

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES BUDGET MEETING – APRIL 16, 2018

Minutes of the Fire Department budget meeting held on Monday, April 16, 2018 at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Present: Mayor Vezina
Councillors: Foekens, Loan
Clerk-Treasurer Buob

Visitors: Fire Chief Henry Mattas
Leadhand Kelly Johnson
Fire Department members – Greg Biloski, Paul Phillips,
Fire Department Auxiliary members – Cheri Biloski, Gayle Poohachoff,
Linda Racicot
Wendy Handy, Erin Laforest

Absent: Councillor Racicot

Mayor Vezina called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Fire Chief Henry Mattas was welcomed to the table. The Fire Department draft #1 budget was reviewed. Items were discussed line by line.

Under Capital purchases Fire Chief Mattas explained that he has included one set of turnout gear, however he has been informed that more suits will need to be purchased this year due to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards. There is money in the turn out gear reserve that could be used. He has just taken an inventory of the suits tonight prior to the meeting and he will still have to confirm how many he will need to purchase. He will also get quotes on new suits to confirm the costs and this line item will have to be adjusted.

Loan payments on the fire trucks will remain the same as previous years. This amount is principal only as the interest is included in the administration budget.

The honourarium for the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief remained the same as last year. If Council would like to increase it, it will be their option. Fire Chief Mattas is asking for a \$500 increase in total member honourarium, which is distributed to the members on a points system, one point for attendance at training, meetings or a call.

Under Fire Department training, Fire Chief Mattas noted that he finds it hard to budget this line item as he does not know how many members are interested in attending Fire Con until closer to the date as the members do not commit to attending this early due to work schedules, etc. Last year he only budgeted for two and six members attended. On this budget he has included for six to attend. The Mental Health course has already taken place and is included on this line. Due to the need for drivers of the fire trucks he is budgeting for one member to take the driver training course. He does have a concern with regard to this training as the department has paid for members to get their licence and then the member does not go out and practice after they get their licence. He would like to see them driving more to get comfortable with the equipment. If an emergency call comes in they will be less nervous in a stressful situation.

The operating and maintenance lines for the equipment were discussed. At this time Fire Chief Mattas does not anticipate any major repairs on any of the equipment. A pump test on the pumper is included. Council suggested that there be an increase on the operating line for fuel for the side-by-side as it should be used for more training. One new radio has been purchased and a few new batteries for the pagers are being budgeted for.

Under Public Education the expenses for the Fire Smart Day are included at the same amount as the grant which will show on the revenue side, to offset these costs. A portion of the Cornerstone expense is also posted to this account. Fire Department recruitment and the Halloween BBQ are also included in this line.

Under Fire Hall maintenance Fire Chief Mattas asked Ms. Biloski to provide Council with information with regard to washroom renovations. Ms. Biloski described the current

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condition of the washroom in the fire hall in regards to the toilet, shower, wash tubs, washing machine and the eye wash station. The Auxiliary members and the Fire Department members are dissatisfied with the current condition and have collected some quotes to have the washroom renovated. These quotes are only for budget purposes and if the project is approved formal quotes will be requested. Fire Chief Mattas also noted that he has done some weather stripping around the doors and he will be doing some more, he would also like to purchase a work bench.

A new account has also been started for operating and maintenance of the miscellaneous equipment such as the portable equipment, pumps, saws, generators etc.

Fixed costs were then discussed, including memberships, hydro, communications and heating. Fire Chief Mattas will check the current level of the propane tank and determine how many more fills may be required and this line item may need to be made higher.

Insurance and VFIS were discussed. The vehicle and building insurance are actuals for the year. The VFIS is an insurance coverage for the members. The members receive 24 hour coverage for accidental death or dismemberment. If the member would like to increase the coverage for their family they can pay the difference between the single and family rate. Currently two members have chosen family and the reimbursement is included in the Fire Department revenue account to offset that portion of this cost.

Under the EHT and WSIB line the Clerk-Treasurer reported there is an additional amount included due to a recent WSIB audit. The audit has determined that when a new member joins the department the Township is required to pay for the entire year not just from the month that they joined and forward. Mayor Vezina would like this information in writing so that he can take this to the MPP's office as this does not seem reasonable.

The Fire Department "Other" account which includes, Driver's Abstracts, Employee and Family Assistance Program and the Ministry of Transportation ARIS application fee has been moved from an operating cost to a fixed cost in the Fire Departments budget form. The Clerk-Treasurer reported that the ARIS is the Ministry program that allows the Fire Department to get the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) report from an accident in the Township in which they have attended. This is a one-time fee which was approved last year. The process was started but not completed in time for 2017 and has been submitted in 2018.

