

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – MARCH 11, 2024

Minutes of the Council meeting held on March 11, 2024 at 7 p.m. in the O'Connor Council Chambers.

Present: Mayor Vezina
Councillors: Crane, Rea, Sobolta
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot

Visitors: Rick Bodnar
Kelly Johnson, Road Superintendent

Absent: Councillor Torkkeli

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

1. Moved by Brendan Rea
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 J. Sobolta
Seconded by Brendan Rea

THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2024 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.

Carried

All visitors were asked if they wished to address Council for anything other than what is on the agenda and they replied no.

Mr. Bodnar was welcomed to the table. Introductions were made. Mr. Bodnar expressed his concern with the tax rate increase last year and the impact that it is having on seniors who are on fixed incomes. Council informed Mr. Bodnar that every effort is made to keep the tax rates down, however, Council has no control over the levy that is set by outside agencies that municipalities are required to pay, such as the Thunder Bay District Social Services Board (DSSAB), Ontario Provincial Police and Land Ambulance. Mr. Bodnar was thanked for voicing his concerns and he was reminded that budget meetings are open to the public if he would like to see the process. Mr. Bodnar left the meeting at 7:30 pm.

Mr. Johnson, Road Superintendent, was welcomed to table. Roadwork in general was discussed. The roads crew has been brushing with the backhoe on Sovereign Road, and they have steamed four culverts. A contractor will be hired to cut down the trees by the Annex Building. Ministry of Transportation will be issuing half load restrictions and we will also be posting half loads on our roadways. Overall the roads are in good shape. Councillor Crane inquired as to what the plans are this year for Loghrin Road. He has had residents inquire. Loghrin Road resurfacing will be addressed during budget deliberations.

The possible replacement of the box on Truck #9 was discussed. Mr. Johnson commented that in his 2023 Equipment Report, he did indicate that the box should be replaced. Mr. Johnson has requested quotes to replace the box, however, he has not received anything yet. For now he feels that they may be able to plate the existing box and look at replacing it in the 2025 budget. Mr. Johnson was thanked for attending tonight's meeting and left at 7:48 pm.

3. Moved by Brendan Rea
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2024-05 DATED MARCH 11, 2024 TOTTALLING \$100,092.99 BE APPROVED AND PAID

Carried

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The Statement of Revenue and Expenditures will not be available until the completion of the Township's Audit for 2023.

By-laws and Policies were reviewed as follows:

a) By-law Number 2024-07, a by-law to amend By-law Number 2023-08 a by-law to establish and regulate a Volunteer Fire Department for the Township of O'Connor and it was

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

THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2024-07 BEING A BY-LAW TO AMEND BY-LAW NUMBER 2023-08 BEING A BY-LAW TO ESTABLISH AND REGULATE A VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT FOR THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR BE PASSED AND ENTERED IN THE BY-LAW BOOK.

Carried

b) By-law Number 2024-08, a by-law to appoint a Chief for the Township of O'Connor Volunteer Fire Department and it was

5. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by Brendan Rea

THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2024-08 BEING A BY-LAW TO APPOINT A CHIEF FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT BE PASSED AND ENTERED IN THE BY-LAW BOOK.

Carried

c) By-law Number 2024-09, a by-law to appoint a Municipal Enforcement/Provincial Offences Officer for the Township of O'Connor. Council at their closed meeting held on February 26, 2024 received and reviewed an application for the position of Municipal By-Law Enforcement Officer from Mr. Greg Croft. Council did not feel that an interview process was required and it was

6. Moved by Brendan Rea
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2024-09 BEING A BY-LAW TO APPOINT A MUNICIPAL ENFORCEMENT/PROVINCIAL OFFENCES OFFICER FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR BE PASSED AND ENTERED IN THE BY-LAW BOOK.

