

## TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR - MINUTES – MARCH 10, 2008

Minutes of the meeting held on March 10, 2008 at 7 p.m. in the municipal building.

Present: Mayor Nelson  
Councillors: Garbutt, Racicot, Vezina  
Clerk-Treasurer Buob

Visitors: Ms. Rosy Brizi, Grant Thornton, LLP  
Mr. Kelly Johnson, Leadhand arrived at 7:23 p.m.

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

Disclosure of pecuniary interest and general nature thereof: none

1. Moved by G. Garbutt  
Seconded by J. Vezina

**THAT THE MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY,  
FEBRUARY 25, 2008 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.**

Carried

2. Moved by Bishop Racicot  
Seconded by G. Garbutt

**THAT COUNCILLOR NYGARD BE MARKED ABSENT DUE TO HOLIDAYS.**

Carried

Ms. Rosy Brizi of Grant Thornton, LLP was welcomed to the table. Ms. Brizi presented to Council a draft copy of the Township of O'Connor's 2007 Consolidated Financial Statements for review. Council was informed that the local boards information will be consolidated into the document in April when the information becomes available. Ms. Brizi explained each page of the document to Council and any questions of Council were answered. It was noted that the Taxes Receivable were slightly higher in 2007 and it was recommended that the Clerk-Treasurer work on collecting these monies as soon as possible and to stay on top of them. Ms. Brizi also would like the Clerk-Treasurer and the Leadhand to review the landfill closure liability to be sure that the closure costs and capacity are still reasonable as set out in financial statements. Council was informed of the new line "Inventory" on the Consolidate Statement of Financial Position. This line was set up for the O'Connor history books yet to be sold. It was also noted that a new note for Physical Assets has also been added in the Notes to Consolidated Financial Statements. Ms. Brizi also recommended to Council that a landfill study be conducted to determine the true life of the disposal site as well as the post closure costs.

Ms. Brizi was thanked for attending.

Mr. Johnson, Leadhand, was welcomed to the table. Timesheets for January 28 to February 8, 2008 and February 10 to 22, 2008 were read. Mr. Johnson informed Council that at the time of the last fuel tank fill up he contacted all the local suppliers for a price and our current supplier was the cheapest. Roadwork in general was discussed.

Mr. Johnson informed Council that he will have to change the push plate cylinder in the garbage truck. He would like to do it in the winter while it is still cold. Council was in agreement to have the cylinder replaced as soon as possible.

Mr. Johnson also informed Council that a gravel pit in the Township of Conmee may possibly be sold and that the access to this pit will be on Strom Road, which could possibly mean more truck traffic on this road. Mr. Johnson informed Council that when he heard of the possible sale he also inquired into purchasing the pit.

Mr. Johnson was thanked for attending.

The bills were passed around the table and it was

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3. Moved by Bishop Racicot  
Seconded by J. Vezina

**THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER FOR FEBRUARY 29, 2008 TOTTALLING \$78,356.85 BE APPROVED AND PAID.**

Carried

A draft By-law to establish a Code of Conduct for Council was discussed. An integrity Commissioner was discussed. The Clerk-Treasurer will enquire further into this matter and bring the by-law back at a future meeting.

Under deferred items from the previous meeting Council read a report from the Clerk-Treasurer with regard to the Township of O'Connor's farmland tax assessment. This report showed the Township's tax losses due to the Province of Ontario's move from the farm tax rebate program to the agricultural property tax rate reduction program in 1998. It was also noted that the Township does not receive any OMPF funding to compensate for the losses recognized by this change. The resolution from the Western Ontario Wardens Caucus and letter regarding the farm tax rebate was discussed and it was

4. Moved by G. Garbutt  
Seconded by J. Vezina

**WHEREAS THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO MOVED FROM THE FARM TAX REBATE PROGRAM TO A 75% REDUCTION IN THE AGRICULTURAL PROPERTY TAX RATE REDUCTION PROGRAM IN 1998, AT A COST IN EXCESS OF 100 MILLION DOLLARS ANNUALLY TO THE MUNICIPALITIES OF THE PROVINCE;**

**AND WHEREAS THE PROVINCE AGREED TO MAINTAIN MUNICIPAL AGRICULTURE PROPERTY TAX REVENUE WHEN THEY MOVED FROM THE REBATE PROGRAM TO THE REDUCED TAX RATE PROGRAM;**

**AND WHEREAS MUNICIPALITIES HAVE NOT RECEIVED EQUIVALENT AGRICULTURAL PROPERTY TAX REVENUE COMPENSATION FROM THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO;**

**AND WHEREAS THIS FAILURE OF THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO TO PROVIDE EQUIVALENT COMPENSATION HAS NEGATIVELY IMPACTED THE FINANCIAL POSITION OF ALL MUNICIPALITIES IN ONTARIO WITH AN AGRICULTURAL TAX BASE, AT THE ABOVE-NOTED COST IN EXCESS OF 100 MILLION DOLLARS;**

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO BE PETITIONED TO PROVIDE COMPENSATING REVENUE TO THE MUNICIPALITIES OF ONTARIO THAT HAVE BEEN NEGATIVELY IMPACTED BY THE TRANSITION FROM THE FARM TAX REBATE PROGRAM TO THE AGRICULTURAL PROPERTY TAX RATE REDUCTION PROGRAM.**

Carried

Resolutions for endorsement were read as follows:

- a) City of Woodstock regarding taxation matters and requesting that the Province of Ontario eliminate tax capping and replace it with an equitable system based on current values assessment. This resolution was filed.
- b) Niagara Region regarding the seats in the House of Commons - filed
- c) Town of Milton regarding rehabilitation of aggregate pits - filed

Thunder Bay District Social Services Board 2007 statement of remuneration and expenses for Councillor Garbutt was reviewed by Council.

