

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – APRIL 11, 2023

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Tuesday, April 11, 2023 at 7 p.m. in the O'Connor Council Chambers and virtual.

Present: Mayor Vezina
Councillors: Crane, Sobolta, Torkkeli
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot
Administrative Assistant Erin Laforest

Visitors: Angie Heath, John Heath
Trevor LaFreniere, Mitchell Malcolm, Jamie Hays – Tbaytel
Jeff Coull, Northern Ontario Innovation Centre
Jules Tupker, Thunder Bay Ontario Health Coalition
Kelly Johnson, Leadhand
Lorna Buob, Clerk-Treasurer (virtual)

Absent: Councillor Racicot

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

1. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by C. Torkkeli

THAT THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING BE APPROVED.

Carried

Disclosure of pecuniary interest and general nature thereof: none

2. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2023 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.

Carried

Mrs. Angie Heath and Mr. John Heath were asked if they wished to address Council and they replied yes. Council agreed to hear Mr. & Mrs. Heath. Mr. Heath stated that he is unable to attend the Northwestern Ontario Recreational Trails Association's Open House Information Session that is being held on Tuesday, April 18, 2023 with regard to the proposed Non-Motorized Recreation Trail. He would like Council to know that he is opposed to the plan to use Loghrin Road as part of the trail system as there is already enough traffic on the road. Mr. Heath was thanked for his comment.

Mr. LaFreniere, Mr. Malcolm, Mr. Hays and Mr. Coull were welcomed to the table. Introduction were made. Mr. LaFreniere gave a brief overview of the status of the Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition's (LRMC) application for funding for highspeed internet. Mr. Coull gave a brief description of the role that the Northern Ontario Innovation Centre (NOIC), and also submitted the application on behalf of the LRMC. NOIC is the recipient of the approved funding. Tbaytel will be partnering with NOIC to design and build a state-of-the-art fibre network in the municipalities represented by the LRMC.

Mr. LaFreniere presented Council with a PowerPoint presentation that illustrated the project highlights which included mapping of the areas covered by the project, the number of homes and the timeline as to when and where the fibre will be installed. The project will bring fibre to 2,697 addresses within the municipalities represented by the LRMC. \$34 million in combined federal and provincial funding was approved.

The funding was for a three-year build (2022-2025) that will bring fibre throughout areas of the Townships of O'Connor, Conmee and Gillies and the Municipalities of Neebing, Oliver-Paipoonge and Shuniah. The timeline of when fibre will be available to the residents of these municipalities will depend on how quickly permits are approved by Hydro One, as Tbaytel will be utilizing the hydro poles to run the fibre. It was commented that engineering studies for each pole would have to be undertaken and that they may result in a number of hydro poles being replaced.

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The Tbaytel representatives were asked if they could clarify information that the Township of O'Connor received in an e-mail from the Ministry of Infrastructure on March 20, 2023, regarding an Update to the Accelerated High Speed Internet Program (AHSIP). In the e-mail it was noted that the Township of O'Connor was identified as being included in one or more of the project areas as part of the reverse auction process and that there were addresses within the Township that were removed from the AHSIP program. It was also noted that other member municipalities of the LRMC have not received a similar e-mail. Mr. LaFreniere commented that Tbaytel had the LRMC coverage area excluded from the bid lot for the AHSIP as there was already an application in the works. He could only speculate as to why they have removed addresses as Bell, not Tbaytel, was the successful bidder for the area in question.

Mr. Malcolm asked if we could provide him with a list of civic addresses for the Township to ensure that the entire Township is covered in the project. Mr. LaFreniere would like us to look further into which addresses have been removed from the AHSIP list so Tbaytel can determine if they can be included in the LRMC project.

Mr. Lafreniere was asked if Tbaytel had any promotional material that we can share with our residents. He did indicate that there was an interactive map on their website and they would definitely be willing to share any material to promote the project.

