

## TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 26, 2022

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday, September 26, 2022 at 7 p.m. in the O'Connor Council Chambers and Virtual.

Present: Mayor Vezina  
Councillors: Crane, Loan, Racicot  
Clerk-Treasurer Buob  
Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot

Visitors: Fire Chief Henry Mattas  
Brendan Rea, John Sobolta  
Greg Biloski (virtual), Jonathon Hari (virtual)

Mayor Vezina called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. Moved by Jerry Loan  
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 Bishop Racicot  
Seconded by A. Crane

**THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.**  
Carried

The Visitors were asked if they wished to address Council and they replied no, they were just there to observe.

Fire Chief Mattas was welcomed to the table. The Fire Department Report for June 23 to September 22, 2022 was read. In that time period there were two (2) Fire related calls and six (6) First Response calls.

Under Fire Department issues, Fire Chief Mattas noted that three (3) members have recently completed the Fire Fighter 1 and Fire Fighter 2 Courses. Brendan Rea was one of those Fire Fighters and Fire Chief Mattas asked him to comment on the courses, as he was in attendance at tonight's meeting. Fire Fighter 1 was a nine-day course and Fire Fighter 2 was seven-days. They were good courses and are now mandatory for all Fire Department volunteers. There will be other courses that will also be required, one being a basic and another two for getting ready for officers or a lower end of management. The courses are being held at the Kakabeka Regional Training Centre and additional courses will be made available and will be coming soon. Mr. Rea was thanked for his comments.

Fire Chief Mattas also noted that two members are going for their DZ Driver training.

Fire Chief Mattas once again expressed his concern of how hard it is to get volunteer members to join the team and he is concerned with the time commitment for the required training that it may be even harder. This is happening all over the country and the enrollment seem to go in cycles.

A discussion was held in regard to how to recruit new members, how do we ensure that the current members are happy and find out why those who were on the team in the past left. It was suggested that a survey be created that can be sent to present and past members. A draft of the survey will be created and brought back to Council for their review and approval.

It was also suggested that the surrounding municipalities be contacted to find out how many active volunteers they have and to see how their volunteers are treated in regard to honourarium/pay for training, calls or meeting attendance.

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As a part of the recruitment campaign to join the Fire Department to our residents could include a reminder that the cost of home insurance can be affected if there is no Fire Department within the Municipality.

Fire Chief Mattas informed Council that he would like to promote Greg Biloski from Captain to Acting Deputy Fire Chief. Council agreed with this recommendation and a By-law to appoint will be brought back to the next meeting. Mr. Biloski was asked if he would accept the position and he did accept.

The Fire Department Auxiliary Meeting Minutes from the June 14, 2022 and July 12, 2022 meetings were read. Fire Chief Mattas noted that they are the best fundraising group out there throughout his many years of volunteering. Fire Chief Mattas noted that the Auxiliary members have been discussing purchasing a generator for the Fire Hall. He has informed them that they would have to come to Council and would not be authorized to purchase this on their own. They could however make a donation towards it should one be purchased.

Fire Chief Mattas thanked Council for their support throughout the term. As this will be Councillor Loan's last meeting with Fire Chief Mattas, farewells and thank you's were exchanged.

Fire Chief Mattas and Mr. Biloski left the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

The Administration and Roads Voucher was reviewed and it was

3. Moved by Jerry Loan  
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

**THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2022-16 DATED  
SEPTEMBER 26, 2022 TOTALLING \$53,025.82 BE APPROVED AND PAID.**  
Carried

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

By-law and Policies were reviewed as follows:

- a) By-law Number 2022-18 – Being a By-law to appoint a Compliance Audit Committee for the 2022 – 2026 Term of Council. The Clerk-Treasurer explained the decision made by the Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC) to appoint surrounding member municipal staff for the area committees. The LRMC administrative staff prepared the distribution of names and all staff have agreed to the appointments and their names have been provided to each municipality for appointment. The Township of O'Connor's appointed members will be Wayne Hanchard, Erika Kromm and Shara Lavallee. It was

4. Moved by A. Crane  
Seconded by Jerry Loan

**THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2022-18 BEING A BY-LAW TO APPOINT A  
COMPLAINCE AUDIT COMMITTEE FOR THE 2022-2026 TERM OF COUNCIL  
BE PASSED AND ENTERED IN THE BY-LAW BOOK.**  
Carried

