

TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – JUNE 10, 2024

Minutes of the Council meeting held on Monday, June 10, 2024 at 7 p.m. in the O'Connor Council Chambers.

Present: Mayor Vezina
Councillors: Crane, Rea, Sobolta, Torkkeli
Clerk-Treasurer Buob

Visitors: Kelly Johnson, Road Superintendent

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

1. Moved by Brendan Rea
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 Carly Torkkeli
Seconded by J. Sobolta

THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, MAY 27, 2024 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED.

Carried

Mr. Johnson was asked if he wished to address Council on any personal matters and he replied, no.

Mr. Johnson, Road Superintendent, was welcomed to the table. Roadwork in general was discussed. The employees have been grading the roads, removing hazardous trees, dealing with nuisance beavers and doing some bank stabilization on Earl Road. They have moved and emptied the garbage compactor truck and are getting it ready for disposal. The Fire Chief has requested that the Fire team use it for auto extrication training prior to its removal from the site. Council did not have any issues with this. Mr. Johnson will speak with Fire Chief Biloski regarding this. Mr. Caren, Equipment Operator has been cutting the grass on the municipal properties prior to the student being hired. The Township's lawnmower is broken and in need of replacement, so Mr. Johnson has brought in his personal mower until the 2024 budget is approved, allowing for the purchase of a new one. Mr. Caren has also done some on-line training courses.

No questions were asked and Mr. Johnson was thanked for his report.

The Administration and Roads Voucher for June 10, 2024, was reviewed and it was

3. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Brendan Rea

THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2024-11 DATED JUNE 10, 2024 TOTTALLING \$95,337.56 BE APPROVED AND PAID.

Carried

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditures to April 30, 2024, were reviewed.

By-law Number 2024-18 to amend the governing By-law for the proceedings for Council and Committees of the Township of O'Connor was reviewed, as per discussion at the May 27, 2024 meeting. The decision was to only hold one Council meeting in December rather than two and it was

4. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

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THAT BY-LAW NUMBER 2024-18 BEING A BY-LAW TO AMEND BY-LAW NUMBER 2020-24, BEING A BY-LAW TO GOVERN THE PROCEEDINGS OF COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES OF THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR BE PASSED AND ENTERED IN THE BY-LAW BOOK.

Carried

Tenders and quotes were opened. The first item was for structural and bridge inspections. Three quotes were received, and it was

5. Moved by Brendan Rea
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT THE QUOTE OF JML ENGINEERING TO CONDUCT A COMPLETE STRUCTURAL INSPECTION OF THREE BRIDGES AND TWO CORRUGATED STEEL BOX CULVERTS WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR AT A COST OF \$4,300.00 + HST BE ACCEPTED.

Carried

Tenders for the Asphaltting of Loghrin Road were opened. Three Tenders were received and were all over anticipated budget, it was agreed to discuss the numbers further during the upcoming budget meeting to be held on June 11, 2024, before approving the lowest tender.

Mr. Johnson was thanked for attending and left the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Resolutions for endorsement were read as follows:

- a) Municipality of Callander regarding urging the Government to promptly resume the assessment cycle was filed.
b) Township of Pelee regarding sustainable infrastructure funding for small rural municipalities and it was

6. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE TOWNSHIP OF PELEE CALLING ON THE ONTARIO AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING FOR SMALL RURAL MUNICIPALITIES AND THAT BOTH THE FEDERAL AND ONTARIO GOVERNMENTS BEGIN BY ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THERE IS AN INSURMOUNTABLE DEBT FACING SMALL RURAL MUNICIPALITIES;

AND CALLING ON BOTH THE FEDERAL AND ONTARIO GOVERNMENTS TO IMMEDIATELY COMMISSION A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP A PLAN ON HOW TO DEAL WITH THE IMPENDING DEBT DILEMMA BE ENDORSED.