Mr. LaFreniere, Mr. Hays, Mr. Malcolm and Mr. Coull were thanked for attending tonight's meeting and left at 7:45 p.m.

Mr. Jules Tupker of the Thunder Bay and Ontario Health Coalition was welcomed to the table. Mr. Tupker gave a background on Bill 60, Your Health Act, which would see the Ontario government move forward with their plan to cut core public hospital services, including surgeries and diagnostics and permit privatized clinics to provide them, which he feels will open the door to the privatization of our healthcare system. Mr. Tupker expressed the Coalition's concerns regarding the underfunding of public hospitals and the loss of hospital staff to these private clinics.

The Coalition has initiated a citizen-run referendum to save local public hospital services and will be asking for people to vote on Friday, May 26th and Saturday, May 27th to stop the privatization of these services. They are hoping to get a million people to vote and to raise awareness, making it politically impossible for the Ford government to implement its plans through Bill 60. It was suggested that a ballot box be placed in the Township of O'Connor office and that we could promote it in the Cornerstone newsletter. Mayor Vezina encouraged Mr. Tupker to submit a resolution for consideration to the Northern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) by April 14, 2023 asking for their support.

Mr. Tupker was thanked for attending the meeting and left at 8:05 p.m.

Mr. Kelly Johnson, Leadhand, was welcomed to the table. A Road Department update and roadwork in general was discussed. The road's crew have been busy on the roads leveling out frost heaves and keeping an eye on the spring melt. Some culverts need to be steamed and cleared of snow to allow the water to flow. Truck #7 is currently in the shop to repair a broken leaf spring. Mr. Johnson commented that he would like to place an advertisement on Kijiji to try and sell the truck before we consider placing it in an upcoming Ritchie Bros. Auction.

The Health and Safety Report for March 21, 2023 was reviewed. Council did not have any questions or concerns.

Mr. Johnson informed Council that he would like to replace yield signs with stop signs for 5 intersections in the Township. Council agreed and Administration informed Council that they have drafted By-law 2023-12, a by-law to erect stop signs, as item number 10 e) on the agenda for approval by Council.

Councillor Crane inquired as to when the chip seal of Loghrin Road would be done this summer. It was commented that a contractor would probably not be available until the fall. Mr. Johnson expressed his concern with the heavy truck traffic using Loghrin Road and how the chip and seal would hold up at the entrance to the road and at the

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driveways of the two trucking companies utilizing the road. It was suggested that these entrances could be asphalted, as well as extending the asphalt that the Ministry of Transportation is responsible for at the entrance to Loghrin road. Council asked Mr. Johnson to look into the cost of both the chip sealing and asphaltting of the road for this year's budget.

Item 12 a), opening of the quote for the accessibility ramp replacement on the Community Centre, was moved forward on the agenda to discuss with Mr. Johnson.

Only one quote from Alpha Engineering was received. The quote was for a lump sum of \$4,500.00. Council would like clarification as to whether or not the quote includes HST and it was

3. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL SUBMITTED BY ALPHA ENGINEERING FOR THE DESIGN/DRAWINGS OF AN ACCESSIBILITY RAMP AND BARRIER FREE DOOR UPGRADE AT THE O'CONNOR COMMUNITY CENTRE TO MEET CURRENT ACCESSIBILITY AND BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS BE ACCEPTED AT A COST OF \$4,500.00 UPON CLARIFICATION OF HST.

Carried.

Mr. Johnson was thanked for attending the meeting and left at 8:25 p.m. Mrs. Buob also left the meeting.

The Administration and Roads Voucher for April 11, 2023 was reviewed and it was

4. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2023-07 DATED APRIL 11, 2023 TOTTALLING \$93,825.43 BE APPROVED AND PAID.

Carried

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditures will be unavailable until the 2022 audit is complete.

