

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HORTON

Special Recreation Committee Meeting

January 23, 2013

There was a Special Meeting of the Recreation Committee held in the Municipal Council Chamber on Wednesday January 23, 2013. Present was Acting Mayor Robert Kingsbury, Chair Margaret Whyte and Members Valerie Miller, Ralph and Gladys Miller, Barb and Arnold Dickson, David Bennett, Bob Johnston and Sandy Black. Staff present was Jennifer Barr, Finance Manager and Mackie McLaren, CAO/Clerk.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Acting Mayor Kingsbury called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed the Committee Members and staff. He said he observed some stress and tension of Members during their January 16th Committee Meeting. He spoke with Chair Whyte and suggested an informal meeting to discuss issues that were a concern with the Members. He said the agenda was a suggestion and could be deviated from.

2. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

- When is a Business Plan Required

Acting Mayor Kingsbury suggested that the recently submitted business plan for the Coffee Club was not necessary as there was limited impact to the budget. He said he mentioned this to a member of the Finance Committee following a recent Council Meeting and the minimum budget impact of \$500 was suggested be used to determine when a Business Plan is required to be prepared and approved.

Valerie Miller reviewed the simple business plan form that was originally used by the Committee. She said she had no issue completing this one page document, but the three page report was a lot of work to complete for small projects.

After further discussion, the Members supported the idea of a \$500 minimum. They agreed that this would free up the Recreation Program Manager's time. Jennifer Barr advised that the change suggested tonight would require Finance Committee support and Council approval. The Members said they understood.

- Township's General Ledger and Reports

The CAO/Clerk presented copies of a GL summary report that the Members receive in their meeting package and a copy of the General Ledger for the same accounts showing all the transactions that made up the summary report totals. He asked if this would satisfy the Member's requirements for financial reports after each event. Jennifer Barr said the computer program has the ability to print the GL report after each event after the invoices come in.

Valerie Miller and Ralph Miller said that is what there were asking for. Ralph also asked for the bar profit to be shown on event reports.

Valerie asked if there was other ways to free up the Recreation Program Manager's time. Ralph suggested that there was no need for her to prepare and read off a Manager's report at each Committee Meeting. Valerie suggested they need to fill the vacant Chairs of Committees to set up and tear down the decorations at the hall, carry out the shopping for the kitchen and advertising. She said we should place an ad in the paper right away to fill the vacant Chair positions. The Members agreed.

- Recreation Program Manager's Job Description

The CAO/Clerk presented copies of the two Job Descriptions that the Manager works under – 20 hours/week on Recreation and 15 hours/week as

Receptionist/Clerk. The person works full time hours but only 20 hours is charged against the Rec budget.

Dave Bennett noted that the Manager is doing too many jobs that others should be doing.

Valerie Miller discussed the new motto "save" and "go cheap" that has been coming from Council recently. The Members said this effects their efforts to run programs the way they want them to be run. The latest suggestion from someone was use pink salmon instead of red salmon and the Members believe that pink salmon is an inferior product that they didn't want to serve in sandwiches. Chair Whyte said part of the reason is to save money to pay down the debt. Valerie asked why bacon on a bun was cut from the winter carnival lunch menu after the organizers had the menu planned. Jennifer Barr said the suggestion was for more bulk purchasing to save money. Valerie said that the Committee in charge of the function should look after the spending. Jennifer agreed if within budget to go ahead. She noted she shops at a bulk store every month in Ottawa and could pick up supplies if asked.

Bob Johnston discussed the issue of the debt. Council Members concerns about the original \$881,000 of debt is not looking at the big picture. In the business world this would have been a great investment getting \$4,000,000 of infrastructure and assets for \$881,000 of debt. He added that this is not a large debt and is very manageable. He said that he doesn't like the statement made by others that his Council mismanaged money. It is against his integrity.

Dave Bennett said he would like someone to examine the original debt repayment plan the previous Council had and believes that plan would be within \$50,000 of where we are now.

Arnold Dickson said that the Winter Carnival organizers are planning a pizza party on the Friday evening before the Winter Carnival. They were in the process of getting donations to cover the cost and have the pizza available free for the youngsters but someone has told the organizer that there must be a charge of \$2.50 per slice. Acting Mayor Kingsbury asked the CAO/Clerk to investigate.

- Infrastructure Committee

Dave Bennett said he had difficulty with this Committee and suggested that maybe there should be a meeting with them. He said it was disheartening to do a project using his company money and no action from the Committee. He suggested if the Committee Members do not have time to carry out a project they should leave it to the Committee to do.

Mr. Bennett referenced the issue of ice on the steel grate steps he installed in the retaining wall. He said he has built identical steps and installed them in outdoors for commercial businesses and never has he had a concern or question. Acting Mayor Kingsbury said the problem was that it was freezing rain out and you couldn't put ice melt on the metal steps so he had wood put on to cover the grate steps.

