

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES BUDGET MEETING – APRIL 19, 2021

Minutes of the Fire Department and the Road Department budget meeting held virtually on Monday, April 19, 2021 at 7 p.m. from the O'Connor Township Office and Council Chambers.

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

Visitors: Fire Chief Henry Mattas
Leadhand Kelly Johnson arrived at 7:30 p.m. (in the Council Chambers)

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

2. Moved by Jerry Loan
Seconded by W. Handy

THAT THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING BE APPROVED.

Carried

Mayor Vezina invited Fire Chief Mattas to present the Fire Department draft #1 budget. Fire Chief Mattas presented the budget line by line. Under capital purchases he did not budget for any items for this year. The loan on the fire truck was paid off last year so there are no loan payments.

The honourariums for the Chief and Fire Chief, as well as the members, remain the same as last year. Currently meetings and training are still cancelled due to the COVID-19.

Under Fire Department training, at this time Fire Chief Mattas does not know what training will be offered again this year due to COVID-19. He does have one member who has written his DZ test and will still need to do the driver training, but is not sure if the training will be offered. Also, a member has received her Health and Safety certification training, as the Health and Safety Representative for the department, which is included in the budget.

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. He will have a pump test completed on the pumper.

Under radios and repairs he would like to purchase six new pagers and some batteries for the current pagers.

The SCBA bottles are all good for this year.

Fire Chief Mattas would like to purchase a few dress shirts for the members for when they attend special meetings, training or fundraisers. He is looking at purchasing five but will confirm with members first that they will wear them.

The O'Connor Fire Hall building maintenance account was discussed. He has added mailboxes for the new members and will have the overhead doors tested for Health and Safety purposes.

Mayor Vezina asked Council if they had any questions with regard to the budget to this point. A couple of questions were asked and answered.

The Fixed costs were then discussed, including memberships, hydro, communications and heating. Most of these costs are set and there is not a lot that can be adjusted. The insurance numbers are currently only an estimate based on a 15% increase, as Township renewal is June 1, 2021 and the actual amounts are not available at this time.

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES BUDGET MEETING – APRIL 19, 2021

Fire Chief Mattas informed Council of the estimated salary of the members who responded to his request for the WSIB coverage. Currently the members are covered for \$65,000. Council will have to determine what rate of coverage they want to go with.

The First Response Team would like to purchase eight training books for certification of the members. Currently they would only be able to train a maximum of ten people at a time. She would most likely hold two different training sessions and these books can be reused.

The Fire Safety Grant monies were also discussed. The Fire Department will be receiving \$4,700.00 with regard to COVID-19 expenses. Training kits, tablets and a subscription for online training have been applied for with the funding.

Fire Chief Mattas informed Council that he has been inquiring about a new fire truck. There are either two or four door options for a pumper. He is awaiting a quote but believes that the starting price would be between \$340,000 - \$360,000. He does have a salesman from Fort Garry looking into the Underwriters requirements for the minimum year of a front-line fire truck, as well as keeping an eye out for any used trucks that are not too old.

Council was asked if they had any further questions. The Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief and member honourarium was briefly discussed and it was suggested that an increase be considered. Fire Chief Mattas was thanked for attending the meeting and presenting the Fire Department budget.

Mr. Johnson, Leadhand, was welcomed to the meeting at 7:42 p.m. The Road Department draft #1 budget was reviewed. Items were discussed line by line.

The Revenue accounts were briefly discussed. Funding will be provided once again from the Federal Gas Tax Fund (FGT) and the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF). Council will also be applying to the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) for an intern for the Road Department.

The Administration and the Building Maintenance accounts for the municipal garage were reviewed. The insurance is again only an estimate, with a 15% increase as we await the renewal costs.

Mr. Johnson informed Council that the CO/NO2 monitor has been installed in the garage, as per health and safety concerns addressed at the previous health and safety meetings.

There are currently no loan repayments, however, if a loan is received for a new truck a number could be included at a later date.

In the Major Capital equipment account, Mr. Johnson has included the cost of a 2021 combination plow and sander for Council's consideration.

