

## TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – JUNE 24, 2024

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday, June 24, 2024 at 7 p.m. in the O'Connor Council Chambers.

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

Visitors: Fire Chief Greg Biloski  
Summer Student Hannah Laforest  
Summer Student Graeme Napper arrived at 7:06 p.m.  
Erin Laforest, Teri Treftlin arrived at 7:06 p.m.

Mayor Vezina called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Moved by Carly Torkkeli  
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 Brendan Rea  
Seconded by A. Crane

**THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, JUNE 10, 2024 AND THE BUDGET MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2024 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.**

Carried

Visitors were asked if they wished to address Council and they replied, no.

Summer Student, Hannah Laforest, was welcomed to the table. Introductions were held and each member of Council was given the opportunity to congratulate and welcome her to the Summer Student Administrative position in the office and wished her well in the position. Words of advice regarding her employment with the Township were provided. Ms. Laforest was asked if she had any questions of Council, and she did not. Her first day of employment will be July 8, 2024.

Ms. Laforest and Erin Laforest left the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

Summer Student, Graeme Napper arrived at 7:06 p.m. and was welcomed to the table. Introductions were held again, and each member of Council was given the opportunity to congratulate and welcome Mr. Napper to the Summer Student Road Department position. He was provided with working safely advice and encouraged to ask if he had any questions, to ensure he would be doing the tasks safely and correctly. He was informed that he would be working in different areas of the Township, including the cemetery. Mr. Napper was asked if he had any questions of Council, and he did not. His first day of employment will be July 8, 2024. Mr. Napper and Teri Treftlin left the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Fire Chief Biloski was welcomed to the table. No written report was provided, however Fire Chief Biloski provided a verbal report. He noted that attendance at training is low, and he is anticipating that through the summer months it will not pick up. Fire Chief Biloski is currently taking the Auto-X training and expressed his frustration with the online portion of the course. The program is very hard to navigate. This comment was also made in the past by Councillor Rea. Fire Chief Biloski also noted that a code is required prior to starting the online portion of the course and the code was still being sent to the incorrect email which delayed the start of the program. He also noted that the criteria provided at signup does not list what books or equipment the member will need, you only receive this when you login. If a book is required to be purchased there is not enough time to order one. The program also refers you to Guidance Notes located on a website which you must navigate through and switch back and forth

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between the course. Council agreed that we have to push back to the Office of the Fire Marshal to make this training more user friendly.

Fire Chief Biloski noted at the recent Zone One meeting they are looking into what training the members would like to see for next year. He has suggested more Firefighter I courses, as all members of the team are required to take this course.

The O'Connor Volunteer Fire Department Auxiliary's recent Steak draw went very well and was sold out. The draw was held on June 18<sup>th</sup> at the Fire Hall during the power outage.

Fire Chief Biloski has been in contact with Fire Chief Horan from Oliver Paipoonge, and they will be meeting to discuss the possible purchase of their surplus Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) equipment.

As no Deputy Fire Chief has been chosen, Council discussed with Fire Chief Biloski who is second in command in his absence. Fire Chief Biloski informed Council that Captain, Mike Carli, has been notified when he is absent. If the Captain is also not available, Sara Shoemaker, Fire Chief of the Nolalu Volunteer Fire Department has been notified. He has been trying to find a Deputy Chief with no real interest coming forward.

Fire Chief Biloski noted that he is looking to see if someone will take the lead on the training for the Department as he is finding it hard with his extra responsibility and busy schedule. He has also been talking with Fire Chief Rob Day of the Conmee Volunteer Fire Department to see if the teams could also work together on training. The Conmee Department meets on Thursdays.

The Automatic Aid Agreement with the Nolalu Volunteer Fire Department was discussed. A draft copy was presented at a previous meeting for Council's review. Fire Chief Biloski confirmed that there was no issue with the Office of the Fire Marshal for the Township to work with an unincorporated Township Department. Council would like the By-law to come to the next meeting for possible approval.

The Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC) are also looking at possibly entering into Agreements with the different Departments. Fire Chief Biloski noted that on July 9, 2024, the Zone One Fire Chiefs will be meeting to go over the Fire Department By-laws and go over the services provided by each Department and discuss how shared services could work. There was a concern expressed by Council on how Central Ambulance Communication Centre (CACC) will know who to page and when, due to the Agreements. This will have to be considered in the discussions.

