

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HORTON

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

SEPTAGE DISPOSAL PROPOSALS

February 14, 2006

There was a Special Council Meeting held to review the issue of Septage Disposal on February 14, 2006. All member of Council were present. Deputy Reeve Hall from 4:18 on. Also present were Lloyd and Amy Cameron.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Reeve Johnston called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There was no declaration of pecuniary interest declared by members of Council.

3. PROPOSALS TO TREAT SEPTAGE

Reeve Johnston said that he has been the only representative to attend the joint meetings on Septage that have been held in the neighbouring municipality of Admaston/Bromley. Other Council members have questions about to the Reed Bed Solution. Councillor Bennett apologized for not starting his research earlier, he needs to clarify costs to the municipality and he wishes to discuss information he has gathered with the Camerons.

Amy Cameron discussed costs, which were outline in their January 20, 2006 Report to Council. This sets out a cost for a downsized Reed Bed as some of the beginning municipalities have dropped out. The remaining municipalities Greater Madawaska, Horton, McNab/Braeside and the Towns of Arnprior and Renfrew are considering septic systems only. The Bed size now is 25 acres rather than 100 acres, but they do not know exactly what the costs will be. However, 16.77% is Horton's share of the estimated \$40,919. for the application package on the Environmental Assessment and the Hydrological study to the Ministry of the Environment. Once these are submitted, we wait for Ministry approval of the application. The total estimated cost of this is \$244,000 but in reality it may be closer to \$150,000 which will reduce our \$40, 919. by the same percentage.

Councillor Eady noted that this number is also subject to a potential 50/50 grant through the Federal Government green funds.

Councillor Bennett referred to Tables 2 and 3 in the January 20, 2006 Report, it notes 252 tanks – he asked how this was determined? Amy Cameron said the number of septic tanks situated in the Township divided by a five year pump cycle on average. This five year pump cycle is gathered from data that is in the Dillon Report to the County. This results in 31 dry tones of material to be treated each in the facility for Horton Township.

Councillor Bennett referred to Table 4 in the Report, the low end of the scale is between \$46.12 or \$40.32 per resident. Amy Cameron said we have to build in growth potential, if we charge each household now it will be \$46.12 per property per year, however, the option that is most likely to be used is the amount of \$40.32, which is the operation cost plus construction and ongoing capacity. She also stated that the proposal is that there be a public/private partnership for grant purposes, and once the operation becomes a reality that it becomes a private venture, with a service agreement to the municipalities participating. Amy Cameron suggested that there could be grants for this as well. She broke the costing down \$20 per household for the annual operation costs, which is not subject to grants amounting to approximately \$25,280. per year or \$250,000. over ten years. In addition there will be \$20. for the capital part of the operation costs. This amount could be subject to a 50/50 grant from the Federal Government. Yearly costs

could be \$30. per house, i.e. \$20. for capital and \$10. after grant for operating \$37,770. per ratepayer. Extra capacity would cost \$6. more per property. Amy estimated the low to medium costs on Table 4 to sum up the costs of \$37. - \$40. per household per year on the tax bill.

Councillor Eady noted that after grants to build the facilities the cost would be \$125,000. If we do not want to pay the annual operating costs would there be an opportunity for the home owner to pay the full cost when their tank is pumped? Amy said they need an annual revenue to operate and they are concerned that it will not come from the individual property owner if they will not pay the larger fee. As well the pumpers would not be working either. Their concern is that with a larger pumping fee ratepayers will hold off calling for service longer than a five year pump cycle.

Councillor Eady discussed earlier data that was submitted which showed a cost to pump the tank, without municipal involvement. Amy said this document was for research purposes only but not on the table now, as they need a guaranteed source of revenue.

The CEO/Clerk noted that he was asked to research whether this cost could be put on the tax bill as a special charge, he now has information that this can be done, and not be part of the general tax rate.

Deputy Reeve Hall noted that they are looking for a ten year agreement. Amy said yes that there would be legal clauses which would bind us to a ten year time period, and that there would be a cost to get out of the contract prior to ten years.

Councillor Eady recapped:

1. application cost is \$12,500 per year – Horton's share, based on \$125,00 application fee
2. operation costs \$20 - \$30 per property or \$40 depending on grants

4. ALTERNATIVES

Councillor Bennett presented information he has been gathering on Lime Stabilization option. He presented data on the State of Michigan which permits treated septage and suggested that Michigan and Ontario are similar as they both border on Great Lakes so if it was fine there why not Ontario?

