

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HORTON

SPECIAL MEETING ON SEPTAGE

FEBRUARY 07, 2006

There was a Special Meeting of Council held in the Municipal Council Chambers on February 7, 2006. All members of Council were present. Also present were: Andrew Polley, Senior Environmental Officer, Ministry of Environment and George Thompson a local Septage Hauler.

Reeve Johnston called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone present.

Councillor Bennett said the option before Council at this point in time is the Reed Bed System which has an expensive capital and operating cost. There are other options in the County Study, one being Lime Stabilization which would cost less for the Municipality to implement. He asked Mr. Polley if Lime Stabilization is looked for the long term solution?

Andrew Polley said one of the technologies that is looked at as a long term solution for the treatment of Septage is Lime Stabilization and it was looked at in a trial in Western Ontario as a pilot project. Some questions are now coming out from that study. He knows that it is being done in US States. It is relatively cheap solution to the public. There is a need to screen plastics and solids from going on the field. It could be a suitable solution. It needs all the parties interested to be part of the solution. Councillor Bennett said one big thing he found out about lime is to manage the Lime Stabilization Septage properly and the proper placement of the final waste in fields so it is controlled. Mr. Polley said certain record keeping would be required. What level of training or certification would be required of the operator would need to be looked at closely. Councillor Bennett noted that the next step up from Lime Stabilization is mobile dewatering. He asked if the sludge could be composed through an in-vessel system? Mr. Polley said yes. Councillor Bennett added that to compost you would mix it with wood chips. Mr. Polley said you would have to meet a range of criteria that could be utilized on farmland under Nutrient Management Act. There would be standards that would have to be met. The water has to be removed from the material and the compost has to be treated. Compost is one solution

Councillor Eady asked if the Pembroke and Area Waste Site are looking at this as a solution? Mr. Polley said the Municipality is looking at it but it needs to be investigated to see if it suits all their land needs.

Councillor Bennett commented that this issue has been passed down to local municipalities from the County. It needs to be returned to the County so they become the new driving force to push this forward. Mr. Polley said this issue needs someone to steer it. It is hard for a municipality to take this on.

Mr. Thompson asked if there was financial backing on the solution as it seems people in running in several directions. MOE has identified the problem but it has left us to find a solution. He believes we have an image problem more than anything. The Pumper Association assisted the County Study but they feel the County leaves the solution to the Pumpers to solve. The County should lead this issue.

Councillor Bennett said it boils down to dollars and cents. Lime Stabilization is approved in Quebec, Manitoba and the border States – why can it not be done in Ontario?

Mr. Thompson said because no one has proven it.

Councillor Bennett said that he has spoken in depth to a contractor in Michigan who has a 50,000 septic tank catchment area, has 2,400 acres which is rotated two years off and one year on to dump the treated septage after receiving lime to stabilize it.

Reeve Johnston asked who took the lead on this venture? Mr. Polley said obviously someone at the State Office took the lead. The Pumpers in the County would not lead and the outside Pumpers will come in and take over.

Mr. Thompson said this is exactly the problem – where all County haulers will disappear and outside haulers come in.

Council discussed the acreage required to field spread the lime stabilized septage. Mr. Polley said the concept is different from what is done now. We would need more land due to crop rotation with treated septage.

Deputy Reeve Hall said we would need to know how much land we would require.

Councillor Bennett noted a municipality the size of Horton is not enough to make a viable business venture for a local pumper. He added that winter spreading of lime stabilized material is out and it could only be spread on certain summer days. He suggested that possibly 20 to 24 tanks would be all that would be required to be pumped as an emergency over the winter months.

Mr. Polley said that there would have to be a winter storage system set up like a steel liquid manure tank. This would be built into the cost of the operation in the County Study. The material is then taken out in the Spring, treated with lime and spread. He noted that there is a misconception in the public that field spreading is wrong. The treated product is good for the farm fields.

Mr. Thompson accepted that advice saying no one has taken the time to advise the public that lime stable septage is accepted by MOE.

Councillor Bennett asked what do we need to do for the Pumpers to accept that Lime Stabilization as a solution? Mr. Thompson said that the issue is going nowhere without MOE stating exactly what is required to be approved. There has to be cooperation with the Ministry of Environment. We can not move forward without the cooperation of the Pumpers. Mr. Thompson read from the Report that the Pumpers submitted on the County Report which set out their concerns with Lime Stabilization including the liability to the Pumpers.

Councillor Bennett asked what is it going to take for the haulers to consider Lime Stabilization as a viable option? Mr. Thompson said possibly if the local municipalities arrange for the farm land the Haulers may be involved. Councillor Bennett stated for Horton this would require 120 acres.

Councillor Eady asked what happens after this? Mr. Polley said the Ministry takes action by 2007 for the treatment of septage for land application. There is no specific date associated with the Policy Statement. There is a lot of wiggle room. There are regulations coming out but until we have treatment that is doable we will not have a date. MOE acknowledges that the treatment capacity does not exist at this time. Mr. Polley added that he believes that the Ministry can not come out with a date in the next two years as it would be political suicide.

Councillor Bennett asked if all the proposed solutions in the County Study would require C of A approval process? Mr. Polley said yes, we need to show how we are managing the process through to the end.

Councillor Eady noted that leadership has been shown by Lloyd and Amy Cameron to establish Reed Bed System, would their application for approval give them the C of A approval? Mr. Polley said no – Phase 3 which is a design of a system would have to be reviewed. Approval given, construction done and operation plan established, which is the same as a Sewage Works approval.

Councillor Eady said that he understood that there is a 50/50 grant available for capital costs from the Federal Government. The management costs though would be outside the grant. Mr. Polley said ownership would be a question. You can contract out operations but you may have to retain ownership to keep the grants.

Councillor Eady asked what Mr. Polley thought about the Reed Bed proposal? Mr. Polley said it is doable, subject to what is done with the final product. Councillor Eady asked what other municipalities in rural Ontario are doing? Mr. Polley said they are all over the map.

Mr. Thompson asked if Mr. Polley saw MOE mandating urban treatment plants to accept septage, as all Ontarian residents pay through their taxes to have Provincial grants given to municipalities to construct treatment plants. The Ministry therefore provided grants to urban municipalities to construct treatment plants but are not giving any funding for construction of alternatives to solve rural waste. Mr. Polley said that this the MOE policy.

Councillor Bennett noted that we would have to change our Certificate of Approval for the Landfill Site to accommodate in-vessel composting, is this a big deal? Mr. Polley said it would need approval and an operations plan but it could be done. Councillor Bennett asked if we applied for in-vessel composting can the approval be for all products or limited by the approvals? Mr. Polley said that we state as part of our application what we want to compost. Councillor Bennett asked if anyone was doing aerobic treatment plants to treat septage? Mr. Polley said not specifically but it could be done if designed properly. Councillor Bennett asked if a number of municipalities built an aerobic system would it be better than a reed bed system? Mr. Polley said that in the end both types have to manage their end product which is liquid and solids.

Councillor Eady said he had a Waste Management Site question. We have recompacted part of our Site, could we take the regrind machine and put the compacted material through the machine, windrow the material and see if it can be used as alternate daily cover? Mr. Polley said there are programs for composting and approval process is required. We have to look at the cost to benefit to see if we gain in the end. Councillor Eady asked if we could try this for one day to see if it would work? Mr. Polley said basically that is mining the site and there is an issue of health and safety, you would have to have rules established, you would need this before you start even if you only do it for one day.

Councillor Eady thanked Mr. Polley for his help in the past and wished him well in his retirement.

Reeve Johnston declared the meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

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Reeve

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CAO/Clerk