

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – OCTOBER 11, 2022

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Tuesday, October 11, 2022 at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers and Virtual.

Present: Mayor Vezina
 Councillors: Crane, Loan (virtual), Racicot
 Clerk-Treasurer Buob
 Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot
 Visitors: Kelly Johnson, Leadhand
 John Sobolta, Margaret Foster, Joyce Posthumus
 Jon Hari (virtual), Erin Laforest, Administrative Assistant (virtual)

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

1. Moved by A. Crane
 Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING BE APPROVED.

Carried

Disclosure of pecuniary interest and general nature thereof: none

2. Moved by Bishop Racicot
 Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2022 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.

Carried

The visitors were asked if they wished to address Council. Joyce Posthumus and Margaret Foster asked to address Council with regard to a beaver issue on Ms. Posthumus' property. Council agreed to allow them to speak during Mr. Johnson's Road Department discussions.

Mr. Johnson, was invited to the table. A Road Department update and roadwork in general was discussed. Mr. Johnson reported that the road crew are currently working on the installation of culverts and there are still a couple more to do before winter. There are several nuisance beavers in the Township's water courses that are keeping them busy. The trees that were taken down during the April storms are being cleaned up.

Council asked Ms. Posthumus to present her questions/concerns to Mr. Johnson at this time as per his discussion regarding beavers. Ms. Posthumus asked who is responsible for the removal of nuisance beavers. Currently Ms. Posthumus has a large pond on her property along Highway 595 and Flint Road. The beavers have chewed a significant amount of the base of a couple of trees, which poses a risk of falling on the hydro lines and across Flint Road. Mr. Johnson responded that if the issue is on private property, it would be the responsibility of the property owner. The road department is only responsible for the road allowance and keeping the beavers away from their own infrastructure. If the issue is within the hydro easement and there is a threat to Hydro's infrastructure their forestry department will take care of any hazardous trees. Ms. Posthumus had contacted Township staff on Saturday, October 8th with regard to her concerns and Mr. Johnson attended the area and has contacted Hydro One. If they do not respond in the next couple of days, he will reach out to them again. He has also tried to deter the beavers from chewing further into the tree by wrapping it with wire, however, they have now moved to the next tree. Mr. Johnson will continue to monitor the situation as the same beavers are causing concerns with the culverts on Flint Road. Mr. Johnson will follow up with Ms. Posthumus if there is still an issue and let her know if she should hire a trapper to address the concerns.

Mr. Johnson continued with his updates. The Shop B renovations are underway. The slab and footings have been poured and the curb will be done Wednesday. Once the styrofoam and floor materials are put down, the road employees will do the backfilling, as per the agreement. During the construction there is no heat in the garage.

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The road employees have been working on the rink shack, preparing it for the construction of the addition. As noted at the last meeting, a portion of the current floor was rotting and needed replacement. Upon further investigation, most of the floor will require replacing. Council agreed that it be repaired properly prior to construction. The pad for the addition was poured last week. The concrete on the rink was poured today. Mr. Johnson will be looking into arranging for the well. The funding received for the rink has to be spent by April 2023 so the project cannot be delayed.

Ms. Posthumus and Ms. Foster left the meeting at 7:22 p.m.

The Clerk-Treasurer provided an update on the funding and loan opportunities for the Shop B renovations. At the time of budget, the bids for the project were not in, however, Council had agreed that a loan for the expenses above the funding would be requested using the Infrastructure Ontario Loans program. An email was recently received from Infrastructure Ontario informing clients that October 21, 2022 is the last day to submit a loan application for the calendar year. Due to the current restrictions in regard to the Council's Lane Duck situation, no liability which exceeds \$50,000 can currently be incurred. As the construction is now underway and payments will be required in the near future, Council was informed of the situation and asked how they would like to proceed. Upon the swearing in of new Council a loan can once again be requested, however, funds through the Infrastructure Program will not be available until the new year.

Council agreed to have the Clerk-Treasurer inquire into raising the line of credit with our bank following the swearing in of new Council to cover some of the expenses, if needed. The Clerk-Treasurer will follow up with Infrastructure Ontario to see when the process for a new debenture or loan could start.

Mr. Johnson informed Council that the safeties are coming due on both Truck #7 and Truck #9 and repairs will be required on Truck #9. The Township will be selling one of the trucks, but have not yet made a final decision on which one, Mr. Johnson asked if both trucks should be safetied. It was agreed to do the safety on both. Council asked Mr. Johnson if the turbo on Truck #9 was repaired. Mr. Johnson reported that the part was found and it has been repaired.

Mr. Johnson will be reviewing the budget and the variances of expenses to September 30th to determine what is still required to be completed before winter and year-end. It was noted that he did cutback on some of the calcium budgeted for this year.