By-laws and Policies were reviewed as follows:

- a) Policy 4.8 – Policy for the Disposal Site was reviewed. A few changes have been made, which include the expansion of the types of plastics that are now accepted, the use of utility trailers and the need to segregate items in the trailer and place them in the appropriate piles and it was

5. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

THAT THE REVISED POLICY NUMBER 4.8, A POLICY TO ESTABLISH THE STANDARDS FOR THE DISPOSAL SITE FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR, BE APPROVED AND ENTERED INTO THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR POLICY BOOK.

Carried

- b) Policy 5.1, a Policy for the Fire Department to provide fire protection services and establish a program. This policy had already been discussed at a previous meeting and is now being brought forward for Council's approval and it was

6. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE REVISED POLICY NUMBER 5.1, A POLICY TO PROVIDE FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES AND ESTABLISH A PROGRAM THAT INCLUDES PUBLIC EDUCATION WITH RESPECT TO FIRE SAFETY AND CERTAIN

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COMPONENTS OF FIRE PREVENTION, BE APPROVED AND ENTERED INTO THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR'S POLICY BOOK

Carried

c) Policy 5.3, a Policy for the Stipend Paid to Volunteer Fire Department Members. This policy was discussed at a previous meeting and is now being brought forward for Council's approval and it was

7. Moved by Carly Torkkeli
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE POLICY NUMBER 5.3, A POLICY FOR AN ANNUAL STIPEND PAID TO VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT MEMBERS, DATED APRIL 11, 2023, BE APPROVED AND ENTERED INTO THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR'S POLICY BOOK.

Carried

d) Policy 5.4, a Policy to Establish a Training and Mileage Allowance for Volunteer Fire Department Members. This policy was discussed at a previous meeting and is now being brought forward for Council's approval and it was

8. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

THAT THE POLICY NUMBER 5.4, TO ESTABLISH A POLICY TO PROVIDE A TRAINING ALLOWANCE AND MILEAGE ALLOWANCE PAID TO VOLUNTEER FIRE AND FIRST RESPONSE MEMBERS, DATED APRIL 11, 2023, AND TO REPLACE THE O'CONNOR FIRE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATIONAL GUIDELINE 1403, BE APPROVED AND ENTERED INTO THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR'S POLICY BOOK.

Carried

e) By-law Number 2023-12, being a By-law to provide for the erection of stop signs in the Township of O'Connor and it was

9. Moved by Carly Torkkeli
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2023-12 BEING A BY-LAW TO PROVIDE FOR THE ERECTION OF STOP SIGNS AT INTERSECTIONS WITHIN THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR BE PASSED AND ENTERED INTO THE BY-LAW BOOK.

Carried

Resolutions for endorsement were read as follows:

a) Township of Mulmur regarding Bill 5, Stopping Harassment and Abuse by Local Leaders Act, 2022 and it was

10. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE TOWNSHIP OF MULMUR SUPPORTING BILL 5 – STOPPING HARASSMENT AND ABUSE BY LOCAL LEADERS ACT, 2022, WHICH WILL REQUIRE THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MUNICIPAL COUNCILLORS AND MEMBERS OF LOCAL BOARDS TO INCLUDE A REQUIREMENT TO COMPLY WITH WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT POLICIES AND PERMIT MUNICIPALITIES TO DIRECT THE INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER TO APPLY TO THE COURT TO VACATE A MEMBER'S SEAT IF IT IS DETERMINED THAT THE MEMBER HAS CONTRAVENED THIS REQUIREMENT BE ENDORSED.

Carried

b) The Corporation of the Town of Cobourg regarding Barriers for Women in Politics was filed.