Lloyd Cameron said there is no winter spreading with Lime Stabilization and no winter pumping for four to five months of the year. At a Conference for Haulers, they discussed Lime Stabilization and the Haulers did not support it. Test sites show burned vegetation due to a high ph of 12. Each tank has to be washed out, possibly getting hands burnt from the lime. Amy Cameron said there was concern of splash back on the attendant, that the septage has to sit at least 30 minutes, a test has to be carried out, that the lands have to be blocked off to ensure that they are not used for agriculture in the future. The haulers in Renfrew County will not take this on as a business. The onus is on the municipalities to come up with a solution, not the haulers. She added that in Lloyd Cameron's case they have clay soils, the lime accumulates over time and eventually the land will become useless.

Councillor Bennett said this is some of the information that he has learnt. In the States a ph level of 12 is required which is a mixture of 50 lbs of lime for 1000 gallons of waste. He suggested that this would not be enough to cause burning. Ag and Food sets out a three year cycle that crops rotate on in the ground that has been treated with septage. For Horton's situation 120 acres would be required in total, with 40 acres each year used and cycled. He referred to Mark Scott Excavating in Michigan who does up to 50,000 septic tanks in his area. The material is screened before field application and there is no problem in the spreading. It becomes value added commodity in the agricultural community.

Amy Cameron said she has spoken with one Ministry representative who was 100 % in favour but has spoken with another who is skeptical as they are. People in the future will see field spreading as wrong. It is up to the municipality to treat septage not stabilize the septage. Treat the pathogens but not the heavy metal, a Reed Bed does both, and looks after all issues in the long term

Reeve Johnston asked what field crops can be used with field spreading septage? Amy Cameron said that any field crop that is not cut close to the ground.

Councillor Bennett said that he has been able to view the OMAFRA material on Nutrient Management specifications and has tried unsuccessfully to contact a specialist in Kemptville.

Reeve Johnston asked what type of farm – hay or crop could accept the treated septage? Lloyd Cameron said they can not spread every day of the year. The clay ground means they can not spread on wet or rainy days.

Councillor Bennett explained that there is a need for winter storage of approximately 25,000 gallon capacity. Rainy days the material can be put into the storage tank and pumped out on dry days. He said he did not understand how the Reed Beds look after heavy metals. How can they do this when forage crops won't do it? Amy Cameron said it is part of the biology of the plant. Not all plants are capable. The ones that are capable are ones that draw water out of the ground i.e. willow trees, cattails etc, therefore the reeds do a good job of land remediation. Hay is good for nitrogen but not a water plant.

Councillor Bennett said that we have State and Provincial Governments around us into land stabilization and he has a hard time understanding why it would not fit into Ontario.

Amy Cameron noted that there are other States which are heavily into Reed Beds. Each State has its own solution. She agreed that there would be several different solutions throughout the County.

Councillor Bennett suggested that \$50,000 over ten years would look after lime stabilization in Horton. Another method to consider, that he has researched is mobile dewatering, which puts the effluent back into the septic tank and only takes the waste away. Lloyd Cameron said that there are problems with this when you encounter a tank that is not working well and you are not fixing the tank in the process. Councillor Bennett said he agreed and that this may happen, up to 25 failed tanks a year. He discussed in-vessel composting which would take over \$100,000. to set up. We would need a hauler to purchase equipment. Councillor Bennett said he has looked at aeration treatment plants, which are half the cost of the Reed Bed, would take 8 to 10,000 gallons, cost about \$900,000. However, we would need to put the heavy sludge into a separate tank which would then have to be drawn away at extra cost. The smallest working tank would take 8,000 gallons per day, can pump year round, would need a constant flow of waste. You inject fresh water into the system and control the rate, limit to 20%.

Amy Cameron noted failure would be high unless it is engineered to "T". Their engineer claims that this is a difficult system to manage and added that there is an aeration part to the Reed Bed process.

Councillor Bennett suggested that the final option would be a complete dewatering facility with ultra-violet light to treat. This would be one million dollars in cost, however, he was concerned that we do not need a Cadillac system.

Amy Cameron said that this is the choice of the municipality, their system is designed to do the work. Haulers are satisfied with the Reed Bed system. If cost is a number one concern, she noted that cost is not necessarily the best solution every time. Are other municipalities going to be convinced to come along with one of these other solutions? She suggested that we weigh all our options before we make a decision.

Councillor Bennett asked how many haulers would use the Reed Bed System?

