

**THE CORPORATION OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF BONNECHERE VALLEY
MINUTES
COMMITTEE MEETING
TUESDAY MAY 21, 2024 1:30 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MUNICIPAL BUILDING AND VIA ZOOM
CONFERENCING**

PRESENT **Mayor Jennifer Murphy
Deputy Mayor Brent Patrick
Councillor John Epps
Councillor Tracey Sanderson
Councillor Merv Buckwald
CAO Annette Gilchrist
Deputy CAO Sandra Barr**

REGRETS **None**

GALLERY **None**

CALL TO ORDER COMMITTEE MEETING

Chair, Jennifer Murphy called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

ADDITIONS TO AGENDA

MOVED BY **Tracey Sanderson**

THAT: the agenda be accepted as presented, with the addition of Correspondence Item 7.3 Waive Ice Surface Rental Fee for Fundraiser Benefit Dance, and the addition of 8.2 Museum Update and 8.3 June 5 Meeting Time. Carried

PECUNIARY INTEREST OR GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

Tracey Sanderson declared a perceived conflict of interest regarding Correspondence 7.3

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY **John Epps**

That: The Minutes of the Committee Meeting on May 7, 2024 be accepted as presented.

Carried

DELEGATIONS

REPORTS

Recreation & Culture

Kevin McGrath, Manager of Recreation and Culture, was present and gave his report.

- a) Two of our summer students started this month;
- b) Tom Adamchick has rented the ice surface for fly fishing practice;
- c) The Library had their Tea Party fundraiser with a great turn out;
- d) The Library Board is requesting the Township waive the rental fee to use the Eagles Nest for the four Monday nights in July for their Author's Festival. Committee recommends waiving the fee;
- e) The sign at the Tourist Information Centre that was knocked over has been reinstalled. Staff are waiting on topsoil to spread around the sign. The water is on and the bathrooms were open for the May long weekend. Washrooms will be accessible from 7:00 am to 9:00 pm. The Tourist Booth will be open Saturday's and Sundays from 10 to 5pm. The Big Green Chair was delivered on May 14 from the Ottawa Valley Tourism Association. The chair will be here for the summer of 2024. This supports to Townships Priority of "Enhance the BVT Brand" as it is related to the objective of "Improve our marketing assets";

- f) Centennial Park – Staff have removed a dead tree in the park. The Brohart family is planting a memorial tree on May 24. The water is on and the bathrooms were open for the May long weekend;
- g) Legion Field - Gord Aitcheson helped us with the installation of the pitching mound on the big ball field;
- h) The Splash Pad has been inspected by the Health Unit and the water has been turned on;
- i) The foul ball posts got a fresh coat of paint and Diamond 2 posts got moved slightly and the soccer net posts got a fresh coat of paint;
- j) Opeongo Soccer will be using the soccer field Starting May 28th to mid-August;
- k) Minor Ball Games will start May 20th;
- l) Little league Ball will be starting at the end of May;
- m) Minor Soccer starts May 22nd;
- n) McRae Park - The water is on and the bathrooms are open for the May long weekend;
- o) The planter boxes have been dropped off at Temperate Gardens. The boxes will be ready to be installed on the bridge for mid-June;
- p) Recreation staff worked with the Roads Department and Bruce Pole to put the banner on the bridge and to switch over the Winter flags to the Summer flags;
- q) The Farmers Market banner will be placed in June;
- r) Benches have been placed around town;
- s) Cormac Park – Staff will need to replace the roof on the outhouse and will be using steel;
- t) Two new swing seats need to be replaced at Opeongo Park;
- u) Foymount Park - A basketball net has been purchased and will be installed in June. Staff will clean up the Foymount tennis court, painting lines and installing a net. Four new swing seats will be installed;
- v) Staff are in discussion with North Algona Wilberforce regarding the Lending Hub Equipment. We rented out our equipment only 7 times last year. North Algona Wilberforce has a full-time summer student at Melissa Bishop Park. Staff are proposing to lend them our equipment. If anyone calls about renting the equipment, we can send them to NAW to borrow equipment. This supports to Townships Priority of "Staffing and Shared Services" as it is related to the objective of "shared services".

Recreation Report Received.

Finance

Sandra Barr, Deputy CAO, was present and gave her report.

