

## TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – DECEMBER 2, 2019

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, December 2, 2019 at 7 p.m. in the Council chambers.

Present: Councillors: Crane, Loan, Racicot  
Clerk-Treasurer Buob

Visitors: Kelly Johnson, Leadhand

Absent: Mayor Vezina, Councillor Handy

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

Disclosure of pecuniary interest and general nature thereof: none

1. Moved by A. Crane  
Seconded by Jerry Loan

**THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY,  
NOVEMBER 25, 2019 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.**

Carried

Mr. Johnson was asked if he wished to address Council on any personal matters and he replied no.

Mr. Johnson, Leadhand, was welcomed to the table. A Road Department update was provided. Mr. Johnson noted that the employees have been out plowing snow, hauling sand and doing repairs on the sander. Mr. Johnson also reported that the Ford F-150 has been sold.

Bridge #3 rehabilitation project update was provided by Mr. Johnson. As the past couple of bridge studies suggested, Mr. Johnson had budgeted this year to have the bearing pads replaced on the bridge located between 286 and 295 Smith Road. After further discussion with a bridge contractor it was suggested that the work be done in the winter when the ice is on the water. A Request for Proposal was sent out on November 20, 2019 with a mandatory site visit held on November 22, 2019 for interested contractors to inspect the bridge. Four contracting companies attended the site visit and upon further investigation they all agreed that the work was not required at this time. The bearings are doing what they are supposed to do and by jacking up the bridge to replace the bearings it could compromise other parts of the bridge. It was agreed, at the site, to cancel the project for this year.

Mr. Johnson noted that the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Plan (ICIP) – Green Stream Application is due on January 22, 2020. He has considered some options and would like to submit an application to replace the Bridge #2 on Smith Road over Whitewood Creek with a concrete box culvert and build up the ravine. He will still have to make some phone calls to determine what is required and what the costs for the work would be. Council agreed with his suggestion and an application will be submitted by the due date.

The Clerk-Treasurer brought to Council's attention that other municipalities have recently been requesting information with regard to formal by-laws to allow for proper enforcement of illegal snowplowing across a roadway. Council was asked if they would like administration to work on a by-law for the Township of O'Connor in this regard. The By-law could include a warning notice to the resident for the first offense, however if the issue were to continue there would be authority to penalize an offender. Council agreed to have administration draft a by-law for Council's further review.

The Health and Safety Reports for the Road Department from July to November 2019 were reviewed. Council did not have any questions with regard to the reports.

A data sheet from the Ministry of Labour with regard to garage ventilation was also provided for information purposes.

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The Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge has recently submitted letters to the Regional Director, Northwest Region, of the Ministry of Transportation with regard to the Highway 588 Kaministiquia River Bridges Rehabilitation project. Copies of the letters addressing the municipalities concerns were read.

The Administration and Roads Voucher for December 2, 2019 was reviewed, and it was

2. Moved by Jerry Loan  
Seconded by A. Crane

**THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2019-17 DATED DECEMBER 2, 2019 TOTTALLING \$72,373.43 BE APPROVED AND PAID.**

Carried

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditures to November 30, 2019 were unavailable.

The Township of O'Connor's Safety Mission Statement was discussed and it was agreed to keep the same wording as in previous years and it was

3. Moved by A. Crane  
Seconded by Jerry Loan

**THAT THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR SAFETY MISSION STATEMENT BE ENDORSED.**

Carried

A resolution for endorsement was read from the Township of Central Frontenac with regard to the Building Services Transformation. As Council have recently submitted their own comments to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on this matter the resolution was filed.

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) The Township of Conmee regarding their Notice for a Public Meeting to be held on December 10, 2019 regarding a proposed site specific amendment to their Zoning By-law. This amendment is to allow for a mobile home as a temporary secondary dwelling on a property located along the O'Connor Conmee property line. Council did not have any concerns with the application.
- b) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – Policy Update - Ontario Announces E-Scooter Pilot on Municipal Roads.

The balance of correspondence was passed around the table.

There was no Old Business to discuss.

Under New Business, Council discussed

- a) Text Magic, a web based APP for mass text messages. Deputy Clerk-Treasurer and Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC) – Linda Racicot prepared a report on the system. Council read the report and agreed that it was worth pursuing with the residents to see if they would be interested in implementing this system. The main reason to use the messaging system would be in an emergency situation to get an emergency notice to all or a portion of the Township residents quickly, however other reasons could also be considered. An announcement will be included in the January Cornerstone requesting the Township residents' opinion on whether or not they would like to receive mass text messages from the Township.
- b) Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC) – i) memo regarding a secretary proposal regarding the secretary duties, payment for these duties and the change in time of the LRMC meetings was read. As Ms. Evans, current secretary of the Coalition, is retiring from the Municipality of Neebing in the near future, and no names have come forward from the other municipalities to replace her in this position of secretary, the Coalition would like to ask Ms. Evans to continue on in the secretary position with payment from the LRMC members. Two cost sharing options, as were presented at the LRMC meeting were discussed, as well as a third option of equal pay for all municipalities which was brought forward at the last LRMC meeting. Council agreed that they would support the population based cost sharing option.