- b) By-law Number 2022-19 – Being a By-law to provide for advance votes to be held prior to Voting Day. It was

5. Moved by A. Crane  
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

**THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2022-19 BEING A BY-LAW TO PROVIDE FOR  
ADVANCE VOTES TO BE HELD PRIOR TO VOTING DAY BE PASSED AND  
ENTERED IN THE BY-LAW BOOK.**  
Carried

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Consent application from the Lakehead Rural Planning Board (LRPB) – Application 1B/26/22 – Con 4 Pt S ½ Lot 8 PCL 996 – Hamilton/Mattas, was reviewed. It was

6. Moved by Bishop Racicot  
Seconded by Jerry Loan

**THAT THE CONSENT APPLICATIONS 1B/26/22 FOR IAN HAMILTON AND OSCAR MATTAS FOR THE PROPERTY DESCRIBED AS CONCESSION 4, PT S ½ LOT 8 PCL 996 FOR A SEVERANCE FOR 25 HECTARES BE APPROVED.**

Carried

Resolutions for endorsement were read as follows:

- a) Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh regarding the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program and the administration fee provided to municipalities was filed.
- b) Municipality of Brighton regarding Streamlining governing legislation for Physicians in Ontario was filed.

Correspondences were read as follows:

- a) Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC) – i) Minutes of the July 5, 2022 Meeting. Mayor Vezina also provided a brief overview of the September 20, 2022 LRMC meeting. Discussed at the meeting was the Northwest Community Health Centre's (NWCHC) Mobile Clinics move to a permanent location at the Evergreen Pharmacy in Kakabeka Falls. While the members of the LRMC supported the move they were unaware that the current mobile locations would no longer be available. With regard to the Municipality of Neebing, Kakabeka is a long distance for their residents to go for appointments. While there are many benefits to the move there are still concerns from the members. The CEO of NWCHC has been invited to attend the next LRMC meeting to discuss this matter further.
- b) Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) News Article regarding the Federal electoral boundary change. All NOMA members agree that this is not acceptable and the distance of the riding has to be considered.
- c) Health Canada – Cannabis Act Legislative Review Secretariat regarding the Launch of the Legislative Review of the Cannabis Act.

The balance of the correspondence was passed around the table.

Under Old Business, Council discussed

- a) Councillor Jerry Loan – Letter of Resignation from his Council position, effective on or before October 11, 2022, as he will be moving away from the area. This will result in a second vacancy on Council, however, due to the Municipal Election being held on October 24, 2022 the seat does not have to be filled at this time. Council thanked Councillor Loan for his years of service to the community as a member of Municipal Council.
- b) Thunder Bay District Municipal Association (TBDML) regarding the cancellation of Conference scheduled for September 22 and 23, 2022 due to insufficient number of registrations. The Conference will be rescheduled following the Municipal Election.
- c) Deferral of Northern Ontario Resource Development Support (NORDS) funding, as discussed at the September 14, 2022 meeting. As the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of this funding has been distributed to the Township in 2022 and the amount was not included in the 2022 budget and the money will not be spent in 2022, it was agreed to transfer these funds into the Deferred Revenue account and it was

7. Moved by A. Crane  
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

**FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2022 THE FOLLOWING AMOUNTS BE TRANSFERRED TO THE DEFERRED REVENUE ACCOUNT:**

**NORTHERN ONTARIO RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT (NORDS)**  
- \$60,675.60

Carried

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- d) The date of the Emergency Tabletop Exercise, Monday, November 7, 2022, scheduled at the last meeting was discussion. The Clerk-Treasurer explained to Council that the Community Centre is not available on November 7<sup>th</sup> due to a regular Monday night booking. It was suggested that the meeting be changed to also accommodate the Volunteer Fire Department's regular training night, which is held on a Tuesday evening and it was
8. Moved by Jerry Loan  
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

**THAT THE TABLETOP EXERCISE SCHEDULED FOR MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2022 AT 7 P.M. BE CHANGED TO TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2022 AT 7 P.M.**

