

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – MAY 25, 2021

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 7 p.m. in the

Present: Mayor Vezina
 Councillors: Crane, Handy, Loan, Racicot
 Clerk-Treasurer Buob
 Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot
 Visitors: Fire Chief Henry Mattas
 Deputy Fire Chief Monica Budiselic
 Administrative Assistant Laforest

Mayor Vezina called the meeting to order at 7:03 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 A. Crane
 Seconded by W. Handy

THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, MAY 10, 2021 AND THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING AND TRAINING HELD ON MONDAY, MAY 17, 2021 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.

Carried

No visitors were in attendance at this meeting.

Fire Chief Mattas and Deputy Fire Chief Budiselic were welcomed to meeting. The Fire Department report was read. There was one Fire related call and one First Response call between April 25 and May 20, 2021. Fire Chief Mattas informed Council that on May 18, 2021 he did put a fire ban on due to the dry conditions and other fires in the area. As a result of the rain the ban was lifted on May 20, 2021. Council did not have any questions with regard to the report. There were no further issues with regard to the department at this time.

Training for the fire team was discussed. The COVID-19 funding is available to purchase additional manuals and Chromebooks for training. Deputy Fire Chief Budiselic noted that she will be calling a virtual meeting for June 1, 2021 with the members to discuss training and the comfort level of the members to meet in person. She would like to start up training in the near future, with the warmer weather coming where they can meet outside, and indoors following proper protocol. She would also like to get everyone set up online and try to get them all working on that portion of the training as well.

Information with regard to the retirement of Fire Apparatus was briefly discussed. As it was only received by email today, Council would like more time to read it over and understand what it is stating. This information will be brought back to the June 28, 2021 Council meeting for further discussion with Fire Chief Mattas. Council would also like the Fire Department's opinion on our current condition of the Township's trucks, as the trucks have hit the age of concern. Fire Chief Mattas confirmed that the truck was used this weekend by a couple of members who filled the area water tanks and everything is working well. Council would also like the Fire Chief to check with other larger municipalities in Ontario, or Manitoba to see if they might be selling anything in the ten-year-old range and what prices they might be going for. Deputy Fire Chief Budiselic noted that the province is going to have to start to come up with more funding for Fire Departments if they are going to demand that vehicles be replaced because of their age and she will be advocating for this.

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – MAY 25, 2021

Both Fire Chief Mattas and Deputy Fire Chief Budiselic were thanked for attending and they left the meeting at 7:32 p.m.

The Administration and Roads Voucher summary was reviewed and no questions were asked. It was

3. Moved by Bishop Racicot
Seconded by J. Loan

THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2021-10 DATED MAY 25, 2021 TOTALLING \$16,195.95 BE APPROVED AND PAID.

Carried

As it is not month end no Statement of Revenue and Expenditures were available.

Policies were reviewed as follows: a) A draft policy for Municipal Reserve and Reserve Funds was discussed with Council. This is a new policy Council has requested. Upon AMCTO training on the subject, administration has drafted a policy for Council's further discussion. The Clerk-Treasurer provided a summary of the policy and noted the information in which Administration is requesting assistance from Council on, such as the maximum levels and definitions for each. It was also noted that there is a difference between a Reserve and a Reserve Fund and currently the Township of O'Connor does not have any Reserve Funds, only Reserves. Discussion was had with regard to the policy, as well as to whether or not maximum levels on the Reserves were required or if it could be on some and not all. It was agreed that the definitions should be broad to allow for more flexibility in their uses, if needed. It was also suggested that rather than a minimum or maximum amount for each reserve that perhaps there could be an ideal target. Administration will continue to work on this policy and bring it back for Council's review once again at an upcoming meeting.

b) A draft policy for Municipal Investments was discussed by Council. This is also a new policy arising from the Reserve and Reserve Fund policy. Currently the Township has two types of investments. Council discussed the draft, changes will be made to the reporting requirements in the policy, as the Clerk-Treasurer currently provides the information on the Township's investments during budget discussions and again at year end with regard to the year end surplus or deficit, it was agreed that an annual investment report to Council was not required. The wording in the Reporting section will be reworded to reflect this and it will be brought back to Council for approval.

Consent Application 1B/11/21 for a 5 Hectare severance on Concession 6, Lot 1, was reviewed. It was noted that while the property does have some frontage that would not be safe for a driveway, there is an area at the top of the hill that could be permitted. The Leadhand would like to ensure that he is contacted prior to any entrance being established on this newly created lot. Council did not have any additional issues and it was

4. Moved by Bishop Racicot
Seconded by W. Handy

THAT THE CONSENT APPLICATION 1B/11/21 FOR AARON GOUGH FOR THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED AS CONCESSION 6, LOT 1 FOR A SEVERANCE OF 5 HECTARES BE APPROVED UPON CONDITION OF LEADHAND APPROVING DRIVEWAY LOCATION.

