

## TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR – MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 23, 2024

Minutes of the Council meeting held on September 23, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the O'Connor Council Chambers.

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

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

1. Moved by J. Sobolta  
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

**THAT THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING BE APPROVED.**

Carried

Disclosure of pecuniary interest and general nature thereof: None.

2. Moved by Brendan Rea  
Seconded by A. Crane

**THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2024 BE ACCEPTED AS PRINTED, AS AMENDED.**

Carried

As Fire Chief, Greg Biloski, was not able to attend tonight's meeting, Councillor Rea read the O'Connor Fire Department Report provided by Fire Chief Biloski. The Fire Department Report was reviewed. There was one Mutual Aid fire related call for tanker assistance, and two First Response calls since the last report.

Fire Department issues in the report stated that the Kakabeka Aqueduct is expected to be closed for 2-2 ½ years. This water source will not be available during that time and the Fire Department will have to rely on the well at 251 Highway 590. Council discussion took place regarding alternative options of water supply and agreed that the hydrant on Highway 590 will need to be inspected. Also stated was that the Automatic Aid Agreement with Nolalu Fire Department is still under review. Fire Chief Biloski also provided an update on the Trucks and Equipment and noted that 10 used Scot Air paks have been purchased, each unit coming with 2 cylinders and a mask. Flow testing on all SCBA paks has been completed and all have been passed and certified for another year. An annual pump test on Pumper 44 was performed and passed with only minor adjustments needed. Pump packing is at its end of adjustment and may require more attention in 2025. The auto-ex tools have been shipped and will be arriving soon. Once inspected, they will be put into service.

As for training, Nolalu will be starting their fall auto ex training on Tuesdays and O'Connor has been invited to join. Annual fit testing for SCBA gear will be arranged soon with testing in house, requiring 30 minutes from each member that needs it.

Training courses through RTC is being looked at for 2025.

It was also noted that the O'Connor Fire Department Auxiliary Two Bit Auction is on October 19<sup>th</sup>. Tickets are sold out and donations are being obtained.

Councillor Rea was thanked for reading the Fire Department update.

The Administration and Roads Voucher to September 23, 2024 was reviewed and it was

3. Moved by A. Crane  
Seconded by Brendan Rea

**THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND ROADS VOUCHER #2024-16 DATED SEPTEMBER 23, 2024 TOTALING \$494,259.53 BE APPROVED AND PAID.**

Carried

The Statement of Revenue and Expenditures were unavailable.

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Resolutions for endorsement were read as follow.

a) The Township of Hilliard requesting sustainable funding for small rural municipalities and it was

4. Moved by J. Sobolta  
Seconded by Carly Torkkeli

**THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE TOWNSHIP OF HILLIARD ENDORSING THE LETTER FROM THE MUNICIPALITY OF TWEED AND REQUEST THE GOVERNMENT TO IMMEDIATELY IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE FUNDING FOR SMALL RURAL MUNICIPALITIES BY REABSORBING THE COST OF ONTARIO PROVINCIAL POLICE FORCE BACK INTO THE PROVINCIAL BUDGET WITH NO COST RECOVERY TO MUNICIPALITIES BE ENDORSED.**

Carried

b) The Township of Tweed requesting supplements from the Federal Government and it was

5. Moved by Brendan Rea  
Seconded by A. Crane

**THAT THE RESOLUTION FROM THE TOWNSHIP OF TWEED CALLING ON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO PROVIDE A SUPPLEMENT TO THE ALLOCATIONS PROVIDED TO MUNICIPALITIES UNDER THE AMO CBBF AGREEMENT FOR 2024 - 2028 FOR THE SAME AMOUNT THAT WAS ALLOCATED, EFFECTIVELY DOUBLING THE ALLOCATION FOR THOSE YEARS BE ENDORSED.**

Carried

c) The Town of Tillsonburg regarding Cellular Coverage Concerns and was filed.

d) The City of Kitchener regarding Renovictions and Safe Adequate Housing was read and was filed.

e) The Township of Amaranth regarding Provincial Updates to the Municipal Elections Act was filed.

Correspondence was read as follows:

- a) Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition regarding the Minutes from the May 21, 2024 meeting.  
b) Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU) regarding the (i) Media Release on School Vaccine Clinics and the (ii) Board of Health Meeting Minutes, June 19, 2024.  
c) The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) regarding the Minutes of the Board Meeting.  
d) The balance of the correspondence was passed around the table.

