

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – DECEMBER 6, 2021

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday, December 6, 2021 at 7 p.m. in the O'Connor Community Centre and virtually.

Present: Mayor Vezina - virtually
Councillors: Crane, Loan
Clerk-Treasurer Buob
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot

Visitors: Kelly Johnson, Leadhand
Stephen Wiebe

Absent: Councillor Handy, Councillor Racicot

As Mayor Vezina was attending virtually, he asked to have the Acting Mayor chair the meeting. Acting Mayor Loan called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1. Moved by J. Vezina
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING BE APPROVED.

Carried

Disclosure of pecuniary interest and general nature thereof: none

2. Moved by J. Vezina
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2021 AND THE NOTES FROM THE TABLE TOP EXERCISE HELD ON MONDAY, NOVEMBER 29 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.

Carried

The visitors were asked if they wished to address Council. Mr. Wiebe asked if he could speak on a matter. Council was in agreement to allow Mr. Wiebe to speak. Mr. Wiebe first thanked Mr. Johnson for the cleanup that was completed following the recent brushing along his property line. Mr. Wiebe then asked about the brushing along the Township road right-of-way's and under the Hydro line right-of-way's. He is of the understanding that Hydro One is responsible for brushing their own right-of-way's and it is their due diligence to maintain these areas. Mr. Wiebe questioned why the Township is paying for this work rather than Hydro One.

Council asked Mr. Johnson for a response. Mr. Johnson explained past practice, where when Hydro One was in the area doing their brushing, he would coordinate his work with theirs and do the opposite side of the road in that same year, unfortunately, in recent years they have not been in the area and there were areas of concern that needed to be brushed on both sides of the road.

It was clarified by Council that the Hydro One right-of-way is not pole to ditch and the Township may still need to brush a portion of the right-of way along the hydro lines or we could be liable. It was suggested that perhaps Hydro One could be approached to help offset these costs as some of the work completed this season was under their lines and on their right-of-way. Mr. Johnson was asked to follow up to see if this would be possible.

Council thanked Mr. Wiebe for bringing this to their attention and Hydro One's response will be brought back to Council at another meeting.

Mr. Johnson, Leadhand, was welcomed to the table. A Road Department update and roadwork in general was discussed. They have been busy today cleaning up from the recent heavy snowfall overnight and will continue to cleanup tomorrow. The brushing project was completed on Friday, the last mile of gravel resurfacing was also completed and all projects in this year's budget are complete. The Road Department is currently doing minor maintenance on the equipment and have hauled in some winter sand from

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the Township's stockpile in Conmee. No further questions were asked in this regard.

A Township of O'Connor Building Report for 2021 was read. Mr. Johnson has based his starting information on the Genivar Building Study completed in 2013 and included any work completed on the buildings since that date. He also made note of any recommendations of work that could be completed in the future. Council has the opportunity to inspect all of these buildings themselves during the annual Township Inspection as well. It was noted that the Township currently has an application for funding in for an addition to the rink shack with a better heating system and storage space. The Fire Department buildings were not included in this report and will be provide to Council by Fire Chief Mattas at the next meeting.

Mr. Johnson was thanked for attending and he left the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

The Administration and Roads Voucher for December 6, 2021 was reviewed and it was

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

THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2021-21 DATED DECEMBER 6, 2021 TOTTALLING \$50,403.79 BE APPROVED AND PAID.

Carried

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditures to November 30, 2021 were unavailable.

The Township of O'Connor's Safety Mission Statement was reviewed and it was

4. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by J. Vezina

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

Carried

A resolution for endorsement from the City of St. Catharines with regard to the National Childcare Program was read and it was

5. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by J. Vezina

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE CITY OF ST. CATHARINES REQUESTING THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT TAKE THE NECESSARY STEPS TO WORK WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ON A BILATERAL AGREEMENT TO ENSURE THE NEW NATIONAL CHILD CARE PROGRAM WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO ONTARIANS, AND THAT IT FOCUS ON INCREASED ACCESS, AFFORDABILITY, QUALITY AND RESPONSIVENESS, ALL ESSENTIAL TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE BE ENDORSED.

Carried

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) – i) Supporting the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM)'s request for Municipal Land Transfer Tax as Revenue Tool.
ii) NOMA Board Meeting Summary Report for November 24, 2021.
- b) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – i) Policy Update November 29th, AMO Board Approves Indigenous-Municipal Relationship Agreement Guidance Document for Municipalities.
- c) Health Canada, Strategic Policy Branch reply to Council's endorsed resolution with regard to support for long-term care residents in Canada.
- d) Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks providing information with regard to ongoing efforts to modernize the environmental assessment program. The

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Ministry is seeking input on the Environmental Assessment Modernization Proposals until January 25, 2022.

- e) Conservation and Source Protection Branch notifying Councils that the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has posted a policy decision on the Environmental Registry of Ontario. These changes do not affect the Township of O'Connor.

The balance of the correspondence was not made available to be passed around table and will be brought to the next meeting.

Under Old Business, Council discussed

- a) Tbaytel – a copy of a letter dated November 30, 2021 to MP Patty Hajdu and MP Marcus Powlowski in regard to the Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC)'s applications for fibre connectivity, expressing concern for the Province of Ontario's drastic change in the process for its Accelerated High Speed Internet Program. These changes could jeopardize the LRMC project, leaving increased connectivity for thousands of our rural constituents in doubt, should the status of the federal component continue to be delayed.