Correspondence were read as follows:

- a) Ministry of Public Infrastructure Renewal regarding the Federal governments decisions that impact the Canada-Ontario Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund (COMRIF)

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- b) AMO – i) Federal Budget Makes Gas Tax Permanent  
ii) Approval of the MHSW Program Plan – Phase 1
- c) North Superior Training Board – Census Analysis report available on line.

The balance of the correspondence was passed around the table.

Under old business Council discussed:

- a) A letter was read from the Township of Gillies regarding the By-law Enforcement Officer position. The Townships of Gillies, Conmee and the Municipality of Neebing have scheduled to run an advertisement for this position in the March 1, 2008 Chronicle-Journal. They have decided to exclude the Township of O'Connor from the advertisement so as not to complicate the process for the candidates applying for the position, as the Township of O'Connor did not want to be committed to hiring the same person as these municipalities. Council have decided to await the hiring of this position by these municipalities and decide what to do at that point.
- b) NOMA – 2008 Annual General Meeting & Conference attendance was discussed. At this time Mayor Nelson will not be able to attend the Conference and Clerk-Treasurer Buob will be attending a one day workshop and will also not be able to attend. The NOMA draft agenda for the Conference was read.

Under New Business, Council discussed

- a) The Administration Workplace Health and Safety meeting report was read. Administrations recommendations were discussed. It was requested that a door be placed on the current cloakroom and this area be redesigned as addition office/storage space. The photocopier and cabinets could be placed in this area. Council made recommendations to have the tables and chairs currently stored in this area moved out of this room and a new area be closed off in the main hall in the current stage area. It was agreed to have the current stage removed from the hall. The Clerk-Treasurer will speak with Mr. Johnson, Leadhand and Mr. Chessell, caretaker in regard to these ideas. The handicap ramp was also discussed. The decking is in need of repair and it was decided to change the decking this summer to 2 x 6's and have the students install them. Councillor Vezina will volunteer to cut the boards to the proper length for the students.
- b) Ministry of Northern Development and Mines – Summer Job Services application was discussed and it was

- 5. Moved by Bishop Racicot  
Seconded by G. Garbutt

**THAT THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR ASK FOR 2 STUDENTS UNDER THE MINISTRY OF NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT AND MINES SUMMER JOBS SERVICE 2008 FOR A PERIOD OF 7 WEEKS.**

**START DATE FOR THE PROGRAM WOULD BE JULY 7<sup>TH</sup>, 2008.**

Carried

- c) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing Municipal Planning Review Workshops April 24, 2008 in Thunder Bay. At this time no one will be attending.
- d) Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services letter from Olaf Lamerz, FPA regarding a review of the training records and training plan of the O'Connor Fire Department. Council will discuss this matter further with Fire Chief Mattas at the next meeting. Council would like a copy of Fire Chief Mattas' reply to Mr. Lamerz.
- e) Waste Diversion Ontario, Clayton Sampson seeking support for submission of an E&E "Intent to Apply Application" to Stewardship Ontario. Council would like more information on this matter before they will support it. The Clerk-Treasurer will bring this back to the next meeting.
- f) AMCTO – a survey regarding Municipal readiness to ensure continuity of government in a crisis or emergency. Council were not interested in replying to this survey at this time.
- g) Ken Boshcoff M.P. letter encouraging municipalities to extend an invitation to the American Ambassador to visit our community and Northwestern Ontario. Council will not be submitting a letter at this time.

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Under further new business, Council discussed the recent Ontario Provincial Police report with regard to the number of calls to our municipalities in the last year and the number that were for alarm systems and the presentation given at the Thunder Bay District Municipal League meeting from the Ontario Provincial Police. Council would like the Clerk-Treasurer to contact surrounding municipalities to see if they are charging their residents a fee for these false alarms. Council would also like to know what the Minister of Finance's criteria is to be considered "under undue hardship".

Issues brought forward and letters received after the agenda was mailed out.

- a) A letter was read from the Honourable Michael Gravelle, Minister of Northern Development and Mines providing an update on their work to develop the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario.
- b) Municipal Health and Safety Association – Health and Safety for Supervisors and Managers Training Program Notice. It was

- 6. Moved by G. Garbutt  
Seconded by Bishop Racicot

**THAT THE CLERK-TREASURER ATTEND THE MUNICIPAL HEALTH AND SAFETY ASSOCIATION SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS TRAINING PROGRAM TO BE HELD IN THUNDER BAY ON APRIL 2 & 3, 2008.**

Carried

- 7. Moved by Bishop Racicot  
Seconded by G. Garbutt

**THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO TUESDAY, MARCH 25, 2008 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**TIME BEING: 9:47 P.M.**

Carried

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Mayor

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Clerk-Treasurer