Carried

Resolutions for endorsement were read as follows:

- a) Township of McKellar requesting Consideration of Tax Breaks on 2020 CERB payments and it was

5. Moved by W. Handy
Seconded by Jerry Loan

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – MAY 25, 2021

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE TOWNSHIP OF MCKELLAR REQUESTING CONSIDERATION OF TAX BREAKS ON 2020 CERB PAYMENTS BE ENDORSED.

Carried

b) Town of Cochrane requesting the reopening of Greenwater Provincial Park and it was

6. Moved by W. Handy
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE TOWN OF COCHRANE CALLING ON PREMIER FORD AND THE MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND FORESTRY TO REOPEN THE GREENWATER PROVINCIAL PARK BE ENDORSED.

Carried

c) Township of Brock supporting the Durham Dead-End Road Kids and the safety concerns of parents of this children and it was

7. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Jerry Loan

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE TOWNSHIP OF BROCK REQUESTING THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT TO ALLOW EXCEPTIONS TO THE STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES POLICY AND ALLOW FOR TURN AROUNDS ON DEAD-END AND ON PRIVATE ROADS BE ENDORSED.

Carried

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Thunder Bay District Health Unit News Release – Ontario Releases Three-Step Roadmap to Safely Reopen the Province.
- b) Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC) – Draft Minutes of the April 20, 2021 meeting, which were amended at the May 18, 2021 meeting.
- c) Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) –
 - i) Update from the Board – May 17, 2021.
 - ii) TBDSSAB 2020 Annual Report. The full report is available on their website.
 - iii) 2020 Audited Consolidated Financial Statements. Full report is available on their website.
 - iv) COVID-19 Update to Member Municipalities.
- d) City of Thunder Bay re: Superior North Emergency Medical Services Master Plan.
- e) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – i) Policy Update – May 13, 2021 – Stay-at-Home Order Extended.
 - ii) Policy Update – May 20, 2021 – New Provincial COVID-19 Plan, Federal COVID-19 Support Ask, Social Assistance Recovery and Renewal Vision, and Ombudsman's Report on Ambulance Complaints.
 - iii) AMO Conference Just Three Months Away.

Under Old Business, Council discussed

- a) Enbridge Report, an update from the Clerk-Treasurer regarding submitting an application to have natural gas come into the Township of O'Connor was read. Ms. Buob has spoken with Mr. Skaarup from Enbridge and it has been confirmed that a portion of the Township of O'Connor was included in their current Phase 2 application for funding, through the Ministry of Energy, for expansion. They are currently waiting for the announcement on which projects are successful. The funding is for \$130 million for rural and remote communities and they received applications for over \$2 billion. The concerns previously discussed with regard to crossing the Kaministiquia River were noted. They would not use the current Highway 11/17 bridge to run lines on, technology has evolved; however, it is still expensive. Enbridge has previously completed an inquiry with regard to customers in O'Connor, the cost to come up Highway 590 and turn down Garbutt Road with 69 customers would cost approximately \$76 million. Mr. Skaarup, or some of his staff, would be willing to attend a Council meeting but feel at this point it would be better to wait until the funding announcement has been made, when they would have a better idea as to what is actually happening. Council agreed and will wait to request a delegation with

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – MAY 25, 2021

them.

- b) i) Report to Council with regard to the OPP Thunder Bay Detachment Board structure options meeting held on May 19, 2021 was read. The report was prepared by Administrative Assistant Laforest and Councillor Loan, and explained the conversation held at the meeting.

Councillor Loan also discussed, in further detail, the positions of each municipality. The concern of the members present was that each municipality should have a representative on the Board if they are a part of it. The First Nation members of the Thunder Bay Detachment were not invited to attend the meeting at this time. The cost apportionment for the Board expenses was also discussed and it was suggested that a formula using the number of properties be used. After further discussion the question of what benefits are the Township of O'Connor receiving from being a member of the Board was discussed, and if we do not have to be a member what is required of the Township with regard to policing.

- ii) Next steps recommending a second meeting was discussed. It was agreed that Councillor Loan and Ms. Laforest should attend and it was

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

THAT THE FOLLOWING PERSON/S PARTICIPATE IN THE LAKEHEAD RURAL MUNICIPAL COALITION (LRMC) MEETING TO DISCUSS THE THUNDER BAY OPP DETACHMENT BOARD FRAMEWORK PROPOSAL TO BE HELD ON THE WEEK OF JUNE 7TH, 2021 AT 3:00 P.M.

