

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – JUNE 8, 2020

Minutes of the meeting held virtually on Monday, June 8, 2020 at 7 p.m. from the Municipal office and Council Chambers.

Present: Mayor Vezina
 Councillors: Crane, Handy, Loan, Racicot
 Clerk-Treasurer Buob (in the Municipal office)
 Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot (in the Municipal office)

Visitors: Kelly Johnson, Leadhand (in the Council Chambers)
 Paul & Janice LeBoeuf

Mayor Vezina called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Disclosure of pecuniary interest and general nature thereof:
 Councillor Racicot declared an interest in item 15 a) Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Notice to bargain, as his spouse is an employee of the Township. Mayor Vezina declared an interest in item 11 a) Tenders and Quotes as he is an employee of the company tendering a price to supply.

1. Moved by B. J. Loan
 Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, MAY 25, 2020 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.

Carried

Visitors on-line were recognized as being in attendance.

Mr. Johnson, Leadhand, was welcomed to the meeting and was asked for a Road Department update and to discuss roadwork in general. Mr. Johnson reported that the detour, for the Highway 595 closure, is operational. Mr. Johnson is watching the weather and will be preparing for the application of dust control on the Township road system. He is waiting until after the rain which is forecasted for this week. The Groundskeeper has been hired and has cut and trimmed all the grass on the municipal properties. A site visit for the culvert replacement construction has been held at Beaver Dam Creek on Sitch Road. Five contractors attended and quotes will be submitted for the next meeting. The three miles of road resurfacing should be starting in a few weeks. Mr. Johnson has been in touch with the belly dump truck companies and he would like to avoid the detour if possible. He does not see COVID-19 preventing him from getting all of the planned jobs done this year.

Mr. Johnson was asked if he had seen any items of interest at the upcoming Ritchie Bros. auction. Mr. Johnson noted that you have to book an appointment to view the items and he will go and look around prior to the auction. Mr. Johnson will stay at the meeting for the opening of the tenders and quotes.

The summary of the Voucher for June 8, 2020 was reviewed. No questions arose and it was

2. Moved by Bishop Racicot
 Seconded by B. J. Loan

THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2020-11 DATED JUNE 8, 2020 TOTTALLING \$57,045.24 BE APPROVED AND PAID.

Carried

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditure to May 31, 2020 were reviewed.

The decision from the Lakehead Rural Planning Board for Application 1B/02/20 – Tempelman was read. The application has been approved by the Board.

Tenders and Quotes were then discussed. The Clerk-Treasurer has all documents in sealed envelopes in the Municipal Office. Mayor Vezina turned the meeting over to Acting Mayor Handy and she took the chair. Mr. Johnson, Leadhand, and Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot were witness to the openings.

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- a) Opening of Tenders for the purchase of culverts for Beaver Dam Creek on Sitch Road project. Two tenders were received. The Clerk-Treasurer opened each one and noted the prices. Artmec's quote came in at a cost of \$26,541.00, including freight and taxes extra. The second quote from Atlantic Industries Limited (AIL) came in at \$33,949.20, however due to COVID-19 they are unable to supply a 2.8 Gauge Aluminized steel and meet the June 26th delivery deadline and have substituted a 3.5 Gauge Aluminized steel. It was also noted that the corrugation profile was not defined in the tender document and they are following the MTO Ontario Provincial Standard Drawing. Council discussed the two quotes and it was agreed to accept the lower bid and it was

3. Moved by Bishop Racicot
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE TENDER OF ARMTEC BE ACCEPTED FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF 60 METRES TOTAL LENGTH OF 1,800 MM DIAMETER ALUMINIZED CULVERTS FOR SITCH ROAD AT BEAVER DAM CREEK AT A COST OF \$26,541.00 PLUS HST.

Carried

Mr. Johnson will review the documents further to ensure proper compliance with regard to the corrugation profile.

Mayor Vezina returned to the meeting and resumed chair.

- b) Opening of Quotes for the Bridge and Structure Study were opened. Two applications were received. The first quote opened was from JML Engineering for \$4,800.00 plus HST. The second quote was from WSP Canada for \$2,820 plus HST. Both companies have worked for the Township in the past and there have been no concerns. It was

4. Moved by B. J. Loan
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE QUOTE OF WSP CANADA TO CONDUCT A COMPLETE STRUCTURAL INSPECTION OF THREE BRIDGES AND TWO CORRUGATED STEEL BOX CULVERTS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR AT A COST OF \$2,820.00 PLUS HST BE ACCEPTED.

