

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – OCTOBER 25, 2022

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Tuesday, October 25, 2022 at 7 p.m. in the O'Connor Council Chambers and virtually.

Present: Mayor Vezina
Councillors: Crane, Racicot (virtual)
Clerk-Treasurer Buob
Administrative Assistant Laforest
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot (virtual)

Visitors: Fire Chief Mattas
Councillor Elect – Sobolta
Councillor Elect – Torkkeli (virtual)

Mayor Vezina called the meeting to order at 7:02 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 TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2022 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.

Carried

The Visitors were asked if they wished to address Council on anything other than what is already on the agenda, and they replied no.

Fire Chief, Henry Mattas, was welcomed to the table. The Fire Department Report from September 22, 2022 to October 19, 2022 was read. There have been two First Response Calls in that time period. He also noted that there have been no grass fires within the Township over the last two years. No questions were asked in regard to the report.

Fire Department issues were discussed. Fire Chief Mattas reported that one volunteer member has taken the trainer course through the Office of the Fire Marshal this weekend past. Two members are currently working on their driver training. Fire Chief Mattas requested that Acting Deputy Fire Chief be moved into the Deputy Fire Chief position, as a result of the Deputy Fire Chief's resignation, to be discussed next on the agenda.

Fire Chief Mattas noted that The Office of the Fire Marshal has sent out the Legacy Information and Application Package, dated October 17, 2022, which was provided for Council's review. Mayor Vezina noted that he has gone through it and would like a copy of the document provided to Council elect. It was noted that at the Candidates night all Candidates stated there was concern for the Fire Department. The Township needs to find a way to promote recruitment for the team from the Township residents. Fire Chief Mattas, also noted that at the recent Mutual Aid meeting, only eight of the thirteen Fire Departments were in attendance.

As this is the final meeting of the current term of Council, Fire Chief Mattas thanked them for their support throughout the last term and for him over the years.

- c) Monica Budiselic, Deputy Fire Chief – letter stating that she will be stepping down as Deputy Fire Chief of the O'Connor Volunteer Fire Department. Council would like a reply letter sent to Ms. Budiselic thanking her for her services over the years. Council informed Fire Chief Mattas that they would like to keep Greg Biloski as Acting Deputy Chief at this time.

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- d) O'Connor Volunteer Fire Department Satisfaction Survey information and update was provided by the Clerk-Treasurer. A final copy of the questions on the survey were provided to Council. The survey was sent out on October 20, 2022 to approximately forty (40) current and former members of the O'Connor Volunteer Fire Department and First Response Team from approximately the last ten years. To date, nine responses have been received. Who has responded is unknown and will remain anonymous. The responses submitted will be brought back to Council for the second meeting in November to discuss.
- e) Update on surrounding municipalities Fire Department responses. Clerk-Treasurer Buob reported that she has also reached out to the surrounding Volunteer Fire Departments to see what they do for their members, how they train and recruit, etc. To date, two Departments have responded. The Clerk-Treasurer will follow up and bring back a report to Council at the November 28th meeting.
- f) Office of the Fire Marshal – Firefighter Certification Legacy Information and Application Package, dated October 17, 2022 was discussed. On July 1, 2022, Ontario Regulation 343/22: Firefighter Certification came into force under the Fire Protection and Prevention Act (FPPA) 1997. The Regulation provides for the ability of the Fire Marshal to grant a letter of compliance with the certification standard to firefighters for several fire protection services. The letters of compliance only applies to the Ontario Seal program that was developed as part of the regulation. This package outlines details of the process. There will be two application windows and no applications will be accepted after September 30, 2023. This information will also be forwarded to Council-elect and will be discussed further at the November 28, 2022 Council meeting.
- g) Report to Council regarding the Township of O'Connor's By-law #99-08, as amended, to establish a Volunteer Fire Department and the new Ontario Regulation 343/22, Firefighter Certification was read. Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot reported to Council that as a part of the new Regulations, members have to be trained and certified to a certain standard, based on the services that the Township provides. Council has to, in the Municipal By-law, identify these core services. It was suggested that Council review all 43 services that require mandatory certification, discuss them further before yearend, repeal the current By-law and replace it with a new one, which will include a Schedule which will identify what services will be provided by the Township of O'Connor Volunteer Fire Department. Council agreed to have a new By-law drafted with Item 1, Firefighter Exterior Attack included as a service. This item will be brought back to Council on November 28th for further discussion on the other options.
- h) The O'Connor Fire Department Auxiliary Meeting Minutes – September 13, 2022 were read.
- i) Wawanesa Community Wildfire Prevention Grants was discussed. The application deadline is December 1, 2022 and funding we be awarded on March 1, 2023. The grant is to help communities across Canada increase their resilience to wildfires through risk reduction or prevention activities. Administration will look further into the grant to see if there is anything that the Township could apply for.

Fire Chief Mattas was asked to stay for a portion of the Closed Meeting further on the agenda.

The Administration and Roads Voucher was reviewed and it was

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

THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2022-18 DATED OCTOBER 25, 2022 TALLING \$21,166.50 BE APPROVED AND PAID.

Carried

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditure will be available following month end.

