

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HORTON

Special Finance Committee of the Whole Meeting  
August 26, 2014

There was a Meeting of the Finance Committee with all Council Members present on Tuesday August 26, 2014. Present were Co-Chairs Don Eady and Jamey Larone. Also present was Councillors Kingsbury, Campbell and Whyte. Staff present was Jennifer Barr, Treasurer/Tax Collector and Mackie McLaren CAO/Clerk.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Eady called the meeting to order at 1:25 p.m.

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

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

3. JOHN DAVID – TAX SALE PROPERTY

The CAO/Clerk presented information on a very small triangle of land that Mr. John David believes should have been transferred to him when he bought the property adjacent to it in the early 1980's. This parcel, being 44' wide by 235' deep that comes to a point at the rear, is used as his driveway since the County of Renfrew improved Burnstown Road in front of his property generations ago. To solve a sight line problem where the former driveway entered onto the re sloped hill, the County negotiated with the neighbouring land owner, (Dedo) to purchase this wedge and add it to the David farm, then owned by the Farquharson family. The driveway was then relocated to this piece of land. Mr. David purchased his property from the Farquharson estate.

The small property was not assessed until the late 1980's and MPAC showed the owner as Jane Farquharson. Ms. Farquharson was deceased by then and the tax bills were returned as undeliverable. The taxes have accumulated to over \$8,000 over the years. The property was never registered for tax sale as it was deemed by staff to be unsaleable due to its small size. The Treasurer/Tax Collector decided 11 months ago to register the property and get it off the books. After the property was registered for tax sale it was learned by chance that Mr. David believes he is the owner.

Mr. David has requested that the Township sell him the property for a nominal fee once the tax sale process is complete and the property "vested" with the Township, which is assuming that no one purchases the property through the tax sale process.

Mayor Eady suggested contacting the County for their input. He will be in Pembroke at the County Council Meeting tomorrow. The Committee Members agreed.

Mayor Eady suggested that since the Township would be absorbing a very large part of the costs to cancel the taxes that there should be some compensation plus costs for this transaction. The Committee Members agreed to wait until the County has an opportunity to respond.

4. YEAR TO DATE FINANCIAL STATEMENT REVIEW

Jennifer Barr, Treasurer/Tax Collector provided the Members with an updated Financial Statement as of August 13, 2014. On the report she

had pointed out some potential savings that may be available in several department budgets. She also presented the 2014 Capital Financing Report, the Reserve Report and an update on the Community Centre Expansion budget.

There was discussion on the tender for the heating system in the Community Centre Expansion project. A tender will be issued shortly. Mayor Eady said there had been a suggestion that reserves be used to replace the two existing oil furnaces with propane boiler to be connected to the in floor heating coils that were installed in the floor when the original hall was building in 2003/4. The replacement is a direct result of the need to replace the outside furnace oil tank.

Mayor Eady asked if we had ever received a list of deficiencies that was requested of North Country Heating back in June. It was confirmed that this report has not been received. Staff was requested to contact the contractor and ask for this report ASAP.

The Treasurer/Tax Collector gave a short verbal overview on finance related items she received at a MFOA (Municipal Finance Officers Association) meeting she attended last Friday in Trenton.

Co-Chair Larone asked if there were any other areas of concern or red flags that Ms. Barr was concerned about. She said no.

#### 5. SALARY GRID PROPOSED AMENDMENT

Jennifer Barr presented information that was requested on salary grid changes if below average grid levels 5 to 7 were increased. The report was drafted in two formats. One using the regression analysis wage and one using the same percentage difference between the three positions. The regression analysis program slowly increases the percentage difference between the top positions.

The Members discussed the two alternatives. Up to this point they had only reviewed the regression analysis information that was provided by the County HR Department. Various suggestions were put forward by the members including:

- Add a new step to grid and drop the first step in 2015
- Consider an \$8500 increase amount between the \$7K and \$10K amount
- Consider the \$7K increase with a new step in 2015 to the grid which will add 3% and a COLA increase next year which could bring the positions up to close to the average.
- Consider a \$5K increase to the top position maximum.

Jennifer Barr provided one-time expenses in the 2014 budget that wouldn't be required in the 2015 budget that would allow \$8 to \$10,000 to offset part of the cost of the increases. This is in addition to the budget savings she has found in item 4 above.

After the Members discussed the issues further, they directed the Treasurer/Tax Collector to prepare the following reports:

- Cost of proposed payroll increases to grid levels 5 to 7 if there was a \$5,000 or \$7,000 increase to level 7.
- Cost of proposed grid step increase in 2015, and
- Potential budget savings to offset these costs.

## 6. COUNCIL REMUNERATION REVIEW

The CAO/Clerk presented the Members with a copy of the current remuneration by-law 2010-08, a copy of the 2009 Horton Remuneration Committee Remuneration Report, a copy of the Municipal Elected Officials Remuneration Survey for 2013 prepared by the County HR Department and a copy of a 2014 remuneration by-law recently adopted by the Township of Laurentian Valley. The Treasurer/Tax Collector presented the 2011, 2012 and 2013 statement of Remuneration with a 3 year average for each member.

The CAO/Clerk noted that earlier in the term Council had accepted that future remuneration would not be based on meetings attended.

Mayor Eady suggested that there be a minimum of 25% between the Mayor's remuneration and that of the Councillors as there are extra duties, visits at the office etc. for the Mayor. He suggested \$20,000 for the Mayor and \$15,000 for the Councillors. He suggested that the Mayor be entitled to attend two conferences or conventions per year and the Councillors attend one each. He also suggested that there be a per diem rate of \$150 plus expenses reimbursed for attending a conference. Finally he suggested that the cost of the Council Members health care benefits come from their remuneration if they choose to enroll in the benefit packages.