Carried

- c) Opening of Quotes for the Township of O'Connor Audit for the years 2020, 2021, 2022 and 2023 were opened. Two quotes were received. The first from Grant Thornton, LLP. The total for service as requested for 2020, - \$14,900, 2021 - \$15,350, 2022 - \$15,800 and 2023 - \$16,450, before office administration and technology charges, disbursements and applicable taxes. The second quote was from BDO Canada LLP. The proposed fees for the engagement were as follows: 2020 - \$15,000, 2021 - \$15,250, 2022 - \$15,500 and 2023 - \$16,000 plus HST, with no out-of-pocket expenses. The Township has worked with both companies and has no concerns with either. It was

5. Moved by B. J. Loan
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE QUOTE OF BDO CANADA LLP TO CONDUCT THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR AUDIT FOR A FOUR YEAR TERM, THOSE YEARS BEING 2020, 2021, 2022 AND 2023, AT A COST OF \$15,000.00, \$15,250.00, \$15,500.00 AND \$16,000.00 RESPECTIVELY, BE ACCEPTED.

Carried

Resolutions for endorsement were read as follows:

- a) Town of Oakville requesting urgent action to ensure the safe re-introduction of patio services for restaurants. It was noted that the Province has already announced regulation changes to allow for outdoor patios and the resolution was filed.

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- b) Township of Puslinch requesting the Province review the Farm Property Class Tax Rate Programme. As the resolution was referring to another resolution in which they were endorsing and no additional information was provided clarifying the concerns this resolution was filed.

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC) – i) Draft Minutes of meeting held on May 5, 2020. The Clerk-Treasurer noted that these minutes have since been Approved, as amended, with corrections made to how each municipal office is conducting business during the COVID-19. It was noted that the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) is requesting that Municipalities track expenses and loss of revenue due to COVID-19. The Clerk-Treasurer confirmed that this information is currently being tracked for the Township of O'Connor.
- ii) Report from meeting held on June 4, 2020 with CAO/Clerk's with regard to Broadband application. The Clerk-Treasurer provided a report of the meeting. Ms. Kromm, from the Municipality of Neebing, has been speaking with Mr. Jeff Coull from the Innovation Centre and he is willing to help the Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC) Municipalities with an application. There are multiple steps that have to be taken prior to applying for funding. Information will have to be collected, including speed tests from our residents through the Innovation Centre's website. This request for residents to do the speed test is currently on the Township's website and will be included in the July issue of the Cornerstone. The test results will go directly to the Innovation Centre and will not have to be tracked by the Township. They are also asking information for 10 – 20 sites within the Township as to how the residents receive their internet. The Clerk-Treasurer would like each of the Council members to provide this information and administration will contact others throughout the Township to see how they are getting their service and map it for reference. A second virtual meeting has been set for June 16, 2020 with Mr. Coull attending to discuss further.
- b) The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBSSAB) – Update from the Board – May 31, 2020.
- c) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – i) AMO COVID-19 Update – May 27, 2020 - Emergency Orders Extended and Next Steps on Long-Term Care.
- ii) AMO COVID-19 Update – May 28, 2020 – Looking Ahead.
- iii) AMO COVID-19 Update – May 28, 2020 – Pandemic Pay Update.
- iv) AMO COVID-19 Update – June 1, 2020 - Federal Gas Tax Funding Accelerated, Pandemic Pay, ESA Changes, Additional Re-openings.
- v) AMO COVID-19 Update – June 3, 2020 – Broadband Funding Announcement, Emergency Extended, and Pandemic Pay Webinar.
- v) i) Ontario Improving Broadband and Cell Service for Rural Communities.
- v) ii) Ontario – Up to Speed: Ontario's Broadband and Cellular Action Plan. Council would like an outreach letter sent to the local MPP's, the MP, as well as Minister Rickford, Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines, and Minister Clark, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing asking for clarification on this funding for Northwestern Ontario.
- vi) AMO COVID-19 Update – June 8, 2020 – Regional Approach to Stage 2, Emergency Orders Extended, and Short-Term Rentals.
- d) Northern Policy Institute – Click this Link! Or Should I?
- e) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing – Minister's letter to Federal Ministers – copy of letter calling for urgent federal action to provide immediate funding for reliable broadband access across Ontario.

Mr. Johnson, Leadhand, left the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

Under Old Business, Council discussed

- a) The Township of O'Connor's draft resolution with regard to high-speed internet was once again discussed. Amendments were made and it was

6. Moved by B. J. Loan
Seconded by A. Crane

WHEREAS the need for high-speed internet services is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity that the whole of society requires for the future of our education, healthcare and economy; and

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WHEREAS Provincial educational requirements are now demanding the need for students to work online to complete assignments, working collaboratively within groups to complete assignments and accessing online documents and videos to complete their work and increase their knowledge; and

WHEREAS due to the worldwide pandemic crisis, rural Ontarians are not only required to work and teach their children online from the confines of their home, but also to limit their social contact through online ordering of food and other necessary items, attending doctor appointments virtually, as well as to attend board, association or other necessary meetings;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Township of O'Connor respectfully requests that the Federal and Provincial governments prioritize measures to speed up the process to improve rural communities throughout Northwestern Ontario's access of high-speed internet services; and that these measures once enacted will show actual improvements to rural communities for which they are intended, and

THAT this resolution be sent to the Lakehead Rural Municipal Association (LRMC) members, the Thunder Bay District Municipal League (TBDML) and the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) for endorsement and support.