Lloyd Cameron said whoever pumps septic tanks in Horton would use the Reed Bed System. There will be records kept which will come back to the municipalities from the Reed Bed process to ensure which tanks are pumped and when.

Councillor Bennett said he has asked a hauler from outside the County for a cost to pump out septic systems and take away the waste to Ottawa for treatment. The price he has received is \$560.00 per tank guaranteed for ten years.

Amy said their current pumping cost is \$175.00 per tank plus the \$40.00 per household per year, on the tax bill for 5 years is \$200.00, so the tank is being pumped for \$375.00 under their system.

Reeve Johnston asked if the tanks that Lloyd Cameron pumps in the Ottawa area could be dumped into the Reed Bed? Lloyd Cameron said he can dump the tanks he pumps in Ottawa into the Ottawa Treatment Centre or he can buy a piece of the Reed Bed himself for Ottawa and become a business partner in the Reed Bed venture like a municipality, which would reduce our percentage, or he could only pump from municipalities with agreements.

Reeve Johnston asked when would the timing be for him to buy in? Amy Cameron said it would be right at the beginning.

Deputy Reeve Hall said the Ontario Government has put the treatment of septic system waste onto municipalities, we do not own any of the treatment systems. Lloyd Cameron reminded the Township that we issue septic tank permits. Deputy Reeve Hall said that the haulers said they are not going to change their practices and that Lloyd Cameron has the solution – can the haulers not become part of the solution?

Amy Cameron noted that in town the local government pays for the cost of sewage treatment and in the rural area the local government pays nothing. The haulers take the risk. The Province has now put the onus on septage treatment to the local governments. The haulers have to network with the local municipalities as there is a change in the requirements.

Deputy Reeve Hall asked if we can deal with one hauler for Horton? Can we sign a long term ten year contract and the hauler collects from the ratepayer, rather than put the cost on the tax bill? He suggested that it is imperative that we tie in the pumpers somewhere. The pumpers have an easier process, pick up the septage, dump it into a Reed Bed.

Lloyd Cameron said that they have taken on a huge risk with the establishment of a Reed Bed System. Amy Cameron said that they need the annual operating costs each year from a contract with the municipality. A hauler could have an agreement on the side with a hauler to collect the fees from the ratepayer, but in the end if they do not pick up enough tanks to meet the financial commitment the Township would pick up the difference.

Councillor Eady noted that Andrew Polley has told us that January 1, 2008 is not a hard and fast date. Councillor Bennett said he will try to confirm this date or January 1, 2007 which is in the Nutrient Management Act, when he talks to the Nutrient Management Specialist in Kemptville.

Amy Cameron said that she has a letter from the MOE that notes this date is somewhat open ended and gray.

Reeve Johnston said he took Mr. Polley to mean that if we were moving forward to a resolution that we will be given any extension required. Lloyd Cameron said he can see regulations coming out of the Province which will require mandatory pumping of septic systems in Ontario.

Councillor Bennett said that in the States septage is controlled by the State and not the municipality.

Deputy Reeve Hall asked what is the time line on the Reed Bed System? Lloyd Cameron said if they can not tell their Consultant to start design and application in March they will lose them for the year.

Councillor Eady asked what other municipalities are in? Lloyd Cameron said that we have to wait until the issue of procurement by-law has been settled by the solicitor on February 17, 2006. Reeve Johnston said that if the answer we get from the solicitor is that the by-law permits negotiations with one contractor then the next Council Meeting will be when the decision is made.

Councillor Eady asked if there will be any Public Meeting? Amy said yes, there will have to be Public Meetings with each municipality, after the decision is made whether we are in or out.

Council thanked the Camerons for attending and they left the meeting at 5:50 p.m.

Council continued the discussion. Deputy Reeve Hall asked if we could make pumping mandatory at the same time? Councillor Bennett said the Province is not considering mandatory pumping. Council discussed their options. Councillor Bennett said one hauler said he did consider Lime Stabilization if the Township found the fields to spread it on. Councillor Bennett asked for time to research further to find a farm or farmers to accept the treated septage. He also said that he would like to talk to other haulers and bring back more information.

5. CONFIRMING RESOLUTION

Moved by Bob Kingsbury
Seconded by Don Eady

Resolution No. 06-070A

That Council pass this confirming resolution to validate any actions or directions given during the open portion of this Council Meeting which were minor in nature and which were not set out in By-law or Resolution.

Carried.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Bob Hall
Seconded by Dave Bennett

Resolution No. 06-071A

That Council adjourn this meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Carried.

Reeve

CAO/Clerk