As the Policies a) Policy for the Fire Department and b) Policy for Volunteer Fire Department Member Recognition, were both in regard to the Fire Department it was agreed to defer their review until the November 28, 2022 meeting.

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Consent Applications were discussed as follows:

- a) Lakehead Rural Planning Board (LRPB) – Decision of application 1B/26/22 – Hamilton, Mattas. The application has been approved.

Resolutions for endorsement were read as follows:

- a) Municipality of East Ferris regarding child care workforce shortage was filed.
- b) Municipality of Wawa objecting to Bill 3, the Strong Mayors Act. It was

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

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE MUNICIPALITY OF WAWA PETITIONING THE GOVERNMENT OF ONTARIO, OBJECTING TO THE CHANGES MADE IN BILL 3 WITH REGARD TO PROVIDING THE MAYOR THE ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY AND POWER AND TO VETO SOME DECISIONS OF COUNCIL AS WELL AS PROFESSIONAL STAFF BE ENDORSED.

Carried

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC) – Minutes of the September 20, 2022 meeting. No further questions were asked in this regard.
- b) Darrell Matson, Rosalie Evans and Ron Bourret, Integrity Commissioners and/or Closed Meeting Investigators offering Council Orientation on Codes of Conduct. The Clerk-Treasurer noted that she would like to recommend that Council be provided this training and has suggested that it be provided with the Township of Conmee and the Municipality of Neebing Council's, who also share their services. Council agreed that this offer should be accepted and a date will be negotiated.

The balance of the correspondence was passed around the table.

No Old Business was discussed.

Under New Business, Council discussed

- a) Township Inspection. Council was asked if they would like to set a date prior to year end or wait until spring for a Township Inspection. Council agreed that if the weather permits, an inspection could take place mid to the end of November, prior to snowfall. A date will be discussed further at the next meeting with Mr. Johnson and new Council.
- b) Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism, Ontario Honours and Awards Secretariat regarding the 2023 Ontario Volunteer Service Awards. The Clerk-Treasurer noted that in the past the Township has nominated those who have provided volunteer services for over 25 years for the Provincial Services Awards. As the Township does provide their own service certificates, in five-year increments, to its volunteers and staff at our annual staff party. At this time no nominations will be made.
- c) O'Connor Community Club President, Linda Racicot, regarding Community Volunteer recognition. Ms. Racicot noted that she had been approached by a couple of the members of the Club asking why the O'Connor Community Club is not included in the Township's annual Christmas Party, as they are volunteers in the community. Council discussed the suggestion and determined that the O'Connor Community Club is a separate entity and not staff or a part of the Fire Department/First Response Team to the Township of O'Connor, even though they provide social events to the Township residents. Council noted that if they would like to attend, they are welcome, however they would be required to pay for their own dinner, the same as a spouse of an employee, Council or Volunteer Fire Department or First Response member.

Under Further New Business, Councillor Crane reported on the Thunder Bay District Municipal League. He announced that Nikita Cava has been hired as the new Executive Director of the Board. There will be an upcoming virtual Board meeting on December 2nd, 2022. Councillor Crane will attempt to participate but is concerned with his internet. Mayor Vezina, as the Alternate Representative, will also participate. Councillor Crane also noted that the large tree at the O'Connor Cemetery was removed by the contractor on the weekend.

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

- a) Proposal for OPP Detachment Board – Thunder Bay Detachment. A copy of the letter addressed to Paul Greenwood, CAO of the Municipality of Shuniah, from the Solicitor General was read. This letter is to follow up on the status of the proposal for the Thunder Bay Ontario Provincial Police detachment. The submission has been reviewed and it has been acknowledged that although the proposal does meet the minimum composition requirements, they do require confirmation from the First Nations communities that they are not interested in being a part of the new Boards. The Ministry is working towards an in-force date for the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019 (CSPA) between fall 2023 and winter 2024.

It was noted that as John Sobolta is the Municipal Representative on the current Board, and he has been elected to Municipal Council, he will no longer be eligible for this position.

For Information purposes no Building Permits were approved since the last meeting.

As Council were moving to closed session of the meeting, Council elect Sobolta and Torkkeli left the meeting.

It was

5. Moved by Bishop Racicot
Seconded by A. Crane

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE NEXT PORTION OF THE MEETING BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC IN ORDER TO DISCUSS A PERSONAL MATTER ABOUT AN IDENTIFIABLE INDIVIDUAL, PURSUANT TO SECTION 239(2)(B); AND LITIGATION OR POTENTIAL LITIGATION, INCLUDING MATTERS BEFORE ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNALS, AFFECTING THE MUNICIPALITY OR LOCAL BOARD, PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION 239(2)(E) OF THE MUNICIPAL ACT, 2001.

TIME BEING: 8:00 P.M.

Carried

Council first discussed the personal matter with regard to the Fire Department. Fire Chief Mattas left the meeting at 8:22 p.m. Council then continued to discuss a potential legal matter.

6. Moved by Bishop Racicot
Seconded by A. Crane

TIME BEING: 8:37 P.M.

THAT WE NOW MOVE TO OPEN MEETING.

Carried

7. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE EMERGENCY TABLETOP EXERCISE TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2022 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE O'CONNOR COMMUNITY CENTRE.

TIME BEING: 8:38 P.M.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk-Treasurer