Carried

Under further Old Business Mayor Vezina informed Council that he has spoken with Fire Chief Mattas in regard to the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) currently included in the budget. Fire Chief Mattas has requested the purchase of six new bottles in his capital budget. He has been asked to confirm how many bottles he does have in working order. Mayor Vezina asked the Clerk-Treasurer to update Council on the findings. The Clerk-Treasurer reported that she did attend the Fire Hall with Fire Chief Mattas and counted the bottles. There are currently thirteen tested bottles in working order. Fire Chief Mattas has, since the budget meeting, received a donation of seven additional bottles from a neighbouring municipality. These bottles have since been tested and have passed and can be added to the inventory, bringing the total count to twenty bottles. This number is sufficient for the department and the purchase of the new ones can now be removed from the budget. Council asked that a thank you letter be sent to the Municipality.

Councillor Racicot left the meeting.

Under New Business, Council discussed

a) The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)'s letter with regard to Notice to Bargain. The Road Employees union contract expires on August 1, 2020. Council discussed who would like to be on the Negotiating Committee and it was

7. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by W. Handy

THAT THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS OF COUNCIL BE APPOINTED TO THE NEGOTIATION COMMITTEE:

MAYOR VEZINA, COUNCILLOR CRANE, COUNCILLOR LOAN

Carried

Possible dates to negotiate were discussed and it was suggested the week of August 17 to 21, 2020. These dates will be forwarded to the Union to see if they work for them and an official date will be set upon their response.

Councillor Racicot returned to the meeting.

b) Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) – Sergeant Katherine Ross – regarding the OPP Section 10 Contract update. Ms. Ross is sending this update to cover some items in relation to the next steps. They are suggesting that Council start to think of the length of the new term of the next contract. Following Council's review of the new contract

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proposal later in the fall a by-law accepting the proposal will have to be passed. Councillor Loan was asked if he had anything to add to this email, as the Township's representative on the Lakehead Police Services Board. At this point he knew nothing about this document and will contact the Chair of the Board, Mayor Holland and report back at the next meeting.

- c) There were no applications for the casual Disposal Site Caretaker position. It was suggested that we ask the new Groundskeeper if he might be interested in the position.

Under further New Business, it was suggested that the Township purchase a medical thermometer to check the temperature of those entering the office, during COVID-19. Each Council member was asked of their opinion. Concerns were discussed. Staff was also asked if they wanted to do this. It was noted that the door is locked and a minimal number of people are coming into the office. There are also signs on the door asking that if they have any symptoms, including fever, that they do not enter. Staff are self-monitoring and if they are not feeling well have been asked to stay home. It was agreed to not purchase a thermometer.

Issues brought forward or letters received after the agenda was mailed were read as follows:

- a) Office of the Premier – News Release June 8, 2020 – Ontario Permits More Businesses and Services to Reopen in the Coming Days. Increasing the limit on social gatherings from 5 to 10 people. Council was asked if they would like to move back to in-person meetings or continue virtually. A discussion was held and it was agreed to hold the next meeting on June 22, 2020 virtually and it will be discussed further at that meeting how they would like to hold the July 13th meeting.
- b) Attorney General – regarding the regulatory changes to allow licensed establishments to extend their outdoor patio licenses due to COVID-19.
- c) Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario – regarding Regulation 719 under the Liquor Licence Act.
- d) Office of Greg Rickford, MPP, Minister of Energy, Northern Development and Mines, Minister of Indigenous Affairs Ontario – i) email request for feedback regarding the Northern Ontario Municipal and Community Survey. A copy of the survey was also provided for Council's review. Council agreed to share comments via email with regard to the survey questions and a response will be submitted.
- e) Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) email regarding Property Inspections Resume. MPAC is gradually resuming exterior inspections on June 15 for four communities. The gradual start will allow them time to ensure the protocols are working and ensure they are prepared to return to serving all municipalities. MPAC offices will remain closed.

For information purposes no building permits have been approved since the last meeting.

It was

8. Moved by W. Handy
Seconded by B. J. Loan

THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD VIRTUALLY ON JUNE 22, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M FROM THE O'CONNOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND MUNICIPAL OFFICE.

TIME BEING: 9:25 P.M.

Mayor

Clerk-Treasurer