

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES – NOVEMBER 1, 2011

Minutes of the special meeting held on Monday, November 1, 2011 at 7 p.m. in the Council chambers.

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

Visitors: Mr. Murray Armstrong, Municipal Planning Advisor – Thunder Bay District and Mr. Scott Abick, Municipal Planning Advisor – Kenora, Rainy River and Thunder Bay District, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Mr. Rod Allan, Mr. Gary Allan

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

Introductions were made. It was

1. Moved by B. J. Loan
Seconded by J. Vezina

**THAT COUNCILLOR RACICOT BE MARKED ABSENT DUE TO WORK AND
COUNCILLOR GARBUTT FOR PERSONAL REASONS.**

Carried

This meeting was called to discuss the requirements of the Official Plan review and update. Mayor Nelson then turned the meeting over to Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Abick to make their presentation.

Mr. Armstrong provided everyone present with a folder containing information with regard to an Official Plan review. Mr. Armstrong informed Council that an update is to be completed not less frequently than every five years. Each review should ensure that the plan is consistent with Policy Statements issued under the Act, has regard for Provincial interest and conforms with Provincial plans or does not conflict with them, as the case may be. The Township of O'Connor's plan was reviewed in 2006 but was last amended in 2001. Mr. Armstrong commented that the current plan is a very good plan and was well written at the time.

An Official Plan is a Municipalities primary strategic document for guiding land use and development; providing the basis for building strong communities consistent with the purposes of Ontario's Planning Act. It also contains the goals and objectives of the community and establishes policies to direct the form, location, extent, nature and rate of growth and change. It guides community decisions for a set period of time; having legal status and derives the authority from the Planning Act and is the primary means for implementing provincial planning interests as defined in the current Provincial Policy Statement. No public works can be undertaken and, with minor exceptions, no by-laws can be passed for any purposes that do not conform to the Official Plan.

Selected Planning Act Excerpts as of January 26, 2010 were read. The purposes of the Planning Act, as well as the Provincial interests were discussed. The Minister, the Council and the Planning Board are responsible for implementing the Province's Plans through the Township's Official Plan.

The 2005 Provincial Policy Statement created many concerns from Northwestern Ontario during the recent review. The Province is currently in the process of summarizing these concerns. There should be a new Provincial Policy Statement within the next year. This Policy is available on line. There is also the Northern Growth Plan coming into play however it has not been officially passed at this time and there is a five-year window to conform with its regulations.

Part III of the Planning Act describes the Contents of Official Plan. Section 16. (1) describes what the plan shall contain and Section 16. (2) describes what the plan may contain.

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Section 17. (15) describes what Council shall do. Included in the list is to hold at least one public meeting for the purpose of giving the public the opportunity to make representations in respect of the current proposed plan. The information must also be made available to the public. If an update is being done an open house is also required.

There are three stages to the process: research, plan development and implementation. The research stage would be the gathering of information based on information about the Township and its needs, taking into consideration the Provincial concerns and background information. It was recommended that other municipalities' plans be looked at for reference and to see what other communities are doing. It was recommended that consultation begin early in the process.

Historically the Lakehead Rural Planning Board completed the Township of O'Connor's Plan. This is not an option this time and Council will have to decide if it will be done by in-house resources or contracted out with a consultant. Mr. Armstrong noted that this project will take a lot of time, and with limited staff resources, recommended a consultant be used. He also recommended speaking to other municipalities who have recently gone through the process to find out who they would recommend. Also meet the person to ensure that they are a good match and understand the Township's needs and resources. Council should work directly with the consultant and be clear upfront as to what they want them to do. Council will have to decide if they want to amend the plan by incorporating the changes or if a rewrite should be completed. The Plan will have to be adopted by the Province and it is recommended that they be consulted early in the process to ensure they agree with the plan.

Once an update is completed the Township must update their Zoning By-law no later than three years after to conform with the Official Plan.

Mr. Armstrong recommended that the Township start this process within the five year window and do the best we can and if Council have any questions to give his office a call.

Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Abick were thanked for attending and it was

2. Moved by B. J. Loan
Seconded by J. Vezina

**THAT THE SPECIAL MEETING WITH MINISTRY OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS
AND HOUSING STAFF WITH REGARD TO AN OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW
ADJOURN TO THE EMERGENCY TABLE TOP EXERCISE TO BE HELD ON
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2011 AT 7:00 P.M.**

TIME BEING: 8:23 P.M.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk-Treasurer