

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HORTON

PUBLIC MEETING

2011 DRAFT MUNICIPAL BUDGET

JUNE 7, 2011

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
Mayor Eady called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**
There was no declaration of pecuniary interest.
3. **CLERK'S REPORT ON NOTICE**
The CAO/clerk reported that he placed an advertisement in the Renfrew Mercury as required by Section 291(1) of the Municipal Act, 2001 (s.o. 2001, s.25).
The purpose of the public meeting is to present the 2011 Draft Budget to the general public for their input and comments.
4. **FINANCE COMMITTEE'S PRESENTATION ON 2011 DRAFT MUNICIPAL BUDGET**
Jennifer Barr, Finance Manager gave a presentation on the budget content. She explained the Budget process and the involvement of Staff, Council and the Municipal Departments.
5. **PUBLIC COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS**
Ray Puhalski asked why the township is not giving more time for the Public to absorb the budget before Council is asked to pass it. He asked for two resolutions be considered by the council that he drafted. He would like us to follow the example set by Whitewater council and present a draft budget who gives the Public 2 weeks to review before passing.

He wants to know how the Township is going to pay down their debt and how they are going to support the \$50,000.00 it cost to operate the Community Centre. He doesn't want his taxes going up anymore and feels that the Township is not being transparent about where his dollars are being spent. Mayor Eady said that we are looking at new ways to rent the Ice surface to increase revenue.

Ms. Barr explained the new tax rate system and how we are taking stock of all capital assets and surplus lands, fees and charges.

Mr. Puhalski felt that the last Council mismanaged the Finances and would like to sit down with Ms. Barr and go through the budget line by line.

Former Mayor and Councillor Dave Bennett were present and both took great offence to Mr. Puhalski's allegations that the Township was mismanaged by the previous Council. Mr. Bennett asked for an apology. Mr. Bennett said that he has donated countless valuable volunteer hours and resources to our recreation facility. Mr. Puhalski said that if he found that his allegations are unfounded that he would give Mr. Bennett and apology. Mr. Puhalski asked Mayor Eady to comment seeing as he was on the previous Council. Mayor Eady replied that he made his decisions based on the facts presented to him at that time.

Former Mayor Robert A. Johnston explained the changes to the original Rink design.

Ms. Barr reviewed.

Mr. Bennett noted that we have 3 million dollars worth of assets in a facility that left us with \$881,000.00 worth of debt and with \$100,000.00 committed to be raised by the Recreation Committee. Mr. Puhalski would like to know if we are going to view the balance sheets monthly or quarterly to keep council accountable.

Mr. Puhalski is going to review the budget line by line and this will take him a great deal of time. He will be back to address the Council with his concerns.

Steve Newman asked what Horton's tax increase by itself was going to be. Jennifer Barr responded.

Mayor Eady asked Mr. Newman to direct his questions to our Finance Manager, Jennifer Barr.

6. COUNCIL MEMBERS COMMENTS

Councillor Whyte said she really pondered a lot on the increases in taxes, they are very important to the new Council and what can they do for the Township and how to make the best possible decisions.

Councillor Campbell said when he campaigned it was on roads, recreation and affordable rates for the community. He himself was frustrated when reviewing the documents. He wanted more input and he had the breakdowns clarified to him. He was surprised at the bottom line. The spending will stop and more grants are being researched and Ms. Barr has a plan for the Township. Ms. Barr is the best thing to happen to this township and if you need help understanding anything she will make you understand it. Councillor Campbell thanked Ms. Barr for all he help. He told Mr. Puhalski that his comments were valid.

Councillor Kingsbury said that he was aware of the Debt but not of the actual costs but the debt did increase our Capital Assets. He honestly feels that this is the best we can do for now. He will support the process because of everything Ms. Barr has put into it.

Councillor Larone addressed the Public and said that Ms. Barr was able to explain where the money came from and where it goes and where it has to go. We have a plan in place. We have evaluated all departments and we are proceeding into the future and debt reduction is the first thing on our mind along with surplus items, staff issues and rink recreation restructuring. He appreciates Mr. Puhalski comments and understands rate payer's frustrations. He thanked Mr. Puhalski for his time.

Mayor Eady thanked the new council, the budget has been a very long process. It started with the CAO/Clerk and himself going through everything line by line. The Township has had 1 retirement, one new staff on maternity leave, a new acting treasurer and another new staff member. He is very proud of how our New Acting Treasurer has conducted herself. He noted that the past budgets were passed on the facts that they had at that time and this budget will be passed on the facts we have today.

7. CLOSE MEETING

Moved by Bob Kingsbury, seconded by Jamey Larone **Resolution No. 11-202**
That Council closes this Public Meeting on the 2011 Draft Municipal Budget at 8:20 p.m.
Carried.

Mayor

CAO/Clerk