Carried

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Mosey & Mosey regarding Employee Group Benefit Plan Renewal Projection for November 1, 2024. Their projected analysis for the Township of O'Connor, based on the claims experience for the LAS Consortium group combined, is a slight decrease in the annual premium. The Clerk-Treasurer requested permission to do a review of the current plan coverages, to see what benefits are being used, and ensure the benefits are appropriate for the employee's needs, as a review has not been done in several years. Council agreed that the plan should be reviewed.
b) Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA)
i) NOMA Board Meeting Summary Report for April 24, 2024.
ii) NOMA Board Meeting Summary Report for June 3, 2024. Mayor Vezina noted that Norm Gale from the City of Thunder Bay attended his last Board meeting as he is Retiring from the City.
iii) regarding securing access to natural gas for Ontario's future.
iv) NOMA's Regional Economic Development Plan "Time to Grow" and resolutions for endorsement. The Plan is available on their website.

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- c) The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) –
 - i) Update from the Board – May 31, 2024.
 - ii) 2023 Audited Consolidated Financial Statements.
- d) Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) - Copy of their response to Conservation Ontario Response on the Minister Permit and Review Powers.
- e) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) regarding Canada Community-Building Fund (CCBF) renewal. Announcement of a 10-year Agreement renewal of the fund.
- f) Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) regarding Broadband approvals.
- g) Ministry of Health reply to Council's endorsed resolution regarding public health laboratories. The testing of private drinking water samples service will continue to be performed free of charge.

The balance of the correspondence was passed around the table.

Under Old Business, Council discussed

- a) Clerk-Treasurer's Report regarding Westland Insurance reply to Council's questions on the renewal policy was read. Council agreed to remove the ball diamond coverage and the pump system on the outdoor recreation area well from the policy. It was suggested that the Fire Hall content value may be low. The Fire Chief will be asked to confirm if the dollar value of the coverage is reasonable. The value can be changed at a later date, if needed. The Clerk-Treasurer also noted that the Township has not heard any results regarding the appraisers decision on the disposal site compactor claim. It is currently still included on the renewal policy and will be removed once the claim is settled.
- b) Approval of Municipal Enforcement/Provincial Offences Officer wage. At the March 11, 2024 Council meeting, Greg Croft was appointed to the position of Municipal Enforcement/Provincial Offences Officer. A wage for the position was not included in the appointment. Council agreed to pay the same rate as what the previous employee was paid, which is also what the same rate as the Township of Conmee is paying. It was

- 7. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Brendan Rea

THAT MR. GREG CROFT, MUNICIPAL ENFORCEMENT/PROVINCIAL OFFENCES OFFICER, APPOINTED BY BY-LAW NUMBER 2024-09 ON MARCH 11, 2024, RECEIVE \$██████/HOUR, PLUS MILEAGE AT THE AUTOMOBILE ALLOWANCE RATE AS PRESCRIBED BY CANADA REVENUE AGENCY, AS COMPENSATION FOR THE POSITION.

Carried

- c) Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) i) Conference – August 18-21, 2024 possible attendance of a Council member was discussed. The agenda was enclosed for Council's review. It was agreed to include the cost of attendance in the draft budget for further discussion at the budget meeting.
- ii) AMO 2024 – Celebrating 125 Years of Municipal Leadership and Excellence.
- d) Township of O'Connor 5 Year Energy Conservation & Demand Management Plan 2019 – 2023 for review and updating of information was discussed. Council made suggestions for updating the Plan, including the purchase of the new backup propane generators and disposal of the old diesel generator, the update of the lighting in the Township garage, the new roof and additional insulation in the ceiling. Administration will look further into any other changes that may need to be made and bring back the plan for Council's final approval.
- e) Deputy Clerk-Treasurer Racicot's retirement party was discussed. Dates will be proposed to Ms. Racicot to confirm her availability. Gift suggestions were discussed.

Under Further Old Business, Councillor Torkkeli noted that she will be attending her first Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy meeting on June 20th. Councillor Sobolta also noted that he will be attending a Police Services Board meeting on June 20th.

The Clerk-Treasurer noted that the Township did receive the water test results from the last sampling which covers a four-month period and the sample results were good. As

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a result of the new water testing cost, it was suggested at the last meeting that, if no other solution can be found, the O'Connor Community Centre will be posted that the water will no longer be tested and not to drink the water. Bottled water can be supplied for less than the testing. If no other option can be found to meet the Ontario Regulations, Council would like a notice included in the Cornerstone to make the residents aware.

