

**THE CORPORATION OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF BONNECHERE VALLEY  
MINUTES  
COMMITTEE MEETING  
TUESDAY NOVEMBER 19, 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/Clerk Annette Gilchrist  
Treasurer/Deputy CAO Sandra Barr**

**REGRETS**            **None**

**GALLERY**            **None**

**CALL TO ORDER    COMMITTEE MEETING**

Chair, Jennifer Murphy called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

**ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

**MOVED BY**            **Brent Patrick**

**THAT:** the agenda be accepted as amended with the addition of CAO Craig Kelly to the delegation. Carried

**PECUNIARY INTEREST OR GENERAL NATURE THEREOF**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOVED BY**            **Tracey Sanderson**

**That:** The Minutes of the Committee Meeting on November 5, 2024 be accepted as presented. Carried

**DELEGATIONS**

County of Renfrew Mesa Team - Director of Development and Property Jason Davis, Director of Community Services Andrea Patrick, and Chief Administrative Officer, Craig Kelly.

**REPORTS**

**Recreation & Culture**

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

- a) Paul Brown is looking to put up a banner for the Bonnechere Cup races with no charge. This is the list of banners we put up every year:
  - Bonnechere Cup
  - Woman's Assault Centre
  - Farmers Market
  - Madawaska Studio Tour
  - Bonnechere Inspired
- b) The tree lighting will be December 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30;
- c) The Legion banners will be taken down this month and the winter banners will go up in their place, as well as the lights on the bridge, with help from the Works Department;
- d) The park benches around town have been put away for the season;

- e) The Recreation Department would like to thank the Eganville Horticultural Society for decorating the planters around town this fall as well as for Christmas;
- f) Kelsey MacIsaac, our new Recreation Assistant started November 11<sup>th</sup>.
- g) We have a student hired to help move the nets for the EHL;
- h) EHL took 2 weeks off from ice rentals for the deer hunt;
- i) Eganville Eagles Day of Hockey will be on Saturday November 16<sup>th</sup>. All our teams have home games, 7 in total;
- j) Whitetail Golf Course has bought wall advertisement space;
- k) The Rotary Club once again will be taking the lead for the Christmas Parade which will be held on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. Entries will depart from the arena which will be open for registration;
- l) We have six events booked so far at the Eagles Nest. The Library is holding their fundraiser, BUPL Rocks, on November 16<sup>th</sup>. Township Christmas party is December 14<sup>th</sup>. Schmidt's Catering was awarded the dinner at a cost of \$28.50 per person plus HST.

*Recreation Report Received.*

### **Finance**

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

- a) The November 14, 2024 Provisional Budget Report was provided to Committee along with the Balance Sheet as of October 31, 2024;
- b) Calculated and billed out property tax Write Off's in the amount of \$2215.56 due to a legislative issue. In March 2021 the Province of Ontario amended legislation to reduce business education tax rates for taxable business properties. The consequence of this change, in relation to Payments in Lieu of Taxes, created an inconsistency between the treatment of taxable and Canada Post property within the province. Property owned by Canada Post Corporation is exempt from property taxes and eligible for Payments in Lieu of Taxes. For taxation years 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024, your application for Payments in Lieu of Taxes included information on the rates used to calculate the amount requested. These rates included a business education rate which was higher than the rate applicable to taxable property. Since Canada Post refuses to pay the higher education rate (that is retained by the municipality as per legislation) we have written off the difference in the rate for 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024;
- c) Mackillican & Associates were on site to do the 2024 interim audit on October 16 and 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024;
- d) We have received our 4<sup>th</sup> quarter OMPF Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund payment in October in the amount of \$368,750.
- e) Received notice of our 2025 OMPF funding. We will receive \$1,609,200 in 2025 which is up \$134,200 from 2024 (Increase of 9.0983%);
- f) Attended the Cunningham & Swan Municipal Law Seminar on October 23, 2024 at the Eganville Arena Eagles Nest. Topics covered included Planning Decisions after Bill 185, Employment Law, and a Legal Update. The presentation was fantastic with multiple case law examples;
- g) On October 29, 2024 Sandra attended a meeting at the County of Renfrew with our benefit Consultants, Cowan regarding our Manulife health and dental benefits. The renewal rates for 2024 will remain stable;
- h) The Township received \$31,318.83 from Aggregate Resources, which is up almost \$8000 from what was received in 2023;
- i) Committee scheduled the 2025 budget meeting date on Thursday March 20, 2025 with a second date of Thursday April 17, 2025, if necessary;
- j) The final instalment of the 2024 taxes was due on October 31, 2024. Taxes outstanding are up over \$120,000 from October 31, 2023. We have sent thirteen properties to the Township lawyers for final notice letters before proceeding with the tax sale process.