Also, funding has been secured through the ICIP COVID stream for the replacement of a portion of the Road Department garage. Shop B will be replaced and the balance of the estimated expense, beyond the funding is included as a Capital – Facilities expense.

Road Employee wages and payroll costs were reviewed. It was noted that at this time no salaries for the road employees are distributed to the different departments, such as cemetery or disposal site, or to any different projects. Under temporary wages, the wage of an intern for 6 months has also been included.

Mr. Johnson continued his presentation with the equipment operating costs. These costs include fuel to run the equipment, safety checks, the licence plates and CVOR for the trucks. Maintenance for each piece of equipment was also discussed. If a new truck is purchased some of the maintenance may not be required.

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES BUDGET MEETING – APRIL 19, 2021

Road signs were discussed. Mr. Johnson will be purchasing more warning signs and posts for the roads.

Road Materials were discussed. Mr. Johnson has budgeting for three loads of calcium. This amount does not include the calcium used for the resurfacing projects, as that cost will be included with the project. The winter sand for the last three seasons was purchased from the Township of Conmee and it has worked out well. The Township of Conmee has increased the price of the sand this year but it is still within reason and the best option. This year the company who mixes the sand & salt has asked that two years stock be mixed at a time, as it is not feasible for him to only do the one. If two years are stock piled a tarp with have to be purchased to cover the material. The cost of purchasing two seasons worth of winter sand/salt mix will be paid out at one time, however can be expensed out on the next two budgets.

Currently the only bridge requiring any maintenance is Bridge #1 on Blaikie Road. Minor repairs have been budgeted for it. Inspections on five large structures will be completed this year as required.

Mr. Johnson has included the cutting of the weeds back into the Township budget this year. This item was cut from last years budget and there were no issues, however when the weeds are cut it also does cut some of the small brush at the same time. If it is left too long it could require additional brushing expense in the future.

Under Road Projects Mr. Johnson would like to see more brushing and ditching, in areas to be determined by himself, completed under the Township's portion of the budget. Under the program funding from the Federal Gas Tax Fund (FGT) and the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF), Mr. Johnson is proposing to do three gravel road resurfacing projects, those being Whittaker Road, Blaikie Road and Strom Road.

Council was asked if they had any questions with regard to the budget. A question was asked with regard to changing over of tires on the grader. Mr. Johnson informed Council that as we have studded winter tires on the grader, twice a year they have to switched over. It would take several years of the cost to change the tires over to cover of the cost of purchasing another rim.

The upcoming Ritchie Bros. Auction was discussed. There is a garbage compactor truck in the Thunder Bay lot that will be included in the auction and Council discussed whether or not Mr. Johnson should be preapproved to a certain amount to bid on the truck for the disposal site. Mr. Johnson does have the specifications on the truck and was planning on going and taking a look at it prior to the auction. There are still a couple of Council meetings prior to the auction, so this item can be discussed further once more information on the condition of the truck is obtained.

It was also noted that the Township did purchase the Leadhand 4 x 4 truck in 2019 and rather than getting a loan, pulled the money from the Road Equipment reserve. It was agreed that this amount would be replaced in the reserve over the next three-year period at that time. This amount was not discussed in today's budget and Council wanted to ensure that it was not forgotten. The Clerk-Treasurer noted that it will be included in the full budget discussion.

Mr. Johnson also noted that there are some sander trucks coming up in the Ritchie Bros. Auction but they are located in Southern Ontario and they do not have the combo unit the Township would require. He will inquire to see if our current box on truck #7 could be transferred to one of those units.

Year 2021 of the Five-Year Road Plan was presented with projects as were discussed throughout the budget. Mr. Johnson did move up a couple of projects in 2020 and 2021 due to additional funding, so changes still have to be made to the four additional years. Once the budget and projects have been approved for 2021, the plan will be updated.

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

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES BUDGET MEETING – APRIL 19, 2021

The Fire and Road Department budgets will continue to be updated as actual expenses occur. Any changes will be discussed further at the full budget meeting yet to be scheduled. Everyone was thanked for attending and for the work put forward so far on the budget and it was

- 2. Moved by Jerry Loan
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE BUDGET MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD VIRTUALLY ON APRIL 26, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M.

TIME BEING: 8:34 P.M.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk-Treasurer