

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES BUDGET MEETING – June 8, 2022

Minutes of the budget meeting held in the Council Chambers and virtually on Wednesday, June 8, 2022 at 6 p.m.

Present: Mayor Vezina
 Councillors: Crane, Handy (virtually), Racicot,
 Loan arrived at 6:25 p.m.
 Clerk-Treasurer Buob
 Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot
 Fire Chief Henry Mattas
 Leadhand Kelly Johnson
 Administrative Assistant Erin Laforest

Mayor Vezina called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

1. Moved by Bishop Racicot
 Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING BE APPROVED.

Carried

Disclosure of pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof: none.

No visitors were in attendance.

Mayor Vezina turned the meeting over to the Clerk-Treasurer to present the draft budget line by line. Clerk-Treasurer Buob explained how the numbers were presented and how the taxation revenue included in Draft #1 Budget was determined. The bottom line of the full Budget shows the variance required to balance the budget as presented. The revenue taxation in the first draft is based on the 2022 assessment values and the same levy used for the 2021 final billing. The assessment values have remained stable since 2020, with only slight increases for properties with improvements that have been picked up by MPAC. The line items in accounts 4020 and 4040, titled Taxation Arrears are actually the Education taxes for budget purposes only.

The proposed amounts in the revenue accounts were explained. The Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) for 2022 is slightly higher than the previous year, \$2,600 more than what was received in 2021. It was noted that the OCIF funding for 2022 is now \$100,000, and the estimated unspent balance will be put into a deferred revenue account on the expense side. The Municipal Operating Fund for COVID revenue and the expenses are being estimated for the year in equal amounts. The interest earned amount is higher than budgeted last year as the interest rates have increased. Interest earned on the funding revenue is also being included in the specific funding lines, rather than the general interest account. Long-Term Debt Proceeds have been budgeted for the new truck. A By-law for the loan will be brought to the June 13th Council meeting for approval.

The meeting continued with the review of the expenses for the Township. Council meeting expenses were discussed. The estimates for regular Council meetings are currently based on to-date expenses as well as estimated attendance at upcoming meetings. Council confirmed that all upcoming special meetings, that they are aware of, are included.

The Administration salaries line does include both Full-Time Staff and the Administrative Assistant's wages. The Miscellaneous wages include the Groundskeeper's wage for the Community Centre yard, for times prior to and following the Summer Student's employment.

The Clerk-Treasurer is still waiting for the actual breakdown for the insurance policy. The total expense has been included; however, at this point are all in one account. The balances will be distributed to the proper accounts prior to the final Budget approval.

The proposed building repairs and maintenance and outdoor recreation area were discussed. Funding has been approved for the rink area, however at this time we are not aware of the actual costs and if the work comes in over the funding approval the

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funds will have to be included in the budget or if there is a funding available from the Canada Community Building Fund, it can be drawn from that funding account.

The Protection and Services accounts were reviewed. It was noted that there is a large dead tree at the O'Connor Cemetery, surrounded by tombstones, that will have to be taken down professionally. Currently included in the budget is only an estimate and an actual quote will be obtained prior to final approval of the Budget.

The Disposal Site accounts were reviewed. The wages include extra time to have the site cleaned up, regular Caretaker wages, as well as some time for Road Employees for the time spent there. The recycling expenses continue to increase.

The Canada Community Building Fund, formerly Federal Gas Tax account, includes the resurfacing of one road project and the purchase of the Asset Manager computer program PSD CityWide.

Under Professional Fees, a small amount is included in the Legal Fees account. If it is not required, it could be transferred to the Legal Reserve account at year-end.

The Joint Board expenses were reviewed. All amounts are similar to 2021, with the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) and the Lakehead Police Services Board increasing slightly.

The Government Mandated Programs were reviewed including Land Ambulance, Policing, Property Assessment, Public Health and Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board. It was noted that these programs together increased by over \$15,000.

The Reserve Allocation line includes a portion of the repayment to the Reserves for the grader transmission expense and the purchase of the 4 x 4 truck, as was previously discussed. Also included are the funding from the NORDS, which is being deferred into 2023, the unallocated OCIF funding, and the estimated interest earned on the Disposal Site Reserve balance.

The Election expenses for the upcoming Municipal Election have also been included.

The meeting was then turned over to Fire Chief Mattas to discuss any changes made to the Fire Department Budget since the previous Budget meeting held on April 25, 2022. Fire Chief Mattas noted that there were no major changes made to the budget, since that time. Fire Chief Mattas was thanked for the update.

The meeting was then turned over to Mr. Kelly Johnson, Leadhand, to review the Road Department's portion of the Budget and explain any changes which have been made since Draft #1 Budget, which was presented on April 11, 2022. Mr. Johnson informed Council that additional funds have been included in the Repairs and Maintenance account for the vehicles, as well as an increased amount in the fuel for all equipment due to the current increases in fuel prices. The new truck has also been purchased since that date, so costs associated with the purchase are also included. The spring weather has resulted in flooding and washouts. The Township will be applying to the Municipal Disaster Recovery Assistance Program (MDRAP) for a portion of those costs with the Township's percentage being included in the Budget.

The Shop B Garage construction project will be completed in 2022. At this time, no actual costs are available. The project will cost more than the funding available and Council will have to determine where the balance of the monies will be obtained from.

The meeting was turned back to Council for discussion.

The balance of the Reserve and the Deferred Revenue accounts were reviewed.

The bottom line of the current Draft #1 Budget was reviewed. An acceptable percentage tax increase was discussed. Council agreed that a 4% increase would be acceptable for this Budget, due to all the significant increase in costs to the Township. Budget items

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were adjusted and cuts were made from the line items where possible. Monies will also be transferred from appropriate reserves. The Clerk-Treasurer will continue to get as many actual costs and make line item changes, prior to final approval. The Budget will be brought back to the June 27, 2022 meeting for further discussion and final approval so that the tax bills can be sent out with July and September 2022 due dates.

Everyone was thanked for their participation in the budget preparation and attending the meeting and it was

- 2. Moved by W. Handy
Seconded by Jerry Loan

THAT THE BUDGET MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND VIRTUALLY ON JUNE 13, 2022 AT 7:00 P.M.

TIME BEING: 8:38 P.M.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk-Treasurer