Fire Chief Biloski informed Council that during the June 18<sup>th</sup> storm with high winds, the Fire Department was called out for a tree that was knocked down and on the power lines on Highway 590, causing a fire on the line and in the ditch, as well as dropping the line onto the highway. The team attended the scene for several hours waiting for Hydro One to attend. When the crew arrived, they were not aware that the Fire Department was on scene waiting for them and they had attended to other calls in the meantime. Communications with Hydro One and the paging out of calls also needs to be addressed. Fire Chief Biloski would like to arrange to have Hydro One come out and do some training with the members regarding safety around downed power lines.

Fire Chief Biloski was thanked for attending and he left the meeting at 7:38 p.m.

The Administration and Roads Voucher was reviewed, and it was

3. Moved by J. Sobolta  
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

**THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2024-12 DATED JUNE 24, 2024 TALLING \$85,270.93 BE APPROVED AND PAID.**

Carried

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The Statement of Revenue and Expenditures to May 31, 2024, was reviewed by Council.

The Township of O'Connor Administrative Report for Disclosure Regarding Budget Impact was unavailable.

Draft #2 of the 2024 Budget was reviewed and discussed. The Clerk-Treasurer provided information on changes that she has made from Draft #1. Revenue from the internship program has been included, however the Township still has not received confirmation on whether or not the funding has been approved. New actual pricing has been included for any purchases already made or any estimates that have been confirmed. Other options to reduce the budget or to bring in additional revenue were discussed. Council would like the Clerk-Treasurer to pursue getting quotes for the cutting of the wood on the Township property on Connolly Road. A request for a donation from the Commercial businesses on Loghrin Road for the road resurfacing project will be made. Dutchaks will be contacted to confirm whether the tin cans, such as soup cans, can be recycled with them, which could bring in additional revenue. Additional estimated numbers will try to be confirmed prior to the final budget being set. A Draft #3 and Final Budget will be brought back to Council on July 8, 2024, for approval. If Council approve the budget, the tax bills can still be sent out July 9<sup>th</sup> with due dates of July 31<sup>st</sup> and September 30<sup>th</sup>.

By-law Number 2024-19 to enter into an Agreement for funding was reviewed and it was

4. Moved by A. Crane  
Seconded by Brendan Rea

**THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2024-19 BEING A BY-LAW AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF AN AGREEMENT WITH THE ASSOCIATION OF MUNICIPALITIES OF ONTARIO TO ACCESS THE CANADA COMMUNITY-BUILDING FUND BE PASSED AND ENTERED IN THE BY-LAW BOOK.**

Carried

Consent applications were reviewed as follows:

- a) Application #1B/02/24 for the proposed new lot at 51 Connolly Road, Concession 3, Part of the N ½ Lot 7 and it was

5. Moved by A. Crane  
Seconded by J. Sobolta

**THAT CONSENT APPLICATION 1B/02/24 FOR TIM SILVAGGIO, AS REPRESENTED BY STEPHAN HUZAN, FOR THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED AS CONCESSION 3, PT N ½ LOT 7 PCL 7262 FOR A SEVERANCE OF 5.44 HECTARES BE APPROVED.**

Carried

- b) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Application for Consent for property located in Lybster Township File#58-C-243813. Council did not have any comment or concerns with the application.

Tenders and Quotes were opened and reviewed for

- a) 2024 – 2027 Municipal Audit. One application was received from BDO and it was

6. Moved by Carly Torkkeli  
Seconded by J. Sobolta

**THAT THE QUOTE OF BDO TO CONDUCT THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR AUDIT FOR A FOUR-YEAR TERM, THOSE YEARS BEING 2024, 2025, 2026 AND 2027, AT A COST OF \$31,000 FOR 2024, \$31,500 FOR 2025, CPI INCREASE FOR SUBSEQUENT YEARS RESPECTIVELY, BE ACCEPTED.**

Carried

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- b) The Tenders for the Asphaltting of Loghrin Road were opened at the meeting held on June 10, 2024, and discussed further at the budget meeting held on June 11, 2024. At that meeting Council agreed to move forward with the project and the tenders were brought back for final approval. It was

7. Moved by Brendan Rea  
Seconded by A. Crane

**THAT THE TENDER OF TARANIS CONTRACTING GROUP TO SUPPLY AND PLACE HL-4 HOT MIX ASPHALT ON LOGHRIN ROAD BE ACCEPTED AT A COST OF \$322,545.00 PLUS HST.**

Carried

Resolutions for endorsement were read as follows:

- a) Township of Larder Lake regarding Asset Retirement Obligations PS 3280 and it was