Taxes Receivable at Month End By Year:

	2022	2023	2024
January 31	466,542.67	447,036.86	552,948.25
February 28	403,254.57	386,536.33	487,248.74
March 31	1,970,057.42	1,968,135.26	2,161,455.97
April 30	1,634,670.40	1,696,205.80	1,767,809.93
May 31	853,788.43	876,567.66	973,660.25
June 30	538,777.35	557,308.55	644,325.89
July 31	444,899.84	461,226.64	546,377.17
August 31	2,198,547.56	2,320,108.62	2,532,521.63
September 30	1,852,980.64	1,978,111.86	2,183,350.64
October 31	1,033,875.27	1,122,271.92	1,243,046.09
November 30	694,373.27	802,736.66	
December 31	524,864.00	647,381.25	

- k) As an update to my previous report on a province wide reassessment there were some developments from the Fall Economic Statement (FES), [Building Ontario For You](#), which is focused on investments to address affordability for Ontarians. As property tax reassessments remain deferred pending the completion of the system-wide assessment and taxation review, the government is taking action to prioritize three areas identified through their consultations with stakeholders:

**Affordable Rental Housing** — Providing municipalities with the ability to reduce municipal tax rates on affordable rental housing through the creation of an optional property tax subclass. As well, the government will continue exploring potential assessment methodology changes for these properties.

**Student Housing** — Introducing a legislative amendment that would provide consistent treatment for university-operated student housing whether the institution's property tax status is governed by the *Assessment Act* or an institution-specific statute.

**Information Sharing** — Undertaking work with MPAC, municipalities, and other stakeholders to enhance information sharing and develop new digital solutions, including:

- Enabling broader municipal use of MPAC data to improve planning;
- Evaluating new tools to help municipalities manage their assessment base;
- Making assessment roll information available to the public through a centralized electronic platform; and
- Authorizing digital delivery of property assessment notices.

MPAC has actively contributed their insights and expertise as part of this review, and they are pleased to see some of their collaborative contributions reflected in this announcement. MPAC is dedicated to advancing these priorities through meaningful partnerships with municipalities.

*Financial Report Received.*

### **Administration**

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

- a) 2025 Committee and Council meeting schedule – Committee was provided with a calendar of meetings proposed for 2025 for consideration and approval. Annette proposed only one for January, July and August. She moved the Aprils meeting to avoid the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month which was proposed and approved last year for the month of October. In January 2025 Councillor John Epps becomes Deputy Mayor and will chair the Administration

Committee which meets the second Tuesday of the month except for the above referenced changes. Councillor Tracey Sanderson will chair the Public Works Committee which meets the first Tuesday of the month except for the above noted changes;

- b) Plans and Policies – Committee was provided with copies of the plans and policies required by the Province for 2024. These include the Accessibility Plan and Policy and the Energy Management Plan. Committee recommends that these be brought forward as presented to be passed by by-law at the Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 meeting;
- c) ROMA Delegation – Committee directed CAO Annette Gilchrist to apply to the following three ministries: Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Finance for delegations at the ROMA Conference.

**Ministry