

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES BUDGET MEETING – MAY 15, 2018

Minutes of the budget meeting held on Tuesday, May 15, 2018 at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Present: Mayor Vezina
Councillors: Foekens, Handy, Loan, Racicot,
Clerk-Treasurer Buob
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot
Administrative Assistant Erin Laforest
Fire Chief Henry Mattas
Leadhand Kelly Johnson arrived at 7:30 p.m.

Mayor Vezina called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Disclosure of pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof: none.

Mayor Vezina turned the meeting over to the Clerk-Treasurer to present the full draft budget line by line. The Clerk-Treasurer explained how the line numbers were presented and how the taxation revenue included in draft #1 budget was determined. This is the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation's (MPAC) second year of reassessment values, and the large increase in the Township's overall assessment values. The revenue taxation in the draft is based on the 2018 assessment values and 2017 tax rates. This formula would result in an increase of \$92,000 of taxation revenue over 2017. The line items in accounts 4020 and 4040, titled Taxation Arrears are actually the Education taxes for budget purposes. The bottom line of the full budget shows the variance required to balance the budget as presented.

The rest of the revenue accounts were explained. The Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) for 2018 is \$21,700 less than what was received in 2017 and will continue to go down each year. There is a new government fund for cannabis implementation included. There is also a new Main Street Revitalization grant. The grant is included as revenue and as an expense in the same amount. The Township has also applied for a FCC Canada – AgriSpirit fund for renovations to the outdoor rink area, which is included in the budget at this time but has not been approved to date. An expense account has also been setup in the same amount for the renovations.

Transferring from Reserves was discussed. An amount will be pulled out of the Federal Gas Tax Reserve to cover the cost of 2018 projects, if approved by Council. The balance in the Fire Department Turnout Gear reserve will also be pulled out in its entirety to cover a portion of the costs of the new suits required to be purchased this year.

The reimbursement revenue line includes large item purchases made by the O'Connor Fire Department Auxiliary charged to the Township and reimbursed by the Auxiliary.

The meeting continued with the review of the expenses for the Township.

Council meeting expenses were discussed. Special meeting and conference attendances were confirmed with each member of Council. It was noted that the Council member honourarium expenses have been separated from registration, flight and accommodation expenses for easier yearend T-4 reporting.

The Administration salaries line does include both full time staff and the administrative assistants wages. The Admin-finance and bank charges line includes the interest of the three loans currently held by the Township. These loans are all for equipment purchases. It was noted that 2017 was the last year for the debenture for the Sitch Road culvert, however the backhoe loan was added in 2017. The staff are recommending a new computer and programming for three computers be purchased this year.

The O'Connor Community Centre and Municipal Office expenses were reviewed. It was noted that the hydro and the heat lines for both buildings are now combined together. The security cameras were discussed for the municipal yard. The current system is battery operated and it has been suggested that we switch to a hardwired system as the batteries are expensive. It was further discussed and agreed that to install a new hardwired system would be too expensive at this time. The outdoor lighting on the

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office building was discussed and it was suggested that the lighting be changed to an LED system. This will be looked into further to see if it would qualify for funding. The Clerk-Treasurer noted the need for additional storage in the office and noted that a cabinet and shelving unit are included in the budget.

The cemetery was discussed. As was discussed in the fall of 2017 the cremated ashes garden and the other structures are in need of maintenance. An amount has been included in this budget to cover these costs. The unmarked graves in the main portion of the cemetery are not being addressed at this time.

The disposal site was discussed. The casual employee has been spending extra time at the site cleaning and picking up bags. There are no major issues with the compacting truck so only regular maintenance and fuel are being budgeted. The purchase of a third bin has been previously discussed to allow for two bins at the site at all times, one for each paper/cardboard and plastics one and two. It was decided not to purchase at this time and to continue to watch for possible funding sources for the purchase.

The joint board expenses were reviewed. The Lakehead Police Services Board expenses was discussed briefly with Councillor Loan to ensure an accurate amount was included in the budget.

The government mandated programs were reviewed including Land Ambulance, Policing, Property Assessment, Public Health and DSSAB. It was noted that these programs are \$15,354.93 higher than in 2017 with the Council having no say in the amount that the Township will pay.

Reserve allocations were briefly discussed and \$500.00 has been added to the Disposal Site reserve.

2018 municipal election expenses have also been added to the budget.

The Clerk-Treasurer was thanked for presenting the budget and Fire Chief Mattas was welcomed to the table to discuss any changes made to the Fire Department budget since the previous budget meeting held on April 16, 2018. Fire Chief Mattas updated Council with regard to the turnout gear and the number of suits required this year. He has determined that eight suits will be purchased. The Clerk-Treasurer also noted that the ARIS original amount of \$250 has been pulled out of the budget. This is a program administered through the Ministry of Transportation where the Township can request reports for accident that occur within the Township of O'Connor. As we continued with the process of registering for this program it became apparent that the security requirements to access this information were not worth the effort with the minimal number of reports that would be requested, The Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief's honourarium has not been increased at this time but if Council would like to provide an increase it would be welcomed.

Fire Chief Mattas was thanked for attending and he left the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Mr. Kelly Johnson, Leadhand, was welcomed to the table to review the Road Department's portion of the budget and explain any changes which have been made since draft #1 which was presented on April 16, 2018. It was noted that \$200 had been added to the building repairs and maintenance line for waste oil pickup. Mr. Johnson also noted that under tools he would like to purchase a sand blaster for doing repairs/body work to the 4x4 truck and equipment. The purchase price is comparable to a rental fee and could be used for other projects. He also provided Council with more information on the combi system he would like to purchase rather than just a polesaw requested at the last meeting.

Council discussed the budget further and adjusted line items were they felt they were required. The increase in the taxes is unacceptable with the numbers presented and it was agreed to pull monies from the reserves to help cover the costs of the office equipment, the full costs of the turnout gear for the Fire Department will come from the turnout gear reserve as well as the Fire Department reserve. The renovations to the Fire hall washroom will come from the Municipal Building reserve.

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The Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief’s honourarium was discussed further. It was agreed that with all the new responsibility’s and extra training requirements coming forth, that both the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief’s monthly honourarium will be increased.

The Road Projects were discussed and it was agreed to continue with all the projects proposed, however the Township’s own budget project costs will be lowered slightly.

It was noted that again due to the reassessment all properties will be affected differently.

The Clerk-Treasurer will make the changes as agreed to by Council, as well as any others that come in as actual prior to approval and present the final copy and the By-law to accept the budget and tax rates at the next Council meeting.

Everyone was thanked for attending the budget meeting and it was

- 1. Moved by Bishop Racicot
Seconded by K. Foekens

THAT THE BUDGET MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON MONDAY, MAY 28, 2018 AT 7:00 P.M.

TIME BEING: 9:32 P.M.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk-Treasurer