Carried

Resolutions for endorsement were read as follows

a) The Corporation of the Municipality of St. Charles

i) Resolution in support of Catherine Fife, Waterloo MPP regarding Bill 21, Fixing Long Term Care Amendment Act (Till Death Do Us Part), 2022 and it was

7. Moved by Brendan Rea
Seconded by J. Sobolta

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF ST. CHARLES SUPPORTING CATHERINE FIFE, WATERLOO MPP'S REQUEST FOR SUPPORT FOR BILL 21, FIXING LONG TERM CARE AMENDMENT ACT (TILL DEATH DO US PART) BE ENDORSED.

Carried

ii) The Corporation of the County of Prince Edward regarding the Ministry of Environment, Conservation proposal to expand the Use of Permit-by-rule was filed.

iii) The Corporation of the County of Prince Edward regarding Guaranteed Livable income and it was

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

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF ST. CHARLES SUPPORTING THE RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE CORPORATION OF THE COUNTY OF PRINCE EDWARD REGARDING GUARANTEED LIVABLE INCOME BE ENDORSED.

Carried

- iv) The Corporation of the Town of Aylmer regarding Provincial Consideration for Amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act was filed.
- v) The Municipality of Shuniah regarding Unnecessary Noise – Engine Brakes was filed.
- vi) The Association of Ontario Road Supervisors to develop a Municipal Equipment Operator Course was filed.
- vii) The Township of Asphodel-Norwood regarding Rising Municipal Insurance Costs and it was

9. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by Brendan Rea

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE CORPORATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF ST. CHARLES SUPPORTING THE RESOLUTION PASSED BY THE TOWNSHIP OF ASPHODEL-NORWOOD REGARDING RISING MUNICIPAL INSURANCE COSTS BE ENDORSED.

Carried

- b) The Corporation of the Tay Valley Township
 - i) Request for the Provincial Government to make an amendment to the Legislation Act, 2006 was filed.
 - ii) Declaration of a Climate Change Crisis was filed.
- c) County of Lambton's request for the Province to upload responsibility of and cost associated with municipally owned highways was filed.
- d) Town of Lincoln regarding the Urgent Need for Increased Funding to Libraries and Museums in Ontario was filed.
- e) Township of Georgian Bay request to increase the tax credit for Volunteer Firefighters and search and rescue volunteers and it was

10. Moved by Brendan Rea
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE TOWNSHIP OF GEORGIAN BAY REQUESTING THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA TO INCREASE THE TAX CREDIT FROM \$3,000.00 TO \$10,000.00 FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND SEARCH AND RESCUE VOLUNTEERS BE ENDORSED.

Carried

- f) The Corporation of the Town of Grimsby regarding support for a Review of the Ontario Works and Ontario Disability Support Program Financial Assistance Rates was filed.
- g) Town of Aurora
 - i) Resolution requesting Mayor to reconsider using strong mayor powers to alter the current structure of Council was filed.
 - ii) Resolution requesting Legislative Amendments to Improve Municipal Codes of Conduct and Enforcement was filed.
 - iii) Resolution requesting for Amenity Sharing Memorandum of Understanding with School Boards for Evening/Weekend Gymnasium Use was file.
- h) Municipality of Brighton regarding support for the migration of ride-share regulations and licensing from the municipal level to the provincial level was filed.
- i) City of Quinte West to re-evaluate their lack of funding for municipalities with population less than 50,000 in rural Ontario and make available funding for infrastructure programs and it was

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11. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by Brendan Rea

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM CITY OF QUINTE WEST CALLING ON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO RE-EVALUATE THEIR LACK OF FUNDING FOR MUNICIPALITIES WITH POPULATIONS LESS THAN 50,000 IN RURAL ONTARIO AND TO MAKE AVAILABLE FUNDING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS TO HELP BUILD INFRASTRUCTURE TO HELP BUILD MUCH-NEEDED NEW HOMES BE ENDORSED.

Carried

- j) Township of Amaranth requesting that the Province of Ontario pause advancement on proposed Highway 413 to Redirect Funds to Support Municipal Infrastructure Costs and Housing Construction Initiatives was filed.
k) Town of Cobourg requesting that Subsection 27 (16) of the Ontario Heritage Act be amended to extend the Deadline to Register Property was filed.