- a) The 2023 draft financial statements from our Auditors, MacKillican and Associates were provided to Committee. A resolution for approval will come forward to the May 21 meeting of Council;
- b) Unfunded Budget Amounts Report – Committee confirmed that it chose not to include amortization expenses, post-employment benefit expenses for payout in a future year and unfunded asset retirement obligations in the 2024 budget;
- c) The 2024 Budget was presented;
- d) The 2024 Operating and Capital Budget By-law, and the 2024 Tax Rate By-law will be passed at the May 21 Council Meeting;
- e) The May 2024 Provisional Budget Report was provided to Committee;
- f) On April 15, 2024 Sandra attended the Renfrew County Clerk's & Treasurers Association meeting in Pembroke;
- g) On April 19, 2024 Sandra attended the virtual Municipal Finance Officer Association discussion forum for populations under 10,000;
- h) Calculated and billed out a Supplemental tax billing for 2023 in the amount of \$1,694.63;
- i) Completed two Statistic Canada Surveys: the Business Payrolls Survey and Job Vacancy and Wage Survey;

- j) Tax Adjustment Report – Committee recommends that the application for an adjustment of taxes for vacant land on Felhaber Road be approved due to a tax exemption. And further that an adjustment of taxes in the amount of \$587.06 for 2023; \$572.53 for 2022; and \$567.30 for 2021; and 538.56 for 2020 be made to the property. Committee also recommends that the application for an adjustment of taxes for 34254 Highway 41 be approved due to a change of class. And further that an adjustment of taxes in the amount of \$3,823.71 be made to the property.

Financial Report Received.

Administration

Annette Gilchrist, CAO, was present and gave her report.

- a) April 23rd 2024 Algonquin College hosted an event titled Rural Perspectives on Economic and Social Trends in Canada - Presentation by Nik Nanos <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p41Wd8PINxw> April 24th;
- b) Annette Gilchrist attended the Eganville Job Fair where we received six resumes we were able to share with local tier municipalities through the Renfrew County Clerks and Treasurers Association.
- c) April 29 I met with Algonquin College to discuss paid coop programs for their environmental, finance/admin and technology programs.
- d) On May 4 Sarah and I attended the Wellness Day in Barry's Bay and there was a lot of networking between groups like the Training and Learning Centre, Bernadette McCann House, Algonquin College, MESA, CRC, Eganville Seniors and many more.
- e) May 13th and 14th the Public Works Superintendent and I participate in Collective Bargaining. A draft proposal will be presented in closed session.
- f) Update of Ontario Heritage Act - The Ontario Heritage Act provides three ways to recognize and protect properties of cultural heritage value on a municipal heritage register.
1. Section 29 of the Ontario Heritage Act gives municipalities the authority to designate individual properties that have cultural heritage value. This is the section we registered the museum under by by-law in 1977.
 2. Section 41 of the Ontario Heritage Act gives municipalities the authority to designate areas as heritage conservation districts. District designation can apply to a collection of buildings, streets or open spaces that are of special significance to the community.
 3. Section 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act permits municipalities to add properties of cultural heritage value or interest to the Heritage Register. This is the section that is currently being affected because any non-designated heritage property listed on the municipal register of properties as of December 31, 2022 shall be removed from the municipal register on or before January 1, 2025, if the council of the municipality does not give a notice of intention to designate the property under subsection 29(1) of the Ontario Heritage Act on or before January 1, 2025.

Bonnechere Valley has one property designated and we do not have a registry list. Therefore, there are no properties to be removed from the list. That being said if the Council wishes to designate a property (church, bridge or other property) as having heritage value it can still do so under Section 29 or 41.

- g) Vacant Home Taxes are municipal taxes applied to the assessed value of vacant homes. These taxes are intended to increase housing supply by creating an incentive for property owners to sell unoccupied homes or make them available to be rented.

Under Part IX.1 of the Municipal Act Section 338.1 The Minister of Finance may, by regulation, designate municipalities to which this Part applies and under Section 338.2 (1) In addition to taxes imposed under Part VIII, a designated municipality may, by by-law passed in the year to which it relates, impose a tax in the municipality on the assessed value, as determined under the Assessment Act, of vacant units that are classified in the residential property class and that are taxable under that Act for municipal purposes.

The Cities of Ottawa, Toronto and Hamilton have all passed by-laws with a tax rate of 1%. In speaking to the City of Ottawa and reviewing their reports on the matter they had 321,800 declarations out of 407,252 properties. Only 3200 of them were not exempt from the vacancy tax. This program is paying for the administration and raising funds which are being directed to housing.

Using similar numbers for Bonnechere Valley out of the 1739 Residential properties this could apply to and assuming the same rate of declarations being 1373 and the same rate of exemptions this could impact 13 properties in the Township. That being said if we use the average assessment for a residence and times that by a 1% tax rate it would raise approximately \$20,000. The cost to staff and administer the program would likely be at least this amount. No interest was expressed by the Upper Tier or any local municipalities at a recent Treasurers meeting;

- h) Facility Rental Policy – Annette reviewed multiple policies from various municipalities from across Ontario. She provided Committee with a sample policy that deals both with prohibited uses and discounted hall rental rates which is something we have practiced in the past on a case-by-case basis bringing the requests to Council. Council could delegate this authority through a policy to staff. Two of the specific clauses are listed below from the attached policy.

