

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – JULY 13, 2020

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday, July 13, 2020 at 7 p.m. in the O'Connor Community Centre.

Present: Mayor Vezina
Councillors: Crane, Loan, Racicot
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot
Visitors: Kelly Johnson, Leadhand, Janice LeBoeuf

On the Telephone: Councillor Handy (joined meeting at 7:57 p.m.)

Mayor Vezina called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Disclosure of pecuniary interest and general nature thereof: none

1. Moved by B. J. Loan
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, JUNE 22, 2020 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.

Carried

Mrs. LeBoeuf was asked if she wished to address Council and she replied no.

Mr. Johnson, Leadhand, was welcomed to the meeting and was asked for a Road Department update and to discuss roadwork in general. Two miles of road resurfacing on Smart Road and Holomego Road has been completed. Chambers Road, Kershaw Road and Earl Road will be done later in the summer when the detour is not in place. The culverts for the Beaver Dam Creek on Sitch Road have been ordered and should be shipped on Tuesday, July 14th and should be here on Friday, July 17th. Mr. Johnson did indicate that the culverts have been upgraded to the proper profile at no additional cost.

Council asked how the new Groundskeeper was doing and Mr. Johnson commented that he is doing a good job.

Mr. Johnson was thanked for attending the meeting and left at 7:10 p.m.

The Administration and Roads Voucher was reviewed, and it was

2. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2020-13 DATED JULY 13, 2020 TOTTALLING \$110,176.02 BE APPROVED AND PAID.

Carried

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditure to June 30, 2020 were reviewed.

The Administrative Report dated July 13, 2020 regarding the required disclosure regarding budget impacts was reviewed and it was

3. Moved by B.J. Loan
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT DATED JULY 13, 2020 ENTITLED REQUIRED DISCLOSURE REGARDING BUDGET IMPACTS AS PER ONTARIO REGULATION 284/09 BE ADOPTED AS READ.

Carried

By-laws and Policies were reviewed as follows:

- a) By-Law Number 2020-14, being a by-law to establish tax ratios for the year 2020 and it was

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – JULY 13, 2020

4. Moved by B.J. Loan
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2020-14 BEING A BY-LAW TO ESTABLISH THE TAX RATIOS FOR THE YEAR 2020 BE PASSED AND ENTERED IN THE BY-LAW BOOK.

Carried

- b) By-Law Number 2020-15, being a by-law to adopt the estimates of all sums required during the year 2020 and to strike a levy for the year 2020 was reviewed. Council agreed that the Final Tax Billings will be sent out in August with the due date for the first installment being August 31st and the second installment being October 30th. Councillor Loan expressed his concern of implementing a 1.5% levy increase for 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact on the residents of O'Connor who are financially impacted by job losses. He expressed his disappointment that the 1.5% levy increase was not funded by using additional reserve funds. Councillor Crane and Councillor Racicot expressed their concern with using additional reserves to avoid the 1.5% levy increase as the Provincial Government's Ontario Municipal Partnership Funding (OMPF) is decreasing by 10% each year and 2021 may prove more difficult as upper tier governments cope with the cost of COVID-19. Mayor Vezina acknowledged that both concerns are valid, however he feels that Township's 2021 budget will be impacted by decisions of the Provincial and Federal governments as they recover from the financial impacts of COVID-19 and that the Township will need to rely heavily on reserves to compensate potential funding cuts.

A recorded vote to pass By-Law 2020-15 for was requested by Councillor Loan and it was

5. Moved by Bishop Racicot
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2020-05 BEING A BY-LAW TO ADOPT THE ESTIMATES OF ALL SUMS REQUIRED DURING THE YEAR 2020 FOR THE GENERAL PURPOSES OF THE MUNICIPALITY, AND TO STRIKE A LEVY FOR THE YEAR 2020 AND TO PROVIDE FOR THE ADOPTION OF TAX RATES, AND TO FURTHER PROVIDE PENALTY AND INTEREST IN DEFAULT OF PAYMENT THEREOF FOR 2020 BE PASSED AND ENTERED IN THE BY-LAW BOOK.

**ALEX CRANE – YES
BISHOP RACICOT – YES
JERRY LOAN – NO
JIM VEZINA – YES**

Carried

- c) Policy for Attendance at Meetings was reviewed and it was;

6. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENT BE MADE TO THE POLICY FOR ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS.

THE FOLLOWING SECTION READ:

PAYMENT FOR ATTENDANCE:

THE TOWNSHIP WILL PAY AN HONOURARIUM FOR MEMBERS OF COUNCIL OR COUNCIL ELECT, AT THE CURRENT PER DIEM RATE. THE CLERK-TREASURER, THE DEPUTY CLERK-TREASURER AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT WILL ALSO BE PAID THE CURRENT PER DIEM RATE IF THE MEETING IS HELD IN THE EVENING OR ON A WEEKEND.

