

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HORTON

Finance Committee Meeting

September 29, 2015

There was a Meeting of the Finance Committee held in the Municipal Council on Tuesday September 29, 2015. Present was Chair Jamey Larone, Mayor Robert Kingsbury, Deputy Mayor Robert A. Johnston (6:00 to 6:45) and Councillor Dave Bennett. Absent was Councillor Glen Campbell. Staff present was Jennifer Barr, Treasurer/Tax Collector and Mackie McLaren, CAO/Clerk.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Larone called the Meeting to Order at 6:03 pm.

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Mayor Johnston declared pecuniary interest on agenda item 7 – Donation Policy. One of the benefactors of this policy is the Golden Age Activity Centre. His wife is a part time employee at the Centre.

3. RECREATION 2013 USER FEE – TOWN OF RENFREW

The CAO/Clerk reviewed a July 31, 2015 letter he sent to the Treasurer of the Town of Renfrew concerning their claim that Horton was paying the Recreation User Fee one year behind. In their view we still owe approx. \$27,000 for the 2013 fees that would have been due in 2014. In 2014 the user fee agreement format changed as did the amount paid. (\$20,500)

In the letter the CAO/Clerk explains that since 2000 payments were for the current year, however the base of the payment was on user numbers from Horton in the previous year. Evidence including correspondence from a former Renfrew Recreation Director and copies of invoices were attached to the letter supporting Horton's position, but unfortunately our position has not been accepted yet.

The Members discussed this situation. Deputy Mayor Johnston noted that he was chair of the Recreation Committee when the change was made to use previous year's data for the current year's invoice. After discussion the Members agreed that it would be up to the Town of Renfrew to prove that we were always one year behind.

4. MUNICIPAL TAX ADVISORY GROUP – POWER DAM COMPENSATION

Jennifer Barr updated the Members on the Provinces proposed change to the Power Dam Compensation program. The Town of Wawa and the Township of Greater Madawaska have taken the lead in communicating with the Ministry of Finance on this issue. If the compensation is withdrawn, as indicated last year by the Province, we would eventually lose the \$25,700 in annual funding. This program was established by the province 12 – 15 years ago and was to compensate municipalities for loss of tax dollars from hydro dams when the province exempted dams from paying property tax.

The Province is still considering the municipal demands to keep the program. The two municipalities are now suggesting that all affected municipality's contract with Municipal Tax Advisory Group to review the compensation tax policy. Ms. Barr advised that we have not been given the amount of our share of this contract, but she estimated it would be less than \$1000. The Contracted Services Budget would cover this cost.

Moved by Robert A. Johnston, Seconded by Robert Kingsbury THAT the Finance Committee approves participating in the process of engaging the Municipal Tax Advisory Group (MTAG) to review power dam compensation tax policy and;

FURTHER that the cost to participate be split proportionately to the current compensation being received by the participating municipalities and;

FURTHER that Chris Wray, CAO of the Town of Wawa be given the authority to develop the Terms of Reference for this endeavor and;

FURTHER that the cost to fund this endeavor be taken from the 2015 operating budget contracted services account 1-110-00-718040.

FURTHER that Horton's upset limit towards contribution be capped at \$1,000, subject to reconsideration.

Carried

5. 2015 PROCEDURAL AUDIT

Jennifer Barr presented the Members with a copy of the Auditor's Engagement Letter which sets out the Auditors responsibilities and the Council Members responsibilities required to complete the 2015 Procedural and Financial Audits. The Engagement Letter requires the signatures of all 5 Council Members.

Ms. Barr also provided and reviewed a copy of the Statement of Financial Position as of September 30, 2015. She said the Auditors have requested this report be submitted to Council monthly. She said she would add it to each of their meeting packages.

6. COMPUTER TENDER OPENING

In the presence of the Council Members and Treasurer, the CAO/Clerk opened the tenders received for computer hardware and operating software. The tender amounts were:

MARK CASSANTO	\$17,842.70
MANAWA NETWORKS	\$20,346.55
MICROCAD COMPUTER CORP	\$16,025.66
DESK LINX INCORP	\$44,713.71
GOLDPALS	A \$16,077.87
	B \$15,447.33
	C \$15,560.33
PCS (PETER BARNABE)	\$18,217.90

When the Tenders were opened the CAO/Clerk recommended that Council direct staff to compare the tenders and report back to Council.