The Township offers discounted rental fees for charities and for groups, organizations and individuals that are resident in the Township that are renting a facility for the purpose of providing benefit to the Township's residents and community. This includes non-profit organizations and community groups using Township facilities for events to provide benefit to the community and/or to fundraise for community purposes. Any rental of a facility by a group for the purpose of providing economic benefit solely to the user will not qualify for the discounted rental fee. The determination of qualification for the discounted rental fee is at the sole discretion of the Township.

Facility rentals will not be permitted for businesses, organizations or individuals, in the sole discretion of the Directors of Corporate Services and/or Director of Operations and Infrastructure, whose programs, services or business activities do not align with the Township's values. Examples of unauthorized rentals would include those that: • Market or advertise the use of tobacco, cannabis, drugs and/or alcohol; • Promote derogatory, prejudicial, harmful to or are intolerant of any specific group or individual; • Create fiscal hardship for the Municipality and/or its residents; and/or • Make the rental inappropriate for reasons not specified herein.

Permitted Users on another policy specifically states rental is only for taxpayers of the Township or b) provide a benefit to the taxpayers of the Township.

It prohibits the below groups specifically:

Political parties or candidates • Political lobby groups/individuals • Groups/individuals attempting to persuade the public to adopt a particular view on a political issue • Advocacy, self-help and other groups/individuals solely dedicated to the political, personal and financial advancement of their members • Groups/individuals attempting to bring about or oppose changes in the law or government policy • Groups/individuals promoting a political doctrine • Advocacy, sponsorship or promotional groups/individuals (except those putting on a function/event to benefit an individual/s in need of charitable services)

The above list is not exhaustive it was only included some of them for context.

Committee directed staff to bring forward a report on hall rentals and rentals where rentals were waived;

- i) Asset Management Pilot Project Update - Annette continues to work with neighbouring Townships on shared services regarding asset management and we are close to a final proposal to be implemented this year.
- j) Canada Day preparations are underway. Fireworks, music, bouncy castles, face painters, cupcakes, RC cars, and the photobooth are all confirmed. Items for crafts and indoor/outdoor activities have been purchased;
- k) Taste of the Valley - Expressions of Interest for Taste of the Valley 2025-2026 will be due early September. I will submit an application. This supports to Townships Priority of "Enhance the BVT Brand" as it is related to the objective of "Spotlight on local businesses and events";
- l) Branding Brainstorm - The branding brainstorm meeting was on April 26. Committee was provided with the results from the survey. This supports the Townships Priority of "Enhance the BVT Brand" as it is related to the objective of "Improve our marketing assets".

Administrative Report Received.

CORRESPONDENCE

(A) Correspondence "A"

- 1. AMO Policy Update
- 2. AMO Watchfile May 9
- 3. AMO Watchfile May 16

(B) Correspondence "B"

- 1. Amenity Sharing MOU with School Boards
- 2. Unwilling Host for Windmills
- 3. Waive Ice Surface Rental Fee for Fundraiser Benefit Dance

(C) Correspondence "C"

- B.1 Committee provided staff direction to look into Sharing MOU with School Boards;
- B.3 Committee recommends supporting the request to lower the ice surface hall fee for a fundraising benefit dance on June 22, 2024 to \$150;

NEW/UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- (1)** Library Update – Brent Patrick updated Committee on the business of the Library. Circulation in April was the highest it's been in the month of April since 2019, with 1,910 checkouts. In 2019 there were 2,240 checkouts, and every year since then it has been less than 1,910. The library welcomed 12 new members this month, and currently has 1,693 active cardholders. Library visits were good, with 1,422 people coming through the doors in April, including 73 between 6 and 8 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Their busiest days were Wednesdays and Fridays (with the new Valley Sprouts group adding to the high statistics on Fridays);
- (2)** Museum – Murals are going up around the Village, they would like to have an official launch soon. The exhibits have been changed up for the season. They now have the new website up and running;
- (3)** June 5 Meeting Start Time – Committee recommends changing the meeting start time from 1:30pm to 3pm.

ESTABLISH NEXT MEETING DATE

The next Meeting will be held on Wednesday June 5, 2024 at 3pm.

MEDIA SESSION

CLOSED SESSION

MOVED BY **Brent Patrick**

THAT: Committee proceed in Closed Session in accordance with the Municipal Act 2001, section 239.2 to deal with the matters as indicated below:

(k) a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board;

Carried

MOVED BY **Tracey Sanderson**

THAT: Council moves out of Closed Session at 5:07 p.m. to rise and report that Council met to receive information and give staff direction regarding collective bargaining agreement and to approve minutes from April 16 2024.

Carried

CONCLUSION

MOVED BY **Brent Patrick**

THAT: the meeting adjourns at 5:08 p.m.

Carried

Jennifer Murphy, Chair

Annette Gilchrist, CAO