Under New Business, Council discussed

a) Ministry of Infrastructure's invitation to participate in virtual roundtable session regarding access to high-speed internet by the end of 2025. It was

8. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

THAT THE FOLLOWING PERSON/S ATTEND THE VIRTUAL ROUNDTABLE SESSION WITH THE MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND CO-HOSTED BY THE RURAL ONTARIO MUNICIPAL ASSOCIATION (ROMA) TO BE HELD ON JUNE 20, 2024 TO DISCUSS HOW WE CAN CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER TO MEET THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO PROVIDE ALL COMMUNITIES ACROSS THE PROVINCE WITH ACCESS TO HIGH-SPEED INTERNET BY THE END OF 2025.

COUNCILLOR CRANE

REGISTRATION: N/C

Carried

- b) Wilson's Business Solutions regarding the cost of a new copier for the office. The Clerk-Treasurer noted that the Township's current maintenance contractor, Wilson's Business Solutions, has recommended that a new photocopier be considered for the Township, as the current one is getting old and parts are getting hard to get, which could result in the copier being out of service for longer periods of time. The Clerk-Treasurer asked for a quote from them so that this could be considered during budget discussions. Council agreed that a new one should be included on the draft budget for further consideration. If Council agrees to move forward, quotes will be requested from suppliers.

Under Further New Business, it was noted that during the Fire Chief's recent absence from the area there was no clear lead identified for the Fire Department as no Deputy Fire Chief has yet been appointed. It was agreed to discuss this further with Fire Chief Biloski at the next meeting.

The Clerk-Treasurer also made Council aware of an emergency call for service that was made to OTIS on the weekend for the accessible lift.

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

It was

9. Moved by Brendan Rea
Seconded by A. Crane

BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE NEXT PORTION OF THE MEETING BE CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC IN ORDER TO DISCUSS LABOUR RELATIONS OR EMPLOYEE NEGOTIATIONS; PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION 239(2)(D) OF THE MUNICIPAL ACT, 2001.

TIME BEING: 8:44 P.M.

Carried

Summer Student and Deputy Treasurer applications were reviewed. Correspondence from the Dog Control Officer was also discussed.

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- 10. Moved by Carly Torkkeli
Seconded by J. Sobolta

TIME BEING: 9:25 P.M.

THAT WE NOW MOVE TO OPEN MEETING.

Carried

- 11. Moved by A. Crane
Seconded by Brendan Rea

THAT THE FOLLOWING STUDENTS BE HIRED FOR THE CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM:

ROADS DEPARTMENT: GRAEME NAPPER

ADMINISTRATIVE POSITION: HANNAH LAFOREST

START DATE WILL BE JULY 8, 2024

THE STUDENTS WILL BE ASKED TO ATTEND THE JUNE 24, 2024 COUNCIL MEETING.

Carried

- 12. Moved by J. Sobolta
Seconded by Brendan Rea

THAT THE FOLLOWING PERSONS BE APPOINTED AS THE INTERVIEW COMMITTEE FOR INTERVIEWING FOR THE POSITION OF DEPUTY TREASURER.

MAYOR VEZINA, COUNCILLORS CRANE AND TORKKELI

THE INTERVIEW MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 2024 STARTING AT 6:30 P.M.

Carried

- 13. Moved by Brendan Rea
Seconded by A. Crane

THAT COUNCIL ACCEPT THE RESIGNATION OF MS. MARGARET FOSTER, DOG CONTROL OFFICER AS OF JUNE 20, 2024.

Carried

A thank you will be included in the July issue of the Cornerstone Newsletter for Ms. Foster services over the past few years. The position will also be advertised.

- 14. Moved by Carly Torkkeli
Seconded by J. Sobolta

THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO BUDGET MEETING TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2024 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE O'CONNOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS.

TIME BEING: 9:29 P.M.

Carried

Mayor

Clerk-Treasurer