Acting Mayor Kingsbury said the Infrastructure Committee identified more projects than they had the funds to complete.

Dave Bennett discussed the purchase of the new stove. He said that the right appliance was not purchased as we needed to have a stove with electronic ignition of the burners. This is going to be trouble for some time. We went too cheap. This \$4,000 expenditure will now be \$10,000 when resolved. Not enough thought was put into what we needed and how we get there.

The CAO/Clerk informed the Committee that Steve Osipenko could not attend this meeting but he did have a concern with the Infrastructure Committee that the changeover of the generator startup was taking so long to accomplish. Jennifer Barr noted that at this time the draft 2013 budget includes funds to complete this project.

- Possible change to Council/Committee Meeting Structure

The CAO/Clerk reviewed scenarios he had been asked to submit to Council on increasing the number of Members on all Committees from two to five. Acting Mayor Kingsbury said with all members of council sitting on every committee there would be no issues sent back and forth between committees before direction is given.

The Committee Members discussed this at some length and agreed that this structure would be a big step in solving some of their issues.

Jennifer Barr asked if the Members preferred she was available to attend Recreation Committee Meetings. Valerie Miller said it was not necessary as long as she provides the financial print outs for the meeting.

- Sale of Land

Dave Bennett said he was taken aback that Council would not turn the issue of developing the beach property over to the Recreation Committee for a recommendation. He said that the responsibility of the Recreation Committee doesn't stop at the Community Centre.

Acting Mayor Kingsbury said part of the question to be examined is if we are not going to develop the property we should sell it.

Bob Johnston said he is one of the people pushing to develop the beach. Renfrew has just voted down a pool so there would be an opportunity to attract clientele from Renfrew during the summer months. He supported Mr. Bennett's suggestion that the Recreation Committee should be making the recommendation not the committee that is now formed.

Sandy Black suggested that we go ahead and develop the property as a wilderness park now and develop the beach later.

The CAO/Clerk said he will be calling a meeting of the sub-committee to begin the review of the property within the next two weeks.

Dave Bennett asked if the Township was still considering approaching Norman Eady and VanderPloeg's to determine if they were interested in selling land to enlarge the Community Centre property. Ralph Miller said he and Arnold Dickson had made arrangements to meet with these two people to discuss their interest before the next Recreation Meeting.

- Independent Committee

Acting Mayor Kingsbury informed the Committee that he had mentioned the idea of a committee that would operate semi independently of Council at their last Committee Meeting. Jennifer Barr described her experience with the two separate committees or associations in Greater Madawaska Township. The DACA Centre is incorporated and a Charitable Organization. They own their community building and have their own governing body. In Griffith the Lions club uses the Township building and operates recreation services and programs. They keep independent books that are audited by the Township auditors.

Acting Mayor Kingsbury pointed out that this idea has not been discussed with any Council Member and would require Council's review, consideration and approval before this could happen.

Bob Johnston said that would take the Committee back full circle to the 1970's when a group of ratepayers started the original Horton Community Centre (Sportsplex).

Dave Bennett suggested that Council would want to control their destiny, but if they appointed a liaison person it would be OK, but to control their future would not work. The group would have to be independent of Council. He also said that he doesn't believe that Committee of the Whole will be an answer to the concerns of the Recreation Committee.

Acting Mayor Kingsbury asked the Committee Members to put some thought into this and bring back a report to the Committee of the Whole.

Chair Whyte asked if the Committee should advertise to fill the vacant chair positions of kitchen, advertising/public relations, decorating. The Members agreed.

Bob Johnston said if they had an independent committee they would decide on volunteers. He suggested we go ahead with Committee of the Whole and the Recreation Committee could continue to discuss an independent committee organization.

Arnold Dickson said there are different ways to become an independent committee, one would be for Council to give them a grant and they are responsible to raise additional funds if they want more or are over budget. Jennifer Barr agreed that would be a form of independence.

3. OTHER ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Acting Mayor Kingsbury asked if there were any other items that members wished to raise at this meeting.

Ralph Miller noted that the Euchre cost was incorrectly stated in the recycling calendar information sheet sent out in late December. That calendar had included upcoming recreation activities and indicated euchre was \$5.00/person when it is only \$4. He suggested the correction be noted in the Horton Corner ad.

Dave Bennett said this was a productive meeting. The dialogue was good. Things were going on that no one was listening to. They need a forum where they could make their points. This was a good start.

Sandy Black asked why the beach gate at River Road was locked. Acting Mayor Kingsbury said it was for liability purposes. Dave Bennett said the property would need to be fenced off first before people could use the site.

The Committee Members thanked the two Council Members for organizing this meeting.

4. END MEETING

Acting Mayor Kingsbury declared the meeting to be ended at 8:43 p.m.

ACTING MAYOR

CAO/Clerk