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – JULY 13, 2020

PAYMENT FOR ATTENDANCE AT BOARD MEETINGS FOR THE TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE PAID AS PER THE PAYMENT FOR OUR REPRESENTATIVES ON BOARDS POLICY.

THE TOWNSHIP WILL PAY WAGES FOR EMPLOYEES, OTHER THAN THE CLERK-TREASURER, THE DEPUTY CLERK-TREASURER AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, AS MENTIONED ABOVE AT THEIR HOURLY RATE.

THE COST OF SPOUSAL REGISTRATION AND ANY SUBSEQUENT COSTS ARE NOT INCLUSIVE.

Carried

d) Policy for Structure of All Departments was reviewed and it was;

7. Moved by B.J. Loan
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT THE FOLLOWING AMENDMENTS BE MADE TO THE POLICY STRUCTURE OF ALL DEPARTMENTS.

THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS BE ADDED UNDER POLICY STATEMENT;

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

- WILL REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE CLERK-TREASURER
- WILL DO ALL DUTIES AS DIRECT BY THE CLERK-TREASURER

GROUNDSKEEPER

- WILL REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE LEADHAND
- WILL DO ALL DUTIES AS DIRECTED BY THE LEADHAND

DISPOSAL SITE CARETAKER

- WILL REPORT DIRECTLY TO THE LEADHAND
- WILL FOLLOW THE JOB DESCRIPTION AS SET OUT FOR THE POSITION OF DISPOSAL SITE CARETAKER
- WILL FOLLOW THE POLICIES OF THE TOWNSHIP

THE MUNICIPAL STRUCTURE TABLE BE AMENDED TO INCLUDE THE ABOVE ADDED SECTIONS.

THE SECTIONS UNDER THE POLICY STATEMENT BE REARRANGED TO REFLECT THE MUNICIPAL STRUCTURE TABLE.

Carried

Resolutions for endorsement were read as follows:

- a) City of Sarnia regarding Long-Term Care Home Improvements was filed.
- b) Town of Renfrew regarding calling on the government to fast track the review of Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program grant applications was filed.
- c) Town of Kingsville regarding Rent Assistance Program was filed.
- d) Township of Puslinch regarding calling on the government to work with the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) to address the assessment issue so that aggregate resource properties are assessed for their industrial value was filed.

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Township of Conmee support letter regarding Council's resolution for Expansion of Broadband.
- b) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – i) AMO Policy Update – June 24, 2020 – Provincial Emergency Extended and Tribunals Ontario.
ii) Report of the Secretary Treasurer on Nominations to the 2020 – 2022 AMO Board of Directors.

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – JULY 13, 2020

- iii) AMO Policy Update – June 29, 2020 – Emergency Orders Extension and Towing Industry Oversight.
- iv) AMO Policy Update – July 2, 2020 – Appeal for immediate financial assistance, Social Services Relief Funding, Standing Committee to consider municipal COVID-19 impacts and Connecting links.
- v) AMO Policy Update – July 6, 2020 – United Call for Emergency Municipal Financial Relief and New provincial growth, renewal and economic recovery plan.
- vi) AMO Policy Update – July 7, 2020 – Provincial Legislation re: Emergency Orders.
- vii) AMO Policy Update – July 8, 2020 – Federal Economic Statement and Initial Analysis of Ontario Omnibus COVID-19 Recovery Legislation.
- viii) AMO COVID-19 Update – July 3, 2020 – Ontario Announces Faster Approvals for Restaurant and Bar Patio Expansions.
- ix) AMO Policy Update – July 9, 2020 – Emergency Orders Extended, ICON Program, and Mandatory Mask Bylaws.
- x) AMO Policy Update – July 13, 2020 – Stage 3 Coming, Child Care Space Increases, and Standing Committee on COVID-19 Municipal Impacts Hearings.
- c) Municipal Finance Officers Association of Ontario (MFOA) – i) Bill 197, COVID-19 economic Recovery Act.
 - ii) MFOA – Government of Canada's Economic and Fiscal Snapshot 2020.
- d) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing – Letter to Head of Council regarding Government introduction of the COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act, 2020.
- e) Minister of the Environment – Letter from the Hon. Jeff Yurek regarding Environmental Assessment modernization.
- f) Ministry of Government and Consumer Services regarding Moving Towards a More digital-focused Service Model for Land Registration Services.
- g) Thunder Bay DSSAB – Update from the Board – June 30, 2020.
- h) Hon. Navdeep Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry, e-mail response to Council regarding \$150 million for reliable broadband and cellular service.
- i) Christine St-Pierre, Northern Policy Institute regarding May/Early June Business Survey results. Council were forwarded the e-mail with a link to the survey results.

The balance of the correspondence was not available for review as it was overlooked when setting up the meeting in the Community Centre. It will be available at the next meeting.

Councillor Wendy Handy joined the meeting via telephone at 7:57 p.m.