Mayor Vezina asked the Clerk-Treasurer to update his email address with Mr. Topatigh from Tbaytel.

- b) Minister of Infrastructure regarding the Building Broadband Faster Act in Ontario. On November 30, 2021, the Ministry of Infrastructure and Infrastructure Ontario issued the Building Broadband Faster Act Guideline and two BBFA regulations. This is the document that has triggered the letter from Tbaytel to the Federal MPP's previously discussed.

Under New Business, Council discussed

- a) Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry letter regarding the Northern Ontario Resource Development Support (NORDS) Fund. The Township of O'Connor will be receiving an annual allocation of \$60,675.60 for the next five years. The funding is flexible and will allow municipalities to stack with other programs, carry-over unused allocations year over year, and pursue partnerships with other northern municipalities to support regional projects. The detailed program information will be available on December 7, 2021.
 - ii) Ministry of Northern Development and Mines – News Release regarding the Ontario Building Municipal Infrastructure in the North – Province sharing benefits of resource development was read.
- b) BDO Canada LLP regarding the PSAB's Exposure draft. The email provided an update on the potential new Handbook section that could impact organizations with Plans like OMERS. These changes could show additional liability on the Township's Financial Statements and municipalities may not have enough information from the OMERS Plan to satisfy this standard. OMERS is actively trying to ensure that additional liabilities are not created on the financial statements.
- c) Pierre Desmarais providing information on a device to assist in flooding of an outdoor rink. It is understood that a garden hose would have to be connected to the device with warm water. At this time the water source would not be available.
- d) MADD Canada request for advertisement in MADD Message Yearbook. It was

- 6. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by J. Vezina

THAT THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR PURCHASE AN HONOUR ROLL LISTING ADVERTISING SPACE FOR A COST OF \$169.00 IN THE MADD MESSAGE YEARBOOK IN SUPPORT OF MADD CANADA.

Carried

- e) The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) membership for 2022 was discussed. It was agreed to not join.

Under further New Business, Council discussed the following:

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Mayor Vezina would like to discuss the full-time employees vacation time earned and succession planning with full Council. These items will be discussed at a January meeting.

The Clerk-Treasurer asked Council if they would consider sponsoring the O'Connor Christmas drive-thru parade. Last year gift cards were purchased and given to random vehicle driving through the event. It was

7. Moved by J. Vezina
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT A DONATION OF \$100.00 BE MADE TO THE O'CONNOR COMMUNITY CLUB FOR THE DRIVE THRU CHRISTMAS PARADE TO BE HELD DECEMBER 12, 2021.

Carried

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

- a) Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks regarding the proposed amendments to the producer responsibility regulations. These changes are in relation to the Tires Regulation, the Batteries Regulation and the Electrical and Electronic Equipment Regulation made under the Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act, 2016.

The Clerk-Treasurer made note of the recent notification from GFL Environmental, informing the Township of an upcoming increase in the rate of recycling pickups effective January 1, 2022.

- b) The Township of O'Connor's Zoning By-law review was discussed. Council was asked when they would like to move forward with the By-law. The Township of O'Connor's Official Plan was consolidated in February 2019 and the Zoning By-law is required to be updated, to be consistent with the Plan, as well. Covid-19 restrictions have delayed the process, however the three-year deadline to complete the process is approaching. The Clerk-Treasurer confirmed that she has spoken with Fotenn, the company hired to assist with the preparation of the documents, and they have confirmed, even with the time lapse, that they are willing to finish the Zoning By-law. It was also noted that Fotenn is currently working with the Township of Conmee and perhaps a scheduled visit could be coordinated between the two Township's. Council would like to host a public meeting in person if possible. The Clerk-Treasurer will follow up with the Township of Conmee on this matter. If there is going to be a delay in timing, it was suggested that the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing be contacted and asked for an extension on the deadline. Council would also like to review the draft Zoning By-law once again prior to a meeting being held.

As the next item on the agenda was a Closed session to discuss an upcoming employee retirement and employee request, Mr. Wiebe was asked to leave the meeting and he left at 8:10 p.m.

8. Moved by J. Vezina
Seconded by A. Crane

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE NEXT PORTION OF THE MEETING BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC IN ORDER TO DISCUSS LABOUR RELATIONS OR EMPLOYEE NEGOTIATIONS; PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION 239(2)(D) OF THE MUNICIPAL ACT, 2001.

TIME BEING: 8:10 P.M.

Carried

Equipment Operator #1, Mr. Dennhardt's retirement was discussed.

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- 9. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by J. Vezina

TIME BEING: 8:34 P.M.

THAT WE NOW MOVE TO OPEN MEETING.

Carried

- 10. Moved by J. Vezina
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT COUNCIL ACCEPT MR. BRENT DENNHARDT’S RETIREMENT AS EQUIPMENT OPERATOR #1 EFFECTIVE JANUARY 31, 2022.

Carried

The position of Equipment Operator #1 will have to be posted, as per the Union Agreement. Council agreed to request the applications for this position in for the first meeting in January, with the hiring to take place upon Mr. Dennhardt’s retirement. It was

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

THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON MONDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE O’CONNOR COMMUNITY CENTRE, IF CONDITIONS WITH COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS ALLOW.

TIME BEING: 8:37 P.M.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk-Treasurer