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- ii) A Corporate Report with regard to the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) "Gap" Project, prepared by the Municipality of Oliver Paipoonge for the six member municipalities was read. The report was prepared for the Council members to include in their deputations to the Ministers at the upcoming Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) conference in January. The report expresses the significant amount of money the six municipalities are losing each year with the current formulas used for the OMPF. The Township of O'Connor in 2004 was receiving \$337,000 with a population of 724, and now in 2020 with a population of 663 is only receiving \$158,900, a decrease of \$178,000 with the mandated provincial programs that the Township has to pay increasing significantly each year.
- iii) Council meeting procedure training on Parliamentary Procedure and Robert's Rules was discussed. Three members present at the LRMC meeting recently attended a training session in Thunder Bay and noted that the presenter who was from Thunder Bay, did an excellent job and would be willing to put on another session if others were interested. The members present at the meeting were asked to bring this back to their Council to see if anyone else would be interested in attending a session. The municipalities would be required to contribute a fee to cover the costs of the presenter. Council agreed that they would be interested in attending the session if it was local and reasonably priced.
- iv) Shared Services for the LRMC Fire and Emergency Services Departments was brought forward for discussion. It was noted that with the departments are facing increasing demands and shrinking resources. It was asked if the LRMC member municipalities would be interested in hiring a consultant to investigate the potential of sharing or amalgamating services. Council noted that Fire Chief Hay, from the City of Thunder Bay also brought this suggestion forward at a recent conference. Council agreed to discuss this further with Fire Chief Mattas.
- c) Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) – Membership information and an invoice was read. It was agreed to not become a member of FCM in 2020.

Under further new business, Council asked about the status of the digital sign to be installed along the highway in front of the Township office. It was noted that it should be delivered this week and will be installed as soon as possible.

Council noted that tbaytel is currently installing fiber internet services into the Marathon area and it is coming in on poles. Council have a concern as to why tbaytel cannot install it in the rural areas closer to Thunder Bay. With all the new mandated education online courses and homework assignments being emailed to the students, highspeed internet should be a priority in our rural areas. It was noted that tbaytel made a presentation to Council on May 27, 2019 with regard to high speed internet and we have not heard anything back from them. Council would like to once again invite tbaytel to attend an upcoming Council meeting and also invite MPP Judith Monteith Farrell and MP Marcus Powlowski to attend a meeting to discuss the matter.

Council asked that the Ministry of Transportation be notified of the broken sign on Highway 590 identifying Sovereign Road. It has been broken for several months. The Clerk-Treasurer will contact them.

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

- a) The Disposal Site Hours over the Christmas Holidays. Christmas Eve falls on a Tuesday, a regular dump day from 3 to 6 p.m. Mr. Ehn has requested the day off and as we currently do not have an alternate caretaker Council was asked if the site could be closed. It currently was not advertised in the December Cornerstone, however there is still time to put up signs at the site showing the change in hours and include the closure on the Township's website and in the municipal office and community centre. Council suggested asking the Road employees if they would like to take the shift and if not, the site will be closed.
- b) The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) December newsletter was read. Council would like the sections with regard to adjusting driving habits, preparing your vehicle, and how to report a minor crime online included in the next issue of the Cornerstone.

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- c) An email from the Township of Conmee notifying Council of Mayor Holland's nomination for the Zone 10 Vacant Seat on the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) Board was read. Council would like a letter submitted to Mayor Holland acknowledging Council's support with a carbon copy to ROMA.
- d) Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs letter regarding trespassers on farms and at food processing facilities, and interference with livestock transportation. Proposed legislation has been drafted, and if approved will better protect farmers, their families and their workers.
- e) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – November 29<sup>th</sup> AMO Board Highlights. Some topics included Flood Advisor's Report, Public Health and EMS Modernization consultations, Blue Box Program and Waste Management issues.
- f) A reply letter from the Ministry of Government and Consumer Services with regard to Council's endorsed resolution with regard to electronic delegation was read.

For information purposes two building permits were approved since the last meeting. One for a new shed and the other for alterations and repairs.

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

**THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2019 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE O'CONNOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS.**

**TIME BEING: 8:45 P.M.**

Carried

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Mayor

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Clerk-Treasurer