

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – NOVEMBER 8, 2021

Minutes of the Council meeting held on November 8, 2021 at 7 p.m. in the O'Connor Community Centre and virtually.

Present: Mayor Vezina
Councillors: Crane, Handy, Loan, Racicot (virtual)
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot, Administrative Assistant Erin Laforest
Visitors: Kelly Johnson, Leadhand, Judith Monteith-Farrell, MPP Thunder Bay-Atikokan, Paul LeBoeuf

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

1. Moved by Jerry Loan
Seconded by W. Handy

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, OCTOBER 25, 2021 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.

Carried

Both visitors were asked if they wished to address Council for anything other than what is on the agenda. Mr. Paul LeBoeuf replied yes. Mr. LeBoeuf announced that his family will be moving in the near future and he probably will not be attending any more Council meetings. Mr. LeBoeuf was thanked for his attendance in tonight and past Council meetings.

Judith Monteith-Farrell, MPP was welcomed to the table. Introductions were made. Ms. Monteith-Farrell was invited by Council to discuss the Kakabeka Falls Good Doctors Telemedicine Clinic. There are concerns that the Clinic will be shut down if the Provincial Government does not address funding issues. Ms. Monteith-Farrell assured Council that the Provincial government is addressing the matter. An issue that rural communities are also facing is the lack of broadband access which also poses a problem for rural Clinics.

Council also inquired as to what is happening with the issue of eye-care. Optometrists are withholding treatment of patients that are covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) for eye testing as the Province is not covering the total cost of the examination. Ms. Monteith-Farrell commented that this is an ongoing issue, and it is being addressed. She also commented that some Southern Ontario Optometrists are starting to open.

Council also asked Ms. Monteith-Farrell what is being done regarding the price of gas and heating fuel. Council has made inquiries as to why natural gas companies are unable to service the residents of O'Connor. One issue that was mentioned was that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) and the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) are not willing to allow the gas companies to cross through the Provincial Park and the bridge over the Kaministiquia River. Ms. Monteith-Farrell commented that she is unaware of the position of MTO and MNR and it was agreed to forward what information we have on the subject to her office. She also commented that the Province is working toward becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and that efforts are being directed toward saving on electricity through retrofit programs and buildings being more energy efficient and following mandates in the Building Code instead of lowering the cost of fossil fuels.

Ms. Monteith-Farrell was thanked for attending the meeting and she left the room at 7:29 p.m.

Mr. Kelly Johnson, Leadhand, was welcomed to the table. Roadwork in general was discussed. Brushing on Earl, Allan and Wheal Roads has started. The gravel haul to

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Strom Road has been completed. Grading is being done to roads where required. Overall the roadways are in good shape. The roads crew will be working on cutting trees on Garbutt and Loghrin Roads and some trees will also be cut along the cemetery.

The Health and Safety report for August and October 2021 were read.

The Equipment Report prepared by Mr. Johnson was read. Truck number 7 has had a new windshield installed, the Chevalier Silverado has had the rear tires replaced and the grader has had a new transmission installed this summer. The CAT Backhoe has a minor leak which is being addressed and the compactor at the Disposal Site is still in operation, however the body is rusting.

Council also discussed the response from Ms. Cathy Seeley, Ministry of Transportation regarding the condition of Highway 595 and when the yellow line will be painted on the highway. Ms. Seeley's response regarding the line painting was that it will not be done until next year when they will be performing a double surface treatment. With regard to the condition of Highway 595, Ms. Seeley replied that there are deficiencies that will need to be addressed by the contractor next year prior to applying the second coat.

Council would like a letter sent to Ms. Seeley and the Minister of Transportation indicating that they are concerned with the safety hazard of not having the yellow line painted now and that the Ministry of Transportation will be liable for any accidents that occur on Highway 595. Council would also like Ms. Seeley contacted with regard to the condition of the corner of Broome Road and Highway 595, as well as and the corner of Loghrin Road and Highway 590.

Mr. Johnson was thanked for attending and left the meeting.

The Administration and Roads Voucher for November 8, 2021 was reviewed and it was

3. Moved by W. Handy
Seconded by Jerry Loan

THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2021-19 DATED NOVEMBER 8, 2021 TALLING \$84,683.31 BE APPROVED AND PAID.

Carried

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditures to September 30, 2021 were not available.

By-laws and Policies were reviewed as follows: a) By-Law Number 2021-16 being a by-law to amend By-Law 2020-24, to govern the proceedings of Council and Committees for the Corporation of the Township of O'Connor was reviewed. A resolution will be brought to the next meeting to pass the by-law.

b) Policy for COVID-19 Rapid Antigen Testing was reviewed and it was;

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

THAT THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR'S POLICY FOR COVID-19 RAPID ANTEGEN TESTING BE APPROVED.

Carried

c) Policy for the Mandatory Use of Mask or Face Covering was reviewed and it was;

5. Moved by Jerry Loan
Seconded by W. Handy

THAT THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR'S POLICY FOR MANDATORY USE OF MASK OR FACE COVERING BE AMENDED TO REMOVE SECTION 1 A) IV) EMPLOYEES WHO ARE WITHIN OR BEHIND A PHYSICAL BARRIER BE APPROVED.

Carried

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- d) Policy for the Pandemic Risk Management and Prevention was reviewed and it was;
6. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Jerry Loan

THAT THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR'S POLICY FOR PANDEMIC RISK MANAGEMENT AND PREVENTION BE AMENDED TO UPDATE SECTION 8 TO INCLUDE POLICY 4.29 – COVID ANTIGEN TESTING AS A SUPPORTING DOCUMENT, REPLACE APPENDIX "B" – COVID-19 WORKER SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE, AND ADD APPENDIX "C" – COVID-19 VISITOR SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE BE APPROVED.

