

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – MARCH 8, 2021

Minutes of the Council meeting held virtually on March 8, 2021 at 7 p.m. from the Township office.

Present: Mayor Vezina
 Councillors: Crane, Handy, Loan, Racicot
 Clerk-Treasurer Buob (in the Township office)
 Deputy Clerk-Treasurer
 Visitors: Kelly Johnson, Leadhand (in the Council Chambers)
 Janice LeBoeuf, Paul LeBoeuf, Stephen Wiebe

Mayor Vezina called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

1. Moved by Jerry Loan
 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 Jerry Loan
 Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2021 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.

Carried

Mayor Vezina recognized the visitors joining the meeting virtually.

Mr. Johnson, Leadhand, was welcomed to the meeting. He provided Council with an update on the Road Department and roadwork in general. The spring melt has started, employees are pushing back the snowbanks and scratching any snow packed areas and frost heaves are popping up. They have been building more sign bases for warning signs. As the roads start to soften up, they will use the grader to scrap some of the surface off or they will be adding material to lesson the bumps. No questions were asked by Council with regard to the roads.

The Health and Safety Report for February 26, 2021 was read. No questions were asked of the Leadhand.

The Canada's Healthy Communities Initiative funding application was discussed. At the last meeting it was suggested that a new ramp for the community centre be submitted as the project under this first round of funding, with a submission deadline of March 9, 2021. After the meeting there was an email forwarded to Council expressing concerns for the size of the ramp required and suggestions for other projects were made to allow for time to get costs, due to the limited time to submit an application. As a result of further investigation into the size of the ramp required, administration would like to confirm that the size in the email was misquoted and the actual size required is similar to the current ramp. It was agreed to continue with the ramp application for this submission.

The second suggestion was a possible HRV for the garage. Council was informed that this would not be a community benefit and would not qualify under this particular funding. Estimated prices for budgeting purposes had been requested. Mr. Johnson provided Council with these costs and it was suggested that this project be considered under the COVID-19 Resilience funding. The balance of the COVID funding available will be looked into with regard to this potential project.

Mr. Johnson left the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

The Voucher summary for March 8, 2021 was reviewed and it was

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3. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by W. Handy

THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2021-05 DATED MARCH 8, 2021 TOTALLING \$67,056.82 BE APPROVED AND PAID.

Carried

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditures will not be available until the completion of the Township's Audit for 2020.

Resolutions for endorsement were read as follows:

- a) Thunder Bay District Municipal League requesting a letter be submitted to the City of Thunder Bay with regard to the proposed changes to the Superior North Emergency Medical Services (SNEMS) in the District of Thunder Bay. The Clerk-Treasurer explained that at the last meeting Council supported a joint letter being submitted to the City from the Board and upon clarification it was determined that it was not the Board's final request. They are asking for each municipality to submit their own letters. A draft resolution from the Municipality of Greenstone and a copy of a letter sent by the Township's of Nipigon and Red Rock were provided. It was

4. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Jerry Loan

WHEREAS THE CITY OF THUNDER BAY HAS BEEN PRESENTED WITH A PROPOSAL 2021-2030 PARAMEDIC SERVICES MASTER PLAN;

WHEREAS THE PLAN CALLS FOR THE CLOSURE OF THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) BASE IN THE COMMUNITY OF BEARDMORE;

WHEREAS PARAMEDIC SERVICES IS A CRITICAL SERVICE TO AREA RESIDENTS THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY;

WHEREAS THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE TO NO CONSULTATION OR DIALOGUE WITH THE MUNICIPALITY, COMMUNITY, OR AREA FIRST NATIONS ON THE PROPOSAL, ITS IMPACT OR TO FIND POTENTIAL MUTUALLY SATISFACTORY SOLUTIONS;

WHEREAS BEARDMORE IS 85 KILOMETERS FROM THE NEAREST EMS BASE AND HOSPITAL, RESULTING IN A 170KM ROUND TRIP (NEARLY 2 HOUR RESPONSE TIME FROM TIME OF CALL TO ARRIVAL TO HOSPITAL) FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL CALLS;

WHEREAS THE PROPOSED CHANGES WILL ALSO IMPACT THE ABILITY TO SERVICE OTHER COMMUNITIES AS UNITS WOULD NOW BE TIED UP FOR AN ADDITIONAL 2 HOURS PER CALL TO BEARDMORE;

WHEREAS THE PROPOSAL TO LEAVE AN EMS FOR WHEN THE CLINIC IS CLOSED DOES NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT IMPORTANT FACTORS SUCH AS CALLS WOULD STILL REQUIRE A DISPATCH OF A UNIT FROM NIPIGON OR GERALDTON, THE FUTURE GROWTH OF POPULATION IN THE FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES, OR THAT THAT CLINIC IS NOT OPEN 5 DAYS A WEEK, 52 WEEKS A YEAR;

WHEREAS IF CARRIED OUT, THE PROPOSAL TO CLOSE THE BASE IN BEARDMORE WILL HAVE SEVERE LIFE THREATENING IMPACTS GOING FORWARD;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR IS OPPOSED TO THE 2021-2030 PARAMEDIC MASTER PLAN IN ITS CURRENT FORM; AND

THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR CALLS UPON THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF THUNDER BAY TO NOT APPROVE THE PLAN