**COUNCILLOR LOAN
ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT LAFOREST**
Carried

- c) Cancellation of approved purchase was discussed. The Clerk-Treasurer reported to Council on the status of a current order with Softsell Computers and would like to recommend that resolution #5 of the February 8, 2021 meeting, for the purchase of a computer with programming, a laptop, and ten Chromebooks be rescinded as there has been no communication with Softsell Computers since the order was placed. Several attempts have been made by staff, via phone and email and now by mail requesting the status of the order with no response. Council agreed and it was

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

THAT RESOLUTION #5 FROM THE FEBRUARY 8, 2021 COUNCIL MEETING TO ACCEPT A QUOTE FROM SOFTSELL COMPUTERS FOR THE PURCHASE OF A COMPUTER WITH PROGRAMMING, A LAPTOP WITH KEYBOARD AND MOUSE, CHROMEBOOKS, WEBCAMS, HEADSETS AND MICROPHONES BE RESCINDED.

Carried

The Clerk-Treasurer also reported that they would like to move forward with the purchase of the Chromebooks, for both Council and the Fire Department, as well as headsets for Council and staff. Quotes were requested from the new LAS Buying Group with Staples Business Advantage and staff would like to get the approval from Council to move forward with the purchase. It was

10. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Jerry Loan

THAT A QUOTE FROM STAPLES FOR THE PURCHASE OF 20 CHROMEBOOKS AT A COST OF \$389.99 EACH AND 8 HEADSETS AND MICROPHONES AT A COST OF \$89.99 EACH PLUS HST BE ACCEPTED.

Carried

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – MAY 25, 2021

d) A date for a budget meeting and possible due dates for the final 2021 tax billing were discussed.

11. Moved by Bishop Racicot
Seconded by Jerry Loan

**THAT THE FOLLOWING DATE BE SET FOR A VIRTUAL BUDGET MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 21, 2021 AT 7 P.M.**

Carried

If the budget can be ready for approval on the June 28, 2021 Council meeting, the final tax installment due dates will be July 30th and September 30, 2021.

The Clerk-Treasurer provided Council with Mr. Robson, the Township of O'Connor's Municipal Enforcement and Provincial Offences Officers, response to the recent increase in his pay rate and appreciation for their kind words.

Under Further Old Business, Councillor Crane reported on his meeting with the Waasigan Hydro One project virtual meeting he recently attended. The final location of the new line has been set and it will not be going through O'Connor at all. The project will bring more jobs into the area.

Under New Business, Council discussed

- a) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – Annual 2021 AGM and Conference to be held virtually on August 15 -18, 2021 was discussed. No one will attend.
- b) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding municipal delegation request for the AMO 2021 Annual Conference. As no one will be attending no request will be made.
- c) Ministry of Finance regarding the New Optional Small Business Property Subclass starting in May 2021. At this time Council do not feel that the Township would need this new optional class.
- d) Minister for Seniors and Accessibility regarding the 2021 Senior of the Year Award. The deadline for nominations is May 31, 2021. Council discussed possible candidates and it was agreed to nomination Randy Turk for this award.
- e) Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks –
 - i) regarding Regulatory Proposals under the Conservation Authorities Act consultations.
 - ii) regarding the Participation in webinar with ministry staff to provide input on the regulatory proposals.
 - iii) Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks – Virtual Engagement Session for Ontario's proposed Land Use Compatibility Guideline.

Mayor Vezina reported that he will learn more on the regulatory changes at the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority Board meeting on May 26th. As the last virtual engagement session is following the June 14, 2021 Council meeting, a decision on whether or not someone should attend can be discussed then.

- f) Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) – Ontario Clean Air Alliance regarding the Ontario Independent Electricity System Operators (IESO) gas plant phase out engagement webinar. Mayor Vezina will be in attendance at this meeting as a member of the Energy Task Force.
- g) Town of The Blue Mountains regarding the Community Recovery Task Force's request to the Provincial re-opening Strategy and Frontline Business Experience. No response will be made.
- h) Thunder Bay Ventures regarding the Business Confidence Index (BCI) and requesting the Township's logo for the survey's cover letter and requesting that the Township share the link with their network. Council do not feel that they would like to submit the Township's logo for this purpose.

Under Further new business, the current mileage rate paid out by the Township was discussed. It was agreed to look into what the other surrounding communities are paying and bring back to a future meeting for discussion.

It was noted that the tender has been posted for the resurfacing of Highway 595.

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – MAY 25, 2021

It was also noted that former Councillor, Bill Mazurkewich has recently passed away. Council would like a sympathy card sent out to the family on their behalf.

For information purposes a building permit has been approved for a new garage at 61 Strom Road.

The date of the next meeting was discussed and it was

- 12. Moved by Bishop Racicot
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD VIRTUALLY ON MONDAY, JUNE 14, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M.

TIME BEING: 10:08 P.M.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk-Treasurer