Councillor Kingsbury said the number suggested by Mayor Eady were close to the amounts he was considering. He suggested that in addition to the one conference for a Councillor that there be an opportunity available for a second conference if approved by Council.

Councillor Larone said he supports the suggestions of Mayor Eady and Councillor Kingsbury.

Councillor Whyte said she was supportive of a flat salary rather than a basic salary plus a meeting allowance. She supported Mayor Eady's and Councillor Kingsbury's suggestions.

Councillor Campbell said he agreed with the opportunity for a second conference for a Councillor and with the flat rate salary.

The CAO/Clerk was directed to prepare a by-law to incorporate the above suggestions for the September 2, 2014 Council Meeting. Changes will not take effect until December 1, 2014, the start of the new term of office.

## 7. INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT—deadline Sept. 19/14

The Treasurer/Tax Collector and the CAO/Clerk reviewed information with the Members on a new Infrastructure funding program recently announced by the Province of Ontario. Part of the program provides the Township with a minimum \$25,000 for infrastructure and part is for applications for projects. There is a third opportunity to apply for funds under the Federal Government's Build Canada Funding. Both programs have a deadline for an Expression of Interest of September 19, 2014.

Mayor Eady suggested that one project be the section of Thomson Road that does not contain the large – deep culverts that must be replaced. This may cost in the neighbourhood of \$400,000 for approximately 3 km of road. The Build Canada project can be for the section of Thomson Road that requires the large culvert replacement which may cost in the \$1,200,000 range. Work in both projects would involve grinding the pavement, repair or replace the existing culverts, granular where needed and repave. He recommended that both projects include wider pavement for active transportation and noted that Thomson Road is a connecting link

between County Road 6 and County Road 1 and leads to the Ottawa River from highway 17.

The Members agreed with the above suggestions. The Committee requested that a resolution be prepared for the September 2<sup>nd</sup> Council Meeting.

8. OPP BILLING MODEL MEETING SEPTEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup> AT 1 PM IN SMITHS FALLS

The Members reviewed and invitation to attend an information session in Smiths Falls on September 4<sup>th</sup> on the revised OPP billing model. Councillor Whyte and the Treasurer/Tax Collector agreed to attend.

9. RECOMMEND COUNCIL AUTHORIZE WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TO AWARD QUOTES FOR SEA CONTAINERS

Councillor Larone, Chair of the Waste Management Committee noted that tenders will be called shortly for the sea containers set out in their business plan for the landfill site. He requested that the Members recommend to Council that they authorize the Waste Management Committee to make the decision on the tenders.

Moved by Jamey Larone, Seconded by Glen Campbell that the Finance Committee recommend that Council authorize the Waste Management Committee to award the tender for the sea containers once the tender closes later in September.

Carried

10. RENT EXCAVATOR TO GREATER MADAWASKA FOR CULVERT

The CAO/Clerk informed the Members that the Public Works Supt. had received a request from the Township of Greater Madawaska to rent our excavator to replace a culvert on their section of Fraser Road on August 28. Their excavator had a breakdown and they wanted to replace the culvert before the school buses start travelling the road next week.

Moved by Glen Campbell, Seconded by Jamey Larone that the Finance Committee recommend Council agree to rent the Township's excavator to the Township of Greater Madawaska at the Fees and Charges By-law rate of \$82.00 per hour plus the cost of our operator.

Carried

11. COUNCIL MEMBER EMAIL OPPORTUNITY

The CAO/Clerk informed Council Members that our IT person now has the capability of creating email addresses for each Council Member. He proposed three options:

Option 1

One email address called [council@hortontownship.ca](mailto:council@hortontownship.ca) which will come to the CAO/Clerk's computer and it will forward to the Council Member's home email address.

Option 2

Each Council Member will have an individual email address such as:

[deady@hortontownship.ca](mailto:deady@hortontownship.ca)  
[rkingsbury@hortontownship.ca](mailto:rkingsbury@hortontownship.ca)  
[gcampbell@hortontownship.ca](mailto:gcampbell@hortontownship.ca)

[ilarone@hortontownship.ca](mailto:ilarone@hortontownship.ca)  
[mwhyte@hortontownship.ca](mailto:mwhyte@hortontownship.ca)

Emails to these addresses will still come to the CAO/Clerk's workstation where he will forward them to the Member.

Option 3

Similar to Option 2 but the emails come directly to your home computer. This requires some logistics as the IT professional would have to go to your home and add another email address to your computer.

After discussion, the members selected Option 1 for now and leave it to the new Council Members to select an option when they come to office.

12. HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE CHANGES TO FRONT OFFICE

Councillor Whyte, Chair of the Safety Coordinator's Committee reported that prior to this afternoon's Finance Meeting her Committee met with the Infrastructure Committee. As a result of this meeting, a recommendation is coming to the September 2, 2014 Council Meeting which calls on Council to approve the installation of a glass barrier to be added to the front counter and a glass door with key pad pass system to restrict access down the hallway past the Public Works Manager's Office. Upset limit is \$5,000. Jennifer Barr said the funds would have to come from the Working Funds Reserve.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Glen Campbell, Seconded by Jamey Larone that this Finance Committee of the Whole Meeting be adjourned at 5:03 p.m.

Carried

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CHAIR

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CAO/Clerk