Under Old Business, Council discussed

a) Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC) regarding potential broadband project update. Council was updated on the progress of the virtual meetings with Mr. Jeff Coull, Innovation Centre and the LRMC municipal Clerks. Mr. Coull indicated that we would need to have a shovel ready project to apply for funding. Mr. Coull will be assisting the LRMC to become shovel ready and has requested that resolutions from the Councils showing support be passed. On June 16, 2020, Ms. Erika Kromm, Clerk for the Municipality of Neebing circulated Mr. Coull's e-mail updating members on the funding opportunities. He has indicated that letters of support from Council will not be required at this time and that mid-August would be a better timeline. Mr. Coull also indicated that TBaytel did share cost estimates to run fibre past 3400 addresses, which would include all 6 municipalities represented by the LRMC. These estimates do include the Municipality of Shuniah, however at this time we are unsure if they will be included or if they will be pursuing their own funding application.

Council were encouraged by the progress that is being made.

b) Improving Connectivity for Ontario (ICON). The ICON program has now launched, and the first intake will be open on July 9, 2020. Council was informed that Mr. Jeff Coull of the Innovation Centre will be looking into the best funding opportunity for the LRMC broadband project and that the ICON program will be included.

Under further old business, Councillor Racicot express concern with the moral of the Fire Department members. Some members have express disappointment that they cannot have a Facebook page for the department that can be used to promote the department. This issue had been discussed at a previous Council meeting and clarification was made that Council is not opposed to having a Facebook page, however

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – JULY 13, 2020

there is a need for a social media policy, which is currently being developed. A draft policy has been provided to Council at tonight's meeting and it will be brought back to the August 10, 2020 Council meeting for discussion. As there is an Auxiliary meeting be held on Tuesday, July 14, 2020, the Deputy Clerk-Treasurer has volunteered to address the issue with the Fire Department members and to clarify Council's position on the matter.

Mayor Vezina took this time to thank Council, staff and visitors who have been participating in Council meetings virtually. Mayor Vezina also took the opportunity to inform Council that he will be participating in the upcoming Hydro One's Waasigan Transmission Line Project information session as part of the Common Voice Northwest Task Force.

Under New Business, Council discussed

- a) Province of Ontario – COVID-19 Update regarding remote municipal meetings during emergencies.
- b) Waasigan Transmission Line Draft Terms of Reference for Review and comment letter. The link to the full document was emailed to Council. This item had been discussed under further old business.
- c) Kevin Surette, Ontario Energy Board, e-mail regarding COVID-19 Energy Assistance Program. The information provided has been shared on the Township's Website.

Under further new business Councillor Loan updated Council on his virtual Thunder Bay District Municipal League (TBDML) board meeting. COVID-19 and how communities are adjusting was discussed. The fall conference was also discussed, and the board felt that it should be cancelled this year due to the pandemic and that they do not want a Virtual Conference. A copy of Council's letter to the Ministers regarding high speed internet sent in June was received and the League and the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) will be helping to push the rural concern. Councillor Bert Johnson of Terrace Bay has accepted the position on the North of Superior Workforce Training Board, replacing Councillor Crystal Olson from Conmee. Councillor Loan also commented that the Town of Marathon has used \$100,000.00 for their reserves to help small businesses in their area with rent and bills to stay afloat. The next meeting of the League is scheduled for October 21, 2020.

Mayor Vezina discuss with Council his participation in a virtual meeting held by Premier Doug Ford and Minister Clark and all heads of Council on July 8, 2020. The discussion was on measures being taken to enable COVID-19 recovery efforts. It was noted that no measures regarding funding to municipalities to offset the financial impact of COVID-19 were discussed.

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

- a) The Corporation of the Township of Perth South letter to Agricorp regarding Farm Property Class Tax Rate Program.
- b) Ministry of Transportation regarding the expansion of the types of off-road vehicles permitted on-road. The new class of vehicles include dirt bikes and extreme terrain vehicles. Council has passed a by-law to allow off-road vehicles on our roadways, however, it will need to be amended to reflect the new class of vehicles. Council had no issue with adding them and an amending by-law will be passed at the next meeting of Council to be held on August 10, 2020.
- c) Hydro One invitation to Mayor Vezina to participate in a virtual information session for Hydro One's Waasigan Transmission Line Project. This item was discussed under further old business.
- d) North of Superior Workforce Planning Board (NSWPB) regarding development of new website and requesting community photos to incorporate into banners throughout the website. Council had no issues with providing pictures for their website.

For information purposes, building permits where approved as follows: Deck and greenhouse at 31 Pool Road.

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – JULY 13, 2020

It was

8. Moved by B.J. Loan
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON AUGUST 10, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE O'CONNOR COMMUNITY CENTRE IF SITUATION DUE TO COVID-19 REMAINS SAFE.

TIME BEING: 8:40 P.M.

Mayor

Deputy Clerk-Treasurer