Mr. Johnson was thanked for attending and left the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

The Administration and Roads Voucher for October 11, 2022 was reviewed and it was

3. Moved by Bishop Racicot
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2022-17 DATED OCTOBER 11, 2022 TALLING \$45,524.10 BE APPROVED AND PAID.

Carried

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditures for September 30, 2022 were reviewed. No questions from Council were asked.

By-laws were discussed as follows:

- a) By-law Number 2022-20 – Being a by-law for the purpose of setting the honourarium for the Mayor and Councillors as per discussion at the previous meeting. It was

4. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2022-20 BEING A BY-LAW FOR THE PURPOSE OF SETTING THE HONOURARIUM FOR MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS BE PASSES AND ENTERED IN THE BY-LAW BOOK.

Carried

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- b) By-law Number 2022-21 – Being a by-law to appoint the Acting Deputy Chief of the O'Connor Fire Department. As per discussions with Fire Chief Mattas at the previous meeting, Greg Biloski will be appointed as the Acting Deputy Fire Chief and it was
5. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2022-21 BEING A BY-LAW TO APPOINT THE ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF OF THE O'CONNOR FIRE DEPARTMENT BE PASSED AND ENTERED IN THE BY-LAW BOOK.

Carried

The Clerk-Treasurer asked Council how they would like to deal with a honourarium for Mr. Biloski, as currently both the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief receive a monthly honourarium. Council agreed that Mr. Biloski will be paid a honourarium as the Acting Deputy Fire Chief, effective October 2022.

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding a thank you for the contributions and support to the Ministry during the first four years under the leadership of Premier Ford and asking for continued collaboration.
- b) Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) regarding the 2023 Annual Billing Statement package. The estimated 2023 Annual Billing will be slightly lower than in 2022. It was noted that the calls for service in 2021 were slightly lower than in the previous 3 years which will also help to reduce the costs in future years, as the calls for service count is used to determine the average over four years for billing purposes.
- c) Mosey & Mosey regarding Employee Group Benefit Plan Projection for November 1, 2022. The renewal costs will see an approximate 7.0% rate increase.
- d) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – i) AMO Policy Update – Proposed Regulations Under the Strong Mayors, Building Homes Act, and Federal Cannabis Act Review.

The balance of the correspondence was passed around table.

Under Old Business, Council discussed

- a) Appointment of Mayor Vezina to sit on the Northern Electricity Advocacy Roundtable (NEAR), as a representative of the Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC), as previously discussed at the September 26, 2022 meeting was once again discussed and agreed upon and it was

6. Moved by Bishop Racicot
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT COUNCIL APPROVE THE APPOINTMENT OF MAYOR JIM VEZINA TO SIT ON THE NORTHERN ELECTRICITY ADVOCACY ROUNDTABLE (NEAR) AS THE LAKEHEAD RURAL MUNICIPAL COALITION REPRESENTATIVE.

Carried

- b) The attendance at the Emergency Management Program Committee Meeting (EMPC) to be held on October 25, 2022 was discussed. Council would like to invite the Council elect to attend if they are available.
- c) Solicitor General regarding Update with regard to the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 and OPP Detachment Boards. In the Spring of 2021, the Ministry of the Solicitor General requested that communities work together to develop a proposal for composition of their new detachment boards based on the changes. The Ministry is working towards an in force date for the new board structure between fall 2023 and winter 2024. At this time, they are working to finalize proposed compositions for OPP detachment boards by November 30, 2022.
- d) A draft copy of the O'Connor Volunteer Fire Department Satisfaction Survey for review and comment by Council was read. Council requested a couple of changes. It will be forwarded to Fire Chief Mattas and Acting Deputy Fire Chief Biloski for their comments and will be sent out to current and past volunteers for their comments.

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Under Further Old Business, Councillor Loan said his final goodbyes as he will be moving from the Township on October 12, 2022.

Under New Business, Council discussed

- a) Dennis Ehn, Disposal Site Caretaker – Letter announcing his retirement. Mr. Ehn will be retiring from this position as of March 31, 2023. Recruitment will be discussed further closer to the date.
- b) Courageous Companions Canada request for advertisement in their Courageous K9 publication. It was agreed to not place an advertisement at this time.

Under Further New Business, Councillor Crane provided information on the 211 Helpline program available to all residents in the area. 211 offers assistance to provide contacts for supportive services 24/7 and in several different languages. He would like the Township of O'Connor to promote this program to our residents, through the office and in the monthly newsletter. If there is an opportunity, he would also like to have them come out and do a presentation in O'Connor. Council were in agreement that it is a great program and would like to see the Township promote it to our residents where possible. The Clerk-Treasurer confirmed that the Township has promoted the program in the past.

For information purposes, no new building permits were approved.

It was

- 7. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

**THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING TO BE HELD ON
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2022 AT 6:00 P.M. IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS
AND VIRTUAL.**

TIME BEING: 8:14 P.M.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk-Treasurer