

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – APRIL 8, 2024

Minutes of the Council meeting held on April 8, 2024, at 7 p.m. in the O'Connor Council Chambers.

Present: Mayor Vezina
Councillors: Crane, Rea, Sobolta, Torkkeli
Clerk-Treasurer Buob

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

1. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Brendan Rea

THAT THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING BE APPROVED.

Carried

Disclosure of pecuniary interest and general nature thereof: None.

2. Moved by Carly Torkkeli
Seconded by J. Sobolta

THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE PUBLIC MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 25, 2024 AND THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 25, 2024 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.

Carried

No visitors were present.

Fire Chief Greg Biloski was unavailable. He provided a written report for the Period of March 22 to April 8, 2024. There was one Fire related call in that period. The Report included an update on the position of Health & Safety Representative for the Fire Department, recruitment ideas, the Department's training calendar for April and May 2024 and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) training courses applied for. The Report also included New Business providing an update on Fire Department matters, including items also included in the budget, presented at the Fire Department Draft #1 Budget meeting, held earlier this evening. He is continuing to look for someone to fill the vacant position of Deputy Fire Chief. In the report Fire Chief Biloski informed Council that a resident has requested that the Department provide large animal rescue training. Due to the lack of volunteer and the extensive training required, Council are not interested in offering this service at this time.

The Administration and Roads Voucher to April 8, 2024, was reviewed and it was

3. Moved by Brendan Rea
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2024-07 DATED APRIL 8, 2024 TALLING \$56,216.90 BE APPROVED AND PAID.

Carried

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditures will not be available until after the Auditors have completed the 2023 Audit report.

By-laws were reviewed as follows

- a) By-law Number 2024-12 being a By-law to amend the Official Plan. This By-law was passed at the March 25, 2024 meeting, however, did not include all the required information for the approval and will need to be repealed. This By-law was available to Council for reference.
- b) By-law Number 2024-13 – Being a By-law to amend the Township of O'Connor's Official Plan with respect to provisions included in Amendment Application #2023-01 and to Repeal By-law Number 2024-12. It was

4. Moved by Brendan Rea
Seconded by A. Crane

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – APRIL 8, 2024

THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2024-13 BEING A BY-LAW TO AMEND THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR OFFICIAL PLAN WITH RESPECT TO PROVISIONS INCLUDED IN AMENDMENT APPLICATION #2023-01 AND TO REPEAL BY-LAW NUMBER 2024-12 BE PASSED AND ENTERED IN THE BY-LAW BOOK.

Carried

Resolutions for endorsement were read as follows:

- a) Town of Rainy River requesting the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) reconsider the current approach to the cap on international student permits was filed.
- b) Township of Clearview endorsing the passing of Bill C-63 in the House of Commons and the establishment of a “digital safety commission” and nomination of an “independent” Ombudsperson was filed.
- c) City of Brantford regarding Home Heating Sustainability was filed.
- d) City of Guelph supporting the Decision of the Ontario Energy Board to end the Subsidization of Fossil Gas was filed.
- e) Township of Warwick securing access to Natural Gas was filed.
- f) Township of Asphodel-Norwood expressing concerns with Public Health Ontario’s (PHO) laboratory modernization plan and it was

- 5. Moved by Brendan Rea
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE TOWNSHIP OF ASPHODEL-NORWOOD EXPRESSING THEIR CONCERN ABOUT THE POSSIBLE CLOSURE OF REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH ONTARIO LABORATORIES AND URGING THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT TO TAKE CAUTION AGAINST ACTING ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS STATED IN THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL OF ONTARIO’S VALUE-FOR MONEY AUDIT: PUBLIC HEALTH ONTARIO BE ENDORSED.