**THE EXERCISE WILL BE HELD IN THE O'CONNOR COMMUNITY CENTRE.**

Carried

- e) Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) regarding the Federal Electoral Districts Redistribution – copy of letter submitted to the Federal Electoral Districts Redistribution Ontario Commission asking that the Commission retain the current ten Electoral Districts, plus the planned Indigenous Representation.
- f) Marcus Powlowski, MP, Thunder Bay – Rainy River reply to Council's endorsed resolution regard Federal Riding Seats in Northern Ontario.
- g) Ontario Connects – Accelerated High-Speed Internet Program (AHSIP) Onboarding, follow up, as per Council's request, in regard to the survey answers submitted. The Clerk-Treasurer informed Council that the survey questionnaire was designed to determine the level of servicing needed for each municipality to effectively manage the responsibilities in the AHSIP. The project will be moving forward.

Council would like to invite Tbaytel to an upcoming meeting to discuss the internet service in the Township of O'Connor and get an update on when the AHSIP will be available for our residents.

- h) Outdoor Skating Rink Project – further discussion was held in regard to options for a well for the outdoor skating rink. As no quotes were received for a drilled well at the last meeting and expenses for the project are higher than anticipated, Council discussed the option of having a dug well, which would be cheaper and still provide the resource as there is a good water table in the area. Council agreed to move forward with a dug well. The Clerk-Treasurer also reported on the recent discovery of rot in the wood of an area of the floor in the rink shack. Repairs will be required prior to construction of the addition.
- i) A report was read regarding signing authority at the bank for the balance of this Term of Council. Council had previously discussed adding Councillor Crane as signing authority due to the resignation of both Councillor Handy and Councillor Loan, who each had the authority. As all persons with the authority, both Council and Administration, would have to go into the bank and resign the required paperwork and with the new term of Council starting soon, it was agreed to not add Councillor Crane at this time. The bank will be made aware of the deletion of both Councillor Handy and Councillor Loan.

Under Further Old Business, Councillor Crane informed Council that he was approached at the Disposal Site by a resident who was upset with his taxes and accusing Council of wasting money. Councillor Crane tried to reply to the resident, however he was not interested in listening to his response. Councillor Crane would like to recommend that the Township host a public meeting to explain how the taxation process and budgeting works and invite the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) out as well to explain how the properties are assessed. This may help to ensure the taxpayers that Council is doing their best and are not wasting taxpayers money. Council agreed to host a public meeting following the election. The Clerk-Treasurer will contact Ms. Knapton from MPAC to see when she might be available and a date will be set.

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Under New Business, Council discussed the honourarium for the upcoming Council term. Council agreed to keep the honourarium the same for the next term. A By-law will be drafted and brought back to the next Council meeting for approval.

Under Further New Business Mayor Vezina informed Council that he has been requested to sit, as the Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition (LRMC) representative, on the newly formed Northern Electricity Advocacy Roundtable (NEAR). As a build off of the Waasigan Community Roundtable, where he is the current member, he has been asked if he would be interested in continuing to be a voice from the northern communities. The LRMC has agreed and he is requesting Council's approval as well. Council agreed to have Mayor Vezina sit on this committee and a resolution of support will be brought back to the next meeting.

Mayor Vezina also congratulated Councillor Racicot for his 24 years of service on Council. Councillor Racicot has been the longest running Councillor in O'Connor's history.

Mayor Vezina also thanked Councillor Loan for his 12 years of service as Councillor for the Township of O'Connor. As he will be leaving the area this could be his last Council meeting.

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

- a) Infrastructure Ontario – Accelerated High-Speed Internet Program Team regarding the Broadband One Window (BOW) going live on Thursday, September 29, 2022. Training sessions will be held September 29 and October 3, 2022. Administration will Attend one of the sessions.
- b) Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) – 2023 ROMA Annual General Meeting and Conference January 22 – 24, 2023. This item will be brought back to the new Council.
- c) Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs – Office of the Chief Veterinarian for Ontario (OCVO) regarding the avian influenza in Ontario. Effective September 23, 2022 the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs has issued a Minister's Order temporarily prohibiting events where birds commingle.
- d) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding Public Consultation in the land use planning process.

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

It was

9. Moved by Jerry Loan  
Seconded by A. Crane

**THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2022 AT 7:00 P.M. IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND VIRTUAL.**

**TIME BEING: 9:05 P.M.**

Carried

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Mayor

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Clerk-Treasurer