Carried

- e) Policy for the Pandemic Risk Management and Prevention – O'Connor Community Centre was reviewed and it was;
7. Moved by W. Handy
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR'S POLICY FOR PANDEMIC RISK MANAGEMENT AND PREVENTION FOR THE O'CONNOR COMMUNITY CENTRE BE AMENDED TO ADD THE DEFINITION OF DOUBLE COVID-19 VACCINATION, ADD PROVISION OF PROOF OF DOUBLE COVID-19 VACCINATION IN SECTIONS 6.2 RESPONSIBILITIES, BULLET 6 AND 7.3 REQUIREMENTS, ADD IN APPENDIX "A" SUPERVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES BULLET 2 AND 3 TO REQUEST PROOF OF VACCINATION AND SCREENING MEASURES, AS WELL AS LESSEE RESPONSIBILITIES IN BULLETS 1 AND 2 TO PROVIDE PROOF OF VACCINATION AND SCREENING MEASURES, ADD IN APPENDIX "B" IN BULLET 2 LESSEE RESPONSIBLE FOR REQUESTING PROOF OF VACCINATION AND SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE, AND ADD APPENDIX "C" COVID-19 VISITOR SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE BE APPROVED.

Carried

Resolutions for Endorsement were read as follows: a) Ontario Municipal Employee Retirement System (OMERS) regarding CUPE Ontario request for Council to pass a resolution for OMERS to cooperate fully with an independent and transparent third party review of its investment performance. Council discussed the request and it was decided that no resolution would be passed.

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO)
 - i) Jamie McGarvey assumes Presidency of AMO.
 - ii) AMO Policy Update regarding Community Paramedicine Expansion, Broadband Internet Expansion, and Launch of Long-Term Care Inspection Program.
 - iii) AMO Policy Update regarding New Long-Term Legislation, Additional Personal Support Workers' Wage Enhancement, New LTC Personal Support Workers and Nurses Training.
 - iv) AMO Policy Update regarding Fall Economic Statement Highlights, Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund and Conservation Authorities Act Webinars and Fact Sheets.
- b) Lakehead University – External Relations regarding offer of Lysol Wipe Packages. The Township of O'Connor has received 66 boxes that will be handed out to residents dropping into the Municipal Office and as a handout during the O'Connor Community Club's Christmas Drive-through Parade.
- c) Mosey & Mosey regarding Employee Group Benefit Plan Renewal Projection. The Township will see an overall rate change of 8.3%.
- d) Minister of Infrastructure – Ontario Government Re-Affirms Commitment to Small, Rural and Northern Municipalities. The Township of O'Connor will receive \$100,000.00 which is the minimum allocation under the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund (OCIF), which is double that of 2021.
- e) Northern Policy Institute regarding October 28, 2021 – For Immediate Release.
- f) Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) – Heads Up Alert: Good Roads Applauds Province's Investment in Infrastructure.

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- g) Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) regarding the Provincial Government's 2021 Fall Economic Statement.
- h) Municipal Finance Officers' Association (MFOA) regarding the Provincial Government's 2021 Fall Economic Statement

Balance of correspondence was passed around the table.

Under Old Business Council discussed;

- a) Cemetery plots for Council members and staff. At previous meetings the subject of providing cemetery plots for Council and staff members at no charge has been discussed. Council would like a legal opinion before proceeding with a policy to ensure that there are no legal repercussions. Administrative staff have been looking online to see if other municipalities have a similar policy or practice, however have been unable to find a policy regarding this issue. Staff will continue to make inquires and Mr. Allan McKittrick will be contact to see if there are any legal issues that the Township will face if we proceed with a policy. He will also be asked if a discretionary policy for this issue could be implemented.

Under further old business Council inquired as to where administration is regarding the outdoor rink improvements. Administration has submitted the application to the Ontario Trillium Foundation and are waiting to see if we are successful.

Under new business Council discussed;

- a) Northwestern Ontario Recreational Trails Association's request for cash and in-kind support for their proposed multi-use, non-motorized recreation trail that will connect the communities of Kakabeka Falls and Shabaqua. Mr. Len Day, President of the Association has requested a \$500 annual cash donation and a \$4,500 annual in-kind donation. Council discussed Mr. Day's request and it was decided that they will not be making a cash or in-kind donation, however they are willing to write letters of support for any funding opportunities that the Association may take advantage of.
- b) Mr. Bryce Matthews, Mapping and Geomatics Project Manager, Ontario Imagery has invited the Township of O'Connor to participate in an aerial photography acquisition project of Northwest Ontario. Administration informed Council that we did participate in the project a few years ago at a cost of \$1,000.00. Council were in agreement not to participate in the project scheduled for 2022.

Under further new business the purchase of a new printer for the Tax Program was discussed. The old printer is starting to have issues with print quality and has been in the office for over 25 years. As the printer is so old, Administration has been advised that it would not be worth repairing and it would be unlikely that parts could even be found. It was agreed that a new printer will be purchased.

Under issues brought forward or letters received after the agenda was mailed were discussed;

- a) Media Release from the Thunder Bay District Health Unit regarding Expanded eligibility for COVID-19 and the Delta variant.
 - b) O'Connor Community Club 2021 Drive-through Christmas Parade.
 - c) O'Connor 2021 Christmas Tour of Lights. Mayor Jim Vezina has generously offered to personally sponsor this event again this year.
8. Moved by W. Handy
Seconded by Jerry Loan

THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON MONDAY NOVEMBER 22, 2021 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE O'CONNOR COMMUNITY CENTRE, IF CONDITIONS WITH COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS ALLOW.

TIME BEING: 9:04 P.M .

Carried

Mayor

Deputy Clerk-Treasurer