The Fire Department revenue account includes the FireSmart grant, the VFIS reimbursement and the sale of smoke/co alarm sales.

Council asked those present if they had any questions or comments to ask Council with regard to the budget. Mr. Biloski noted that he has recently looked at turnout gear prices and depending on the type of suit they were between \$1,500 and \$1,800 per suit.

Fire Chief Mattas would like to see the government kick in some funding opportunities with the regulations that they are imposing on the Township's. The NFPA regulation states that a suit expires when it is ten years old, whether it has ever been worn, in a fire or not. This is unrealistic for a small municipality with minimum calls to justify the cost.

Ms. Racicot noted that the utility trailer which is to be towed by the side-by-side is too heavy on the tongue when it is loaded with the equipment. The auxiliary is willing to purchase a new lighter trailer and would like to sell the current trailer and use the proceeds to offset the costs. They would like to ask Council if this would be acceptable to them. Council agreed that this would be a reasonable request and agreed to allow the sale revenue to offset the purchase.

The Fire Department Auxiliary have also purchased a new laptop for the department and have the old one cleaned out of all information and have noted that it could also be repurposed or sold.

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Council thanked Fire Chief Mattas and the department members for attending the meeting and presenting the Fire Department budget. Fire Chief Mattas, Greg Biloski, Linda Racicot, Cheri Biloski and Gayle Poohachoff left the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Mr. Johnson was then welcomed to the table to discuss the Road Department draft #1 budget. Items were discussed line by line. Ratepayer revenue was briefly discussed. At this time no requests have been made for contract work and the snowplowing is based on actual to date plus a small amount estimated for one plowing at the end of the year.

Mr. Johnson discussed some of the training he has planned for this year, mostly refresher courses. Some of the courses have already been taken and others are currently being scheduled.

The Building Maintenance account for the municipal garage was reviewed. One of the issues noted on the Health and Safety reports is the air quality in the garage when starting up the trucks. Mr. Johnson has looked into the options of an air exchange unit. This would require filters and environmental monitoring. If you are pumping out cold air you have to return with heated air. The total cost of such a system would be approximately \$20,000. Due to the age of the building and the hopes to build a new garage in the next few years, the cost of this purchase does not seem feasible. They do have a safe work practices posted which currently describes the process of how they go about starting the trucks and purging the building before reentering to work in the area.

The loan payments will be higher than last year due to the purchase of the backhoe in 2017. A loan was taken out later in the year with only three months of payments. The amount included on this line is only the principle portion of the loan and the interest is included in the administration budget.

Under Capital Mr. Johnson does not plan on purchasing any major capital items this year but would like to purchase a cordless pole saw under minor capital.

Road Employee wages and payroll costs were reviewed. It was noted that some of the salaries are distributed to the different departments, such as cemetery or disposal site for the time spent there by the road employees. The wages for the employees working on Projects #1 and #2 are also included in those line items. The time spent on the Federal Gas Tax projects are not pulled out as they are not eligible expenses under that program.

The equipment operating costs were reviewed. This cost includes fuel to run the equipment, safety checks and plates for the trucks. Maintenance for each piece of equipment was also discussed. Mr. Johnson noted that Truck #7 continues to have oil leaks which will be covered under warranty and Truck #9 has continued the odd time to puff smoke when it has been sitting for a few days. The mechanics have been notified of this.

Road Materials were discussed. Mr. Johnson noted the cost of calcium is going up this year. He is budgeting for three loads plus the amount that go towards the resurfacing projects are included with the projects. He also noted that he has been working with the Township of Conmee to get a price for winter sand through them. If their Council agree to the price in the discussion with their Road Superintendent there could be a savings of approximately \$3,000 compared to the current supplier, however we would have to mix and pay for a large quantity upfront.

The 2018 road projects were discussed. Currently the only repairs planned for the bridges in this budget are the replacements of posts at the Blaikie Bridge #1. There will be a bridge and structure study done this year for three bridges and two large structures. Mr. Johnson would like to do more brushing and ditching this year along with resurfacing of Loghrin Road, one mile of Connolly Road and Holomego Road. The Federal Gas Tax funds will be used for two miles of the resurfacing projects. The funding received from the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF) for 2018 will be saved to help offset a larger project for Bridge #3 in 2019 and a portion of the Beaver Dam Creek culvert on Sitch Road in 2020.

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The budgets will continue to be updated with comments or concerns from this meeting or if actual expenses are occurred and will be discussed further at the full budget meeting to be held on Tuesday, May 15, 2018 at 7 p.m.

Mr. Johnson was thanked for attending and presenting his budget and it was

1. Moved by B. J. Loan
Seconded by K. Foekens

THAT THE BUDGET MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 23, 2018 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS.

TIME BEING: 8:45 P.M.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk-Treasurer