8. Moved by A. Crane  
Seconded by Brendan Rea

**THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE TOWNSHIP OF LARDER LAKE CALLING UPON THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO MUNICIPALITIES TO COMPLETE THE ASSET RETIREMENT (ARO) OBLIGATIONS BE ENDORSED.**

Carried

- b) Township of Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan regarding Household Food Insecurity and it was

9. Moved by J. Sobolta  
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

**THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE TOWNSHIP OF BRUDENELL, LYNDOCH AND RAGLAN SUPPORTING THE RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE PUBLIC HEALTH SUDBURY & DISTRICTS REGARDING HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY BE ENDORSED.**

Carried

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) – 2023 Audited Financial Statements.  
b) NorthWestern Ontario Recreational Trails Association (NWORTA) – Notes from the Open House Information Session held on June 18, 2024, at the O'Connor Community Centre. On the evening of the event there was a power outage, however Mr. Day was still able to provide the presentation from his laptop. Overall, all attendees indicated support for all their proposals as outlined in their report. All concerns raised were addressed. No dissensions were expressed.  
c) Office of the Prime Minister, reply to Council's supporting resolution regarding Sustainable Infrastructure Funding for Small Rural Municipalities.

The balance of the correspondence was passed around the table.

Under Old Business, Council discussed

- a) BDO Dunwoody – Management Letter to Council regarding the 2023 Audit. Council discussed the concerned address by the Auditor. The Auditor would like to see different user accounts for each employee in the Asyst program. Council agreed that they would like to see this done. The Clerk-Treasurer will look further into how to do this.  
b) Deputy Treasurer position  
i) NOHFC intern program status. The Clerk-Treasurer informed Council that she still has not heard back from the program, but they have noted that it has been reviewed and it should be discussed at their next meeting, however, no date for that meeting was provided.  
ii) The draft interview questions for the Deputy Treasurer position were reviewed and discussed. Changes were made and will be prepared for the interviews to be held on June 27, 2024.

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- c) Councillor Crane provided the slide deck and a quick overview of the Roundtable session he attended regarding Broadband Programs.
- d) Small Drinking Water System - Water Sample update. The Clerk-Treasurer informed Council that administration has found a new company that will do water testing for a reasonable and similar price to the past testing.

There was no Further Old Business.

Under New business, Council discussed

- a) Greg Croft – Municipal By-law Enforcement/Provincial Offences Officer i) email regarding City of Thunder Bay Animal Services no longer accepting dogs from surrounding municipalities. Council would like to check with the Humane Society to see if they might take dogs from the Township if needed. An advertisement will also go into the Cornerstone to see if any of our residents would be able to house a dog for a short period of time and Council will also see if there are any other options available. The Township's By-law for Dogs Running at Large will have to be amended to remove this option.
- ii) Update on a dog complaint and the action taken to date was provided by the Clerk-Treasurer from information provided by Mr. Croft. Letters will be sent to the offenders as per the Township's Policy.

Equipment for a Dog Control Officer was briefly discussed. The Clerk-Treasurer will acquire prices for gloves, catch pole, leash and collars.

- b) Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission (CEDC) – request for letter of support – Rural Communities Immigration Pilot. Council did not make a decision on this request.
- c) Request for a donation of one history book for the Norwest Community Health Centre.

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

**THAT THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR DONATE ONE HISTORY BOOK TO THE NORWEST COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE.**

Carried

Under Further New Business Council expressed their concern for the multiple power outages in our Township over the last while that are not caused by weather. Council would like a letter submitted to Hydro One asking for an explanation as to why.

It was also noted that during the June 18<sup>th</sup> storm, several trees came down along Highway 590 and the Loghrin Road area.

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

- a) Lakehead OPP Detachment Board Administrative Report i) OPP Detachment Board Levy Allocations and Remuneration. The Board is recommending a levy allocation be split based on the percentage of total OPP billing total for all members. The Township of O'Connor's percentage would be 8.19%.
- ii) OPP Detachment Board Community Representative Appointments. Council did not have any issue with the Appointments recommended by the Board and an approval By-law will be prepared for the next meeting.
- b) Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks regarding Environmental Assessment Act Section 17.12 Notice of Completion of Ministry Review – Invitation to comment on the proposed Waasigan Transmission Line Environmental Assessment. No comments will be made at this time.

It was

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

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**THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING TO BE HELD ON MONDAY, JULY 8, 2024 AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE O'CONNOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS.**

**TIME BEING: 9:51 P.M.**

Carried

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Mayor

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Clerk-Treasurer