Carried

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) regarding the 2024 Conference and AGM. Six Ministers have confirmed attendance and deputation requests are being accepted. Council will not be requesting a deputation at this time. The draft agenda for the Conference was also included.
- b) Ministry of Finance regarding 2024 Ontario Budget announcements related to municipal taxation.
- c) Good Roads regarding the 2024 Provincial Budget: Big on Capital, Short on Maintenance.
- d) AMCTO - Advocacy Update: 2024 Provincial Budget. The document noted that the government has introduced funding over the next three years for the application - based Fire Protection Grant to support municipal fire services infrastructure and equipment. Administration will investigate what funding is being offered.
- e) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – i) Policy Update – 2024 Ontario Budget and National Housing Strategy Funding.
ii) AMO President’s Update – April 2024.
- f) Nuclear Waste Management Organization regarding the 2023 Annual Report and 2024-2028 Implementation Plan now available.
- g) The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board – invitation to 25th Anniversary Celebration on April 18th. RSVP deadline is April 15, 2024.

The balance of the correspondence was passed around the table.

Under Old Business, Council discussed

- a) The wage for the Deputy-Treasurer Intern position, as per discussions held in the Closed meeting held on March 25, 2024. It was

- 6. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

THAT THE WAGE FOR THE POSITION OF DEPUTY-TREASURER INTERN FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR BE SET AT \$25.00 PER HOUR.

Carried

Council also discussed the option of moving forward to fill the position without going through the Internship program. If the Township could find someone with Municipal experience for the position, as training time with Ms. Racicot is limited due to her retirement date, it may provide a better turnover experience. The applicant would be on probation for a three-month period to confirm their experience. The wage of the successful applicant could be paid based on experience and taking into consideration the current wages of the Township of O'Connor of employees. The Internship application has been submitted and the Township cannot advertise or promote the position until confirmation has been made from the program. With staff shortage and time to train a new person to the field it could take much more time to be back to efficiency. If there are no applicants that Council feel fit the qualifications, then the request for an Intern could move forward. Administration will work on the job description and prepare an advertisement for the position.

The Clerk-Treasurer noted that Ontario Power Generation have agreed to provide a Deputation to Council at the May 13th Council meeting regarding the Kakabeka Falls Generation Station and the anticipated station redevelopment, as per Council's request rather than the April 22nd meeting, as they had first suggested. Council would also like to ask for more detail regarding the water supply for the Fire Departments during the shutdown. She noted that the Auditors are also tentatively attending that meeting.

Under New Business, Council discussed

- a) An Interview Committee for the Equipment Operator position currently posted. Applications are due on April 22, 2024, for Council's view at the Council meeting held later that evening. Applicants for interview will be chosen and will be scheduled following the review. It was

- 7. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Brendan Rea

THAT THE FOLLOWING PERSONS BE APPOINTED AS THE INTERVIEW COMMITTEE FOR INTERVIEWING FOR THE POSITION OF EQUIPMENT OPERATOR:

MAYOR VEZINA, COUNCILLOR CRANE, COUNCILLOR TORKKELI

THE INTERVIEW MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 29, 2024.

Carried

The interview questions from the previous hiring will be forward to Council for their review and discussion at the next meeting.

Councillor Sobolta reported that the next Lakehead Police Services Board meeting will be held on May 2, 2024. The new name for the Board has been chosen. A By-law for the appointment to the Board will be brought to the next Council meeting for approval.

Councillor Crane asked if there was any policy or information regarding the Disposal site not being open during regular hours due to bad weather or no attendant being available to open. He also asked if there is a way to notify the residents, so they do not attempt to go when it is closed. The Clerk-Treasurer noted at this time there is not. It was suggested that a text message could be sent out to those who have signed up for the service. That could be used to encourage more residents to sign up for the messaging. A policy will be considered.

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

- a) Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks regarding Provincial Day of Action on Litter.

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For information purposes, no Building Permits were issued since the last meeting.

It was

- 8. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE BUDGET MEETING TO BE HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 22, 2024 AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE O'CONNOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS.

TIME BEING: 8:42 P.M.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk-Treasurer