Under Old Business, Council discussed

- a) The Lakehead OPP Detachment Board. Councillor Sobolta gave an update from the last Board meeting. The savings of leaving the Board were minimal and he did not see the benefit. Incidents occurring have been given to the Board in a percentage rate, not in number of calls. Since the bill is based on service, Council would like a full report based on the numbers and have accountability for what the Township is paying for with more say on how the Board is run. The question arose as to whether the First Nations was still a part of the Board. Councillor Sobolta confirmed that they are. Councillor Sobolta said that these issues can be brought to the next Zone 1 meeting for the Board, which will be coming up soon. Mayor Vezina will also bring these issues forward at the next Lakehead Rural Municipal Coalition meeting in November.  
b) The Deputy Treasurer start date was confirmed. She is expected to start Tuesday, October 15, 2024.  
c) The Municipal Finance Officers Association's Northern Finance Workshop to be held October 16 – 18, 2024. Deputy Clerk-Treasurer advised that she will not be able to attend the Workshop but felt that it would be beneficial if Ms. Cava could attend in her

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stead. It was

6. Moved by Brendan Rea  
Seconded by A. Crane

**THAT THE FOLLOWING PERSON/S PARTICIPATE IN THE MUNICIPAL FINANCE OFFICERS OF ONTARIO (MFOA) NORTHERN FINANCE WORKSHOP, TO BE HELD ON OCTOBER 16, 17, AND 18, 2024. NIKITA CAVA, DEPUTY TREASURER. REGISTRATION: \$75.00 + HST**

Carried

- d) A Negotiating Committee for Negotiations with the Union was set and it was

7. Moved by J. Sobolta  
Seconded by Brendan Rea

**THAT THE FOLLOWING PERSON(S) FORM THE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE TO NEGOTIATE A NEW UNION AGREEMENT NEGOTIATE WITH THE CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES LOCAL 87:**

**COUNCILLORS CRANE AND TORKKELI AND MAYOR VEZINA.**

Carried

- d) Under Further Old Business, Council discussed the Public Meeting held Wednesday, September 18, 2024. The question of where does it state in the law that we must pay for The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board fees was discussed. It is mandated by Provincial law. Mayor Vezina will look into this and get back to Council with the answer.

Council discussed the potential of a Fire Cadet Program. Councillor Rea has sent Administrative Staff information from other municipalities regarding Cadet programs for those aged 16 – 17. Administrative Staff received the email, however, have not had the time to look into it yet.

Under New Business, Council discussed

- a) The AMO courses coming up online. As these courses are so expensive, Council agreed not to attend.  
b) The AMCTO Zone 9 Fall Meeting. The Agenda was discussed and it was agreed not to attend.  
c) The Ministry of Natural Resources regarding the Flood Hazard Identification and Mapping Program Funding. As this falls under the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority, Council did not see the need to apply for it.  
d) The Intact Public Entities regarding the Municipal Climate Resiliency Grants. Council agreed that something to assist with wildfires would be appropriate, since the Kakabeka Aqueduct would be out of service for 2 – 2 ½ years and it was

8. Moved by Brendan Rea  
Seconded by A. Crane

**THAT THE TOWNSHIP OF O'CONNOR APPLY FOR FUNDING THROUGH INTACT PUBLIC ENTITIES FOR THE MUNICIPAL CLIMATE RESILIENCY GRANT. APPLICATION DEADLINE IS JANUARY 31, 2025.**

Carried

- e) The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing regarding Building Inspector Internship Programs. Council decided it was not needed at this time and as such, would not be attending the webinar.  
f) The Institute of Public Administration of Canada, Balancing Growth and Challenges and it was decided to not attend.  
g) The Ministry of Infrastructure regarding Housing Enabling Water System Fund. Council decided that if one of the Staff was able to attend the webinar to determine if funding could be used for culverts, then that would be beneficial.

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h) The Township of O’Connor to set the dates for the annual Municipal Emergency Control Group (MECG) training and the annual Emergency Tabletop Exercise. It was advised that all of Council must attend the MECG training and it was

- 9. Moved by Carly Torkkeli  
Seconded by Brendan Rea

**THAT THE FOLLOWING DATE AND TIME BE SET FOR A MUNICIPAL EMERGENCY CONTROL GROUP (MECG) PROGRAM COMMITTEE MEETING AND TRAINING. MONDAY, OCTOBER 28<sup>TH</sup> AT 6:00 P.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS.**

Carried

The date for the Emergency Tabletop Exercise was discussed and it was

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

**THAT THE FOLLOWING DATE BE SET FOR A TABLETOP EXERCISE. TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2024 AT 7:00 P.M. THE MEETING WILL BE HELD IN THE O’CONNOR COMMUNITY CENTRE.**

Carried

No new Building Permits have been approved.

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

**THAT THE COUNCIL MEETING ADJOURN TO THE COUNCIL MEETING TO BE HELD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2024 AT 7:00 P.M. IN THE O’CONNOR COUNCIL CHAMBERS.**

**TIME BEING: 8:44 P.M.**

Carried

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Mayor

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Deputy Clerk-Treasurer