.

Communications with the Town of Blind River have been made easier through the town website and through our weekly community updates. Residents are also encouraged to sign up to Instagram @ experience_blind_river to learn the latest news etc.

All meetings are now live-streamed to improve access and demonstrate the transparency of your town council.

During 2021, members of council and staff met via Zoom for budget, council, emergency management, protective services, police board, corporate services, infrastructure services, museum committee, community improvement committee and community services meetings. Council is also represented on the Blind River Development Board, library board, golf course board, Algoma District Social Services Board, ELNOS board, North Shore Power board, Algoma Public Health board, Huron North Community Economic Board and Blind River & District Chamber of Commerce. Two information sessions were held for the public in February and July.

During the 2021 year, 77 resolutions were passed and put in place resulting in advancement of our community!

With staff input, council was able to oversee the implementation of the asset management plan, strategic plan, service delivery review and budgeted initiatives worked on and, in many cases, brought to completion.

A lot of time and thought goes into keeping our community safe and beautiful; public works and parks and recreation staff are to be congratulated. The world of administering the town falls on our CAO/Clerk Katie Scott and her team to ensure that our water/wastewater, budget, planning and protection are well planned and implemented.

With the beginning of 2022, Staff and Council will be finalizing the town's budget. We will be following the provincial direction as it pertains to the pandemic. We know that there is a provincial election in June and a municipal election in October and we hope that our residents will continue to follow our website and our weekly information updates to stay current on what is happening in Blind River.

As mayor of Blind River, my goal is to continue to look for all the possibilities for our community and work towards ensuring that we keep an optimistic focus as the future has exciting initiatives coming our way.