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Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
 - i) AMO President's Board Update – March 2023.
 - ii) Waste Management Group – Municipal Waste Update: RPRAs Issues Compliance Orders to Tire PROs, Upcoming Webinars.
 - b) Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA)
 - i) Northern Policy Institute's 10th Anniversary Gala 2023 invitation to register.
 - ii) NOMA Board Meeting Summary Report for March 22, 2023.
 - iii) Additional Contest for NOMA Meeting – Invasive Species added to the list of crippling costs shouldered by municipal taxpayers.
 - iv) NOMA Conference Resolutions Request.
 - c) Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) regarding Free Webinars: Energy, Housing (Federal), and Conservation Authorities.
 - d) Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) regarding 2020-22 Triennial Report and 2023-27 Implementation Plan.
 - e) Superior North Emergency Medical Services (SNEMS) regarding 2023 Levy Information.
 - f) Association of Ontario Road Supervisors (AORS) regarding Introduction to AORS
- The balance of the correspondence was passed around the table.

Under Old Business, Council discussed

- a) Under Further Old Business Councillor Sobolta updated Council on the meeting he attended with the Community Housing Transformation Centre regarding funding opportunities for senior housing. The funding available is mainly for non-profit organizations and he commented that it would probably not be suitable for what he is looking for, however he is still waiting to hear back from Ms. Alison Lair from the Centre.

Under New Business, Council discussed

- a) Senior Elected Officials Workshop being offered by Mr. David Rasi, Field Officer, Amethyst Sector, Emergency Management Ontario. Council was asked what dates they would be available to take the training. It was agreed that the first week of May would work for Council. Ms. Laforest will confirm with Mr. Rasi and let Council know when the training will be held.
- b) Lakehead Region Conservation Authority 34th Annual Spring Melt Meeting. Leadhand Johnson will attend.
- c) AORS request to municipal Councils to pass a resolution regarding the new charge to third-party contractors and other utilities for utility locates. Council will not be passing a resolution.
- d) Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility – 2023 Ontario Senior of the Year Award. Council did suggestion two names. Administration will confirm eligibility and submit a name for the award.
- e) Councillor Torkkeli requested Council's approval to represent the Township as an ex-officio board member on the Community Pasture Board. Council agreed that it would be a good idea to have municipal representation, however the Community Pasture Board would have to move forward with adding the position to the board before they could appoint someone to sit on it. Ms. Diana Bockus will be contacting the Township office with the Boards decision on whether or not they will add the position.

Under Further New Business Councillor Torkkeli inquired about the Essentials of Municipal Fire Protection seminar that had been scheduled in March and cancelled due to weather conditions. A new time and date for the seminar has not yet been scheduled.

Mayor Vezina brought back to the table the discussion of the guardrails on Highway 595 at Cedar Creek. There is an issue with water not draining off the highway due to the design of the guardrails. He will be discussing with the Ministry of Transportation the possibility of removing the channel rail from the bottom of the existing guardrail, which he feels is preventing the water from running off the highway.

Issues brought forward or letters received after the agenda was sent out were discussed as follows:

- a) Justices of the Peace Appointments Advisory Committee request for potential

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candidates and distribution of their notice of vacancies. Council would like this advertised in the next issue of the Cornerstone and posted on the website.

- b) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding the Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Act was read.
- c) i) Application for Zoning Amendment has been received from Graham and Graham Consulting Inc. The application is to do a site-specific amendment to permit the building of an assembly building and parking lot on the property located at 93 Smart Road.
- ii) A public meeting will need to be scheduled and notice of the meeting will need to be distributed to surrounding property owners 20 days prior to the meeting. Council discussed possible dates for the meeting and it was

- 11. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE FOLLOWING DATE BE SET FOR A PUBLIC MEETING TO CONSIDER A PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE O'CONNOR ZONING BY-LAW 2022-12 UNDER SECTION 34 OF THE ONTARIO PLANNING ACT, R.S.O. 1990,C.P.13. MAY 5, 2023 AT 7:00 P.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD IN THE O'CONNOR COMMUNITY CENTRE.

Carried

For information purposes no building permits were issued since the last meeting.

- 12. Moved by Carly Torkkeli
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE FIRE DEPARTMENT BUDGET MEETING TO BE HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 24, 2023 AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND VIRTUAL.

TIME BEING: 9:26 P.M.

Carried

Mayor

Deputy Clerk-Treasurer