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) regarding Legislative and Regulatory Changes Affecting LRCA Development Permitting.
b) Municipality of Shuniah, Paul Greenwood, CAO i) OPP Detachment Board Proposals
ii) Update for OPP Detachment Board Framework for the Thunder Bay Catchment Area. It was commented that the proposal for the detachment board is not what was expected.
iii) Set up of the Next Meeting and Selection of a New Representative to Continue Correspondence with SOLGEN.
c) Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) i) Letter to the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario regarding Social Assistance Rates and Common Assessment Tools.
ii) Social Assistance Rates and Common Assessment Tools – Correspondence and Attachments.
d) Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) regarding the NOMA Board Meeting Summary.
e) Joel Richard, Stakeholder Relations Advisor, North Region – Area West, Ministry of Transportation regarding the intersection of Highway 590 and Loghrin Road. The e-mail indicated that MTO maintenance staff have undertaken temporary repairs at the intersection and plans are in place to complete a more permanent repair during the upcoming construction season.
f) Thunder Bay Vet Services Committee i) Annual Minutes, 2023
ii) Next Annual Meeting - March 19, 2024.

Under Old Business, Council discussed

- a) Treasury Board Secretariat letter regarding Approval of Application for the Community Emergency Preparedness Grant. The Township was approved for \$50,000.00 for the purchase of two emergency generators for the fire hall and the municipal garage and a transfer switch to ensure backup power to the Community Centre.
b) Report to Council giving Notification to Elected Officials for the Community Emergency Preparedness Grant Approval.

Under New Business, Council discussed

- a) Fire Chief Henry Mattas Resignation Letter and it was

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

THAT COUNCIL ACCEPT MR. HENRY MATTAS' RESIGNATION AS FIRE CHIEF EFFECTIVE MARCH 15, 2024.

Carried

- b) We the Nuclear Free North regarding Transportation and Burial of Nuclear Waste in Northwestern Ontario and request for Municipal Resolution. Council did not pass a resolution.
c) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding Save the Date – Northern

- Housing and Homelessness (Virtual) Forum. No one from Council will participate.
- d) Association of Ontario Municipalities (AMO) regarding Advanced Strategies to Master Conflict Relationship. No one from Council will participate.
- e) AMO regarding Cybersecurity for Municipal Councillors. No one from Council will participate.
- f) AMCTO regarding Zone 9 Spring Meeting and it was

13. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by Brendan Rea

THAT THE FOLLOWING PERSON/S ATTEND AMCTO'S ZONE 9 SPRING MEETING TO BE HELD ON APRIL 30, 2024 AND MAY 1, 2024.

**CLERK-TREASURER BUOB
DEPUTY CLERK-TREASURER RACICOT
ADMIN ASSISTANT LAFOREST**

REGISTRATION: \$100.00

Carried

- g) Ontario Power Generation regarding a Council Meeting Delegation Request by Chad Tanner. As April Council meetings also include budget deliberations, it was decided to invite Mr. Tanner to the May 13, 2024 Council Meeting.

Under Further New Business, Councillor Sobolta informed Council that he will be volunteering for the Boots on the Ground Program. The program is a peer to peer support program for First Responders.

The recent meeting of the Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC) was discussed. The meeting brought together Council members, Fire Chiefs and Administrative Staff to discuss the need for possible shared services to help area Volunteer Fire Departments cope with low membership and training requirements. Mayor Vezina will be discussing this issue at the next LRMC meeting.

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

- a) Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot's letter to Council announcing her retirement effective July 26, 2024 and it was

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

THAT COUNCIL ACCEPT MS. LINDA RACICOT'S RETIREMENT AS DEPUTY CLERK-TREASURER EFFECTIVE JULY 26, 2024.

Carried

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

15. Moved by Brendan Rea
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON MARCH 25, 2024 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE O'CONNOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS.

TIME BEING: 9:03 PM

Carried

Mayor

Deputy Clerk-Treasurer