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AS PRESENTED AND ENSURE THAT PROPER DIALOGUE REGARDING THESE TYPES OF DECISIONS OCCURS GOING FORWARD**AND THAT IT BE SENT TO THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF THUNDER BAY, THE MINISTER OF HEALTH, AS WELL AS MUNICIPALITIES AND FIRST NATIONS IN THE DISTRICT OF THUNDER BAY.**

Carried

- b) Town of Marathon regarding the ongoing lockdowns due to COVID-19 and requesting that the district communities not be included in the same code as the City of Thunder Bay was filed.
- c) Township of Lake of Bays regarding the Capacity Limits for Restaurants in Stage 2 under the Reopening Ontario Act, 2020 was filed.
- d) Township of South-West Oxford & Township of South Glengarry regarding Automatic Speed Enforcement (photo radar) by municipalities was filed.
- e) Township of The Archipelago regarding Municipal Elections Act and adding names to the voters list was filed.
- f) Regional Municipality of Halton regarding recommendations from AMO in regard to Long-Term Care and advocating to the Federal Government to enhance federal health care funding to Provinces and Territories was filed.

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing – 2021 COVID-19 Recovery Funding for municipalities. The Township of O'Connor will be receiving an additional \$21,452.00 in 2021.
- b) Superior North EMS – Fourth Quarter Levy for 2020. The final levy for land ambulances services has been adjusted based on their year end reconciliation and confirmed funding for pandemic costs.
- c) Minister of Transportation, Honourable Caroline Mulroney, Thanking Council for the delegation meeting, held virtually during the ROMA Annual Conference.
- d) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – i) Policy Update – February 24, 2021 – Build Back Better Extension and New Anti-Human Trafficking Legislation.
ii) Policy Update – March 1, 2021 – Province Provides Additional Transit Funding, Municipal Modernization Funding, and 34 Public Health Unit Vaccination Plans Together.
iii) Policy Update – March 4, 2021 – New 2021 COVID-19 Relief Funding.
iv) Policy Update – March 5, 2021 – Phase II of Vaccinations Plan, Bill 257 – Supporting Broadband and Infrastructure Expansion Act, and Firefighter Training Modernization.
v) Policy Update – March 8, 2021 – Municipal Councillor Code of Conduct Consultations.
vi) Office of the President regarding the Options for Enforcing Compliance by Council Members with Municipal Codes of Conduct. As this item was received late in the day and some members had trouble opening the document it was agreed to bring this item back to the next meeting for further discussion.
- e) Norfolk County regarding the carbon tax on primary agriculture producers.

Under Old Business, Council discussed a Memorandum from Judith Monteith-Farrell – regarding her Private members bill to eliminate fees for birth certificates and Ontario Photo ID cards for all applicants and requesting Council's feedback. The request was brought to the last meeting however the attachment of the memorandum was not received prior to the meeting. It was noted that she has put this forward to the house already. It was

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

THAT COUNCIL OF THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR SUPPORTS THE PRIVATE MEMBERS BILL DESCRIBED IN THE MEMORANDUM DATED FEBRUARY 16, 2021 FROM JUDITH MONTEITH-FARRELL, MPP THUNDER BAY-ATIKOKAN, REGARDING THE AWENEN NIIN ACT (WHO AM I) RESPECTING IDENTITY DOCUMENTS, 2021; AN ACT TO AMEND THE PHOTO CARD ACT, 2008 AND THE VITAL STATISTICS ACT TO PROHIBIT

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THE CHARGING OF FEES FOR A PHOTO CARD OR RELATING TO BIRTH REGISTRATIONS, BIRTH CERTIFICATES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS.

Carried

Under further Old Business Councillor Crane noted that both himself and Councillor Handy attended the Veterinary Service Committee meeting held on February 25, 2021. Both Councillors are now on the Board of Directors.

The possibility of having all the municipal buildings on one meter at the O'Connor Community Centre to save meter rentals was discussed. It was clarified that there is no rental fee for the meters but there is a base amount included in the delivery charge for each meter, but the majority of the delivery charge is based on usage. This will be looked into further to see if this option is worth considering.

Under New Business, Council discussed

- a) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing letter regarding the Township of O'Connor's 2021 Annual Repayment Limit and explanation of what it is was read.
- b) Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) regarding Connecting the North – A Draft Transportation Plan for Northern Ontario – Looking for feedback by March 10, 2021. No comments were provided by Council.
- c) Budget meeting dates were discussed. It was agreed to wait until the next meeting to discuss further as Council would prefer to hold the budget meeting in person if possible, and they would like to wait and see where the COVID-19 restrictions are heading.

Under further New Business, Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot noted that she has been in contact with Blue Fox Communications and they are currently looking for towers in the area to install their transmitting equipment for high-speed internet. Council would like her to get more information and bring it back to the next meeting.

Issues brought forward or letters received after agenda was mailed were emailed to Council as follows: a) Thunder Bay DSSAB – Update from the Board – March 4, 2021.

For information purposes no building permits were approved since the last meeting.

It was

- 6. Moved by Jerry Loan
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD VIRTUALLY ON MARCH 22, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M.

TIME BEING: 8:16 P.M.

Carried

 Mayor

 Clerk-Treasurer