

## TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES BUDGET MEETING – MAY 4, 2020

Minutes of the Fire Department and the Road Department budget meeting on Monday, May 4, 2020 at 7 p.m. held virtually from the O'Connor Municipal Office and Council Chambers.

Present: Mayor Vezina  
Councillors: Crane, Handy, Loan, Racicot  
Clerk-Treasurer Buob (in the Municipal office)  
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot (in the Municipal office)

Visitors: Fire Chief Henry Mattas (in the Council Chambers)  
Leadhand Kelly Johnson arrived at 7:30 p.m. (in the Council Chambers)

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

Mayor Vezina invited Fire Chief Mattas to present the Fire Department draft #1 budget line by line.

Under Capital purchases Fire Chief Mattas has included six new self-contained breathing apparatus (SBCA) bottles. As a result of testing, new bottles are required.

The loan on the fire truck will be paid off this year. The line item amount includes the principal only for nine months, as the interest is included in the administration budget.

The honourariums remain the same as last year. Currently all meetings and training are cancelled due to the COVID-19.

Under Fire Department training, at this time Fire Chief Mattas does not know what training will be offered this year, again due to the COVID-19. He does have two members interested in the driver training and some of the training expensed has already occurred.

The operating and maintenance lines for the equipment were discussed. At this time Fire Chief Mattas does not anticipate any major repairs on any of the equipment. There have been some repairs completed on the pumper already this year.

Under radios and repairs he would like to purchase two new pagers and some batteries.

Fire Chief Mattas would like to look into purchasing dress uniforms for the members for when they attend special meetings, training or fundraisers. Before purchasing he will confirm with each member that they will wear them.

The O'Connor Fire Hall building maintenance account was discussed. The washroom renovations have been completed. \$5,000 was put into the Fire Department reserve at the end of 2019 as this work was budgeted for 2019 but not completed. Therefore, this amount will be pulled back out of the reserve this year to cover those costs.

Mayor Vezina asked Council if they had any questions with regard to the budget to this point. Some questions were asked and information was clarified. One of the suggestions was to ask the Auxiliary if they would be willing to pay for the member's dress uniforms. Fire Chief Mattas will follow up with this.

The Fixed costs were then discussed, including memberships, hydro, communications and heating. Most of these costs are set and there is not a lot that can be adjusted. The insurance numbers are currently only an estimate as we are still awaiting the rates for the June 1, 2020 renewal.

The current balances of the Fire Department reserve accounts were presented. It was noted again that \$5,000 will come out of the Fire Department reserve to cover the washroom renovations. Fire Chief Mattas would also like to add \$2,000 to the Turnout Gear Reserve. No new suits are required this year; however, Council has previous agreed to expense one suit each year and if a suit was not purchased an amount equal to a new suit would be put into this reserve.

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Council did not have further questions. Fire Chief Mattas was thanked for attending the meeting and presenting the Fire Department budget and he left the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Mr. Johnson, Leadhand, was welcomed to the meeting. The Road Department draft #1 budget was reviewed. Items were discussed line by line.

The Administration and the Building Maintenance accounts for the municipal garage were reviewed. The insurance is again only an estimate as we await the renewal costs.

The loan repayment amount includes the final principle payments for the grader as this loan will also be paid in full this year. The interest is included in the administration budget.

In the Major Capital equipment account, Mr. Johnson has included the cost of a 2020 combination plow and sander for Council's consideration. No other capital items are being put forward this year.

Road Employee wages and payroll costs were reviewed. It was noted that some of the salaries for the road employees are distributed to the different departments, such as cemetery or disposal site, as well as some expensed to the different projects. It was also noted that the union contract is due for renegotiations as of August 1, 2020 and no wage increase has been included in these numbers.

Mayor Vezina again asked Council if they had any questions with regard to the budget to this point. Some questions were asked and information was clarified. Mr. Johnson was asked which truck would be replaced if a new truck was purchased or could the third truck be kept as a spare. The 1993 is the oldest of the fleet, but it is also the most reliable but it is starting to get hard to find parts. The licensing of the truck would also be an added cost if it was kept; however, it could be considered. It was suggested that perhaps Mr. Johnson could possibly look around and see if there are any used trucks available.

Mr. Johnson continued his presentation with the equipment operating costs. These costs include fuel to run the equipment, safety checks, the licence plates and CVOR for the trucks. Maintenance for each piece of equipment was also discussed.

Road signs were discussed. Mr. Johnson has ordered some signs for the Blaikie and Diana Road intersection. Mr. Johnson also noted that with regard to the safety concern with this intersection some clearing in the corner was done last year but more trees will be cut this year to allow for a better site line.

At this point in the meeting the Township's internet was cutting out and had to be reconnected. There was some interruption but the meeting was able to continue.

Road Materials were discussed. Mr. Johnson has budgeting for three loads of calcium. This amount does not include the calcium used for the resurfacing projects or the detour. The winter sand for the last two seasons was purchased from the Township of Conmee and it has worked out well. The cost of mixing the salt and sand will increase for next season however no price for the salt is available at this time. It will however still be cheaper than purchasing the mix from the previous supplier.

Bridge repairs were discussed. The wooden surface of Bridge #2, on Smith Road, will be changed this year. The lumber was purchased in 2019 but the job was not completed. The amount in this line is only for wages, supplies and equipment to complete the job.

The Township of O'Connor has submitted an application to the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) Green Infrastructure Stream for funding to change out several culvert within the Township road system. If this application is not approved Mr. Johnson would like to change out five culverts on the road system through the Township budget.

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Mr. Johnson is proposing to do two Road Projects, one being 1.6 km of gravel resurfacing on Earl Road and the second being brushing and drainage in areas to be determined by himself. He will also be resurfacing 4.2 km of roadway using Federal Gas Tax funds and asphaltting the approaches to Bridge #1 on Blaikie Road using OCIF funds. A traffic counter/radar sign, similar to what was borrowed in 2019 from the Municipality of Neebing and a report for replacement options for the Smith Road bridge is also being proposed using the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF). If the ICIP Green Stream funding application is approved, the OCIF funding could be used to cover the Township's portion of the costs.

The application for funding to the "Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP) Rural and Northern Infrastructure Stream" was approved for the replacement Beaver Dam Creek culverts and the installation of guide rails on Sitch Road and, if construction is permitted in wake of the COVID-19, will be completed in 2020.

It was also noted that the Township did purchase the 4 x 4 truck in 2019 and rather than getting a loan, pulled the money from the Road Equipment reserve. It was agreed that this amount would be replaced in the reserve over the next three-year period. This amount will be discussed further at the budget meeting held on May 12, 2020.

Council asked additional questions with regard to the budget. It was requested that if Council were to move forward with the purchase of a new truck that the actual bank cost and fiscal liability be made available to Council for the next budget meeting,

The Five-Year Road Plan was briefly discussed. Mr. Johnson explained the changes he has made from last year's plan. Once the budget and projects have been approved for 2020, the plan will be finalized.

Mr. Johnson was thanked for attending and presenting his budget.

The Fire and Road Department budgets will continue to be updated with comments or concerns from this meeting or if actual expenses are occurred. Any changes will be discussed further at the full budget meeting to be held on Tuesday, May 12, 2020 at 7 p.m. Everyone was thanked for attending and for the work put forward so far on the budget and it was

1. Moved by Bishop Racicot  
Seconded by A. Crane

**THAT THE BUDGET MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON MAY 11, 2020 AT 7:00 P.M. FROM THE MUNICIPAL OFFICE AND O'CONNOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS.**

**TIME BEING: 8:53 P.M.**

Carried

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Mayor

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Clerk-Treasurer