Moved by Robert Kingsbury, Seconded by Dave Bennett that Council receive the tenders for computers and direct staff to review the tenders for accuracy and to ensure the companies were all quoting on the items set out in the tender.

Carried.

7. DONATION POLICY

Mayor Kingsbury had declared pecuniary interest in this item at the start of the meeting. He did not speak to the issue during the discussion.

Jennifer Barr reviewed the updated version of the draft policy she prepared following the last Committee Meeting. Changes made at that meeting are highlighted in yellow in this version. Ms. Barr pointed out that if this policy was passed, staff would oversee the disbursement of the policy and report back to council.

Moved by Dave Bennett, Seconded by Robert A. Johnston
that the Finance Committee recommend Council adopt the Donation Policy.

Carried.

Mayor Kingsbury did not vote on the resolution.

8. YEAR-END SURPLUS/DEFICIT POLICY

Jennifer Barr reviewed the draft Year-end Surplus/Deficit Policy and answered questions from the Members.

Moved by Robert Kingsbury, Seconded by Dave Bennett
that Finance Committee recommend Council adopt the Year-Ed Surplus/Deficit Policy.

Carried.

9. 2016 OPP BILLING

Jennifer Barr presented the 2016 OPP Billing statement received yesterday. It amounts to a 4.8% levy increase and is based on a large increase of 93 properties between 2015 and 2016 billing. However she is checking this with OPP as Horton's MPAC information on new properties indicates only 19 new properties. She is waiting on a call back from OPP and MPAC. She will keep Council updated as she gets information.

10. DRAFT PROCUREMENT BY-LAW

Jennifer Barr presented an updated copy of the draft Procurement By-law with the changes highlighted in yellow. She reviewed the changes. Several further amendments and additions were made to the draft. Councillor Bennett said he had concerns with several sections and was not ready to support it at this time as he wanted further opportunity to review the document. The Members agreed to place this item on the next Finance Committee Meeting agenda.

11. 2016 BUDGET PROCESS UPDATE

Jennifer Barr reviewed the status of the 2016 draft municipal budget. Recreation and General Government have responded with draft budgets, although some tweaking is required. She will encourage the other Managers and Committee Chairs to draft their departmental budget by mid-October.

12. RESERVE/DEBT/TANGIBLE CAPITAL ASSET POLICIES

Jennifer Barr suggested that these policies be considered at a meeting when all members are present. The Members agreed.

13. CORRESPONDENCE

- AMO email – Asset Management Plan Requirements

Jennifer Barr reviewed the Asset Management Plan requirements to continue to receive the Gas Tax payments.

14. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Larone expressed concern that staff has been advised that TransCanada Pipeline is no longer planning to construct a pumping station in Horton.

Mayor Kingsbury suggested that our Member of Parliament be contacted for support. He also noted that he has invited a representative of TransCanada to attend our October 6th Council Meeting.

Mayor Kingsbury reported that during the Human Resources Committee Meeting held earlier today the Members heard a request from Jim McBain our Municipal Law Enforcement Officer who asked to be provided protection in the Township's Indemnification By-law and insurance coverage. Mr. McBain explained that he has been sued personally and with his company for actions he carried out investigating zoning and dog tag issues in two other municipalities. The Committee has recommended Council direct staff to seek legal comment on Mr. McBain's request.

Mayor Kingsbury also mentioned that there is a recommendation coming to Council from the HR Committee to raise the health/drug benefit coverage to age 70m, up from age 65. In addition there is a recommendation to support a joint agreement with Admaston/Bromley Township in sharing the cost of the benefit coverage for the Chief Building Official.

15. NEXT MEETING

The Members agreed to set a tentative next meeting date of Tuesday October 27 at 6:00 pm.

16. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Larone adjourned the Meeting at 8:05 pm.

CHAIR

CAO/Clerk