

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HORTON

Special Council Meeting with Renfrew Power Generation

January 22, 2013

There was a Special Council Meeting held in the Municipal Council Chambers with representatives of Renfrew Power Generation to discuss their proposal to construct a hydroelectric generating station at the First Chute on the Bonnechere River on Tuesday January 22, 2013. Present was Acting Mayor Robert Kingsbury, Councillor Glen Campbell, Councillor Jamey Larone and Councillor Margaret Whyte. Absent was Mayor Don Eady who is on a leave of absence.

Present from the Planning Committee was David Brown and John Wilson.

Present from Renfrew Power Generation (RPG) was Peter Boldt and Charlie Jamieson.

Staff present was Jennifer Barr, Finance Manager, Rose Curley (until 4:35) and Mackie McLaren, CAO/Clerk.

3 members of the public were also present.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Acting Mayor Robert Kingsbury called the Meeting to Order at 4:00 p.m.

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There was no declaration of pecuniary interest by Members of Council or Staff.

3. RENFREW POWER GENERATION

Acting Mayor Kingsbury called upon Mr. Boldt and Mr. Jamieson to inform Council of their plans to construct a generating station at the First Chute of the Bonnechere River. Peter Boldt reviewed a power point presentation on the history of the property they own at the First Chute and the various forms of Provincial and Ontario Power Authority (OPA) programs to supply electric power to the Province that they applied for in the past.

Mr. Boldt said that they had "FIT" (Feed in Tariff) approval for the project but there was no transmission line capacity so they were relegated to a "production line" status until the transmission infrastructure was upgraded. Recently though, FIT 2.1 has come on line and all previous approvals were cancelled so they have to start over with a new application under different rules. One of these rules is a point rating system which gives the project additional priority points if the local Municipal Council provides a resolution of support. Mr. Boldt said that if the Council signed the support resolution document, it did not provide an obligation for Council to support the entire project. He added that RPG is going forward with or without Council's support, but said they would welcome that support.

Mr. Boldt informed Council that public consultation is required as part of the review process prior to construction if their application is approved. There has been one public consultation session in the Horton Community Centre to date. He said that the project is financially viable, and some of the Environmental Assessment (EA) work has been completed.

Their plan calls for the water to be raised about 3 metres behind the dam which is the high-water mark set out by Ministry of Natural Resources. Mr. Jamieson

added that they would be raising the water within the natural boundary and no expropriation of land is required. The dam is a rubber air bladder that goes up and down and water will be running over the dam and over the chute all the time. The dam structure will not be seen. Aerial mapping has been completed and they can determine if any culverts will have to be changed or raised on tributaries that cross under Thomson Road. Acting Mayor Kingsbury asked if RPG would change or enlarge any culverts. Mr. Boldt said it depended on the impact that shows up on the mapping.

David Brown noted that the river banks were silty and muddy; will there be lots of erosion anticipated? Peter Boldt said they have studied the clay banks. Their findings are that if pressure is held constant on the banks they will be OK. There are gravel areas that would erode however.

John Wilson asked what happens with a large rainfall, will water back up higher? Charlie Jamieson said they will do here how they manage the water on control dams they have higher up on the river. They will open up the dams to let water out. John added that he is concerned downstream from the dam and the silt buildup at the mouth of the Ottawa River.

Councillor Campbell asked what would be done during times of drought like we experienced this summer. Peter Boldt said they let 1 cubic metre of water per second spill over their dams and they didn't generate power from July to October last year. This would happen again if there were future droughts.

Peter Boldt said the Chute will still be available to be viewed by the public. He noted that the land around the proposed generation station is privately owned by RPG. They will keep their pedestrian access open from Thomson Road for picnickers and fishing. No swimming though. He added that the Rangers come in every year to clean up the plantation area down from the Chute. They do experience vandalism.

Councillor Larone asked what their time frame was. Mr. Boldt said they would make their application in March 2013 when they anticipate the program will open up for applications, they would know in June or July if they were successful and hold their first public meeting and EA comments in September/October. They would complete design and machinery and construction later in 2014 and 15.

Councillor Larone asked who oversees the project. Mr. Boldt said that they would get a building permit from Horton. Mr. Jamieson said they are governed by OPA rules.

John Wilson asked who owns up to the high-water mark. Mr. Boldt said the crown does.

David Brown asked about public input. Would there be an ad in paper and use the Community Centre? Both Peter Boldt and Charlie Jamieson said this is part of the required process.

John Wilson asked how the electricity would get into the hydro grid. Peter Boldt said they will hook into Ontario Hydro lines on Thomson Road. They will have to pay to upgrade the lines to Goshen Road.

David Brown asked how many dollars Horton would receive from this project. Mr. Boldt said they would pay "Payment in Lieu" (PIL) of taxes, whatever the assessed rate is times the tax rate. Jennifer Barr said that the Province of Ontario guarantees the amount of PIL on existing hydro dams. She didn't know if new dams would be the same. Acting Mayor Kingsbury asked if there were any royalties that would come to Horton. Peter Boldt said no. Mr. Jamieson said there will be local benefits as \$20 million will be spent within 40 km of Renfrew as part of the dam and other upgrades.

In answer to a question from the floor, Peter Boldt said that this plant will produce 1700 kW of electricity while the two generators in Renfrew produce 1000 kW each.

Jennifer Barr asked for them to explain the priority point system. Peter Boldt said that points are available to help push their application ahead of others who were unable to produce these points. Example 1 point for municipal support, 1 point for First Nation's support, 1 point for already producing hydro. If they were successful in gaining all three points, they would have an advantage over an application that could not get municipal approval.

John Wilson asked how many public meetings they anticipate will be held for this project. Mr. Boldt suggested three, depending on public input, but there is no limit to the number of meetings. They try to satisfy the majority of the issues by bringing back proposed solutions on concerns.

John Wilson asked if they would cover any damage to Thomson Road as a result of trucks hauling in equipment and building materials. Mr. Boldt said that if they damage something, they would be responsible, but asked how much damage would be contributable to other commercial uses using the road. Councillor Whyte noted that there is a possibility that Horton will be improving Thomson Road in 2014.

John Wilson said that the township would be remiss if they didn't ask for a peer review of the project, at RPG's cost. i.e. engineering, road study. Mr. Jamieson explained the hoops they have to go through to get approval to proceed. John Wilson said he understood that but that information is going to the Ministry not the Township.

Acting Mayor Kingsbury asked if there is a possibility of a liaison person appointed to be a contact with Horton when construction proceeds. Mr. Boldt said that he and the CAO/Clerk have established lines of communication now and they will be maintained.

David Brown said he understands that they want the blessing of Council, but would they also not want the blessing of ratepayers at a public meeting? Mr. Jamieson said that these are two separate processes. The Environmental Assessment is the public consultation. Peter Boldt added that the public become involved once RPG receives approval from the Ontario Power Authority. Tonight they are just looking for Horton's endorsement.

John Wilson noted that they will get an extra "point" if Horton is supportive. Peter Boldt said yes. John said that they need to fund the township studies that we may need. Peter Boldt said if the Township sees the need to have someone oversee the project they will cover the cost as long as it is a Township policy.

Councillor Whyte said to clarify, RPG are the landowners. They can do as they wish on this project without our blessing. Peter Boldt said yes. Councillor Whyte added that RPG will still leave the site available for people to utilize the Chute when they could stop people. Peter Boldt again said yes.

Councillor Campbell asked what the actual deadline for our endorsement is. Peter Boldt said the RfP is not out so no deadline yet, but it will be tight time frame when an announcement is made so he is looking to get all the information he needs ahead of time. He is not pressing Council tonight to sign the resolution.

Acting Chair Kingsbury said that this issue will be reviewed by Council at their February 5th Council Meeting. He thanked Mr. Boldt and Mr. Jamieson for attending this meeting and updating Council.

4. BY-LAW 2013-13 CONFIRMING BY-LAW

Moved by Margaret White
Seconded by Jamey Larone

Resolution No. 2013-

That Council enacts By-law 2013-13 to confirm the actions and decisions of this Special Council Meeting.

Carried

5. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Glen Campbell
Seconded by Margaret Whyte

Resolution No. 2013-

That Council adjourns this Special Council Meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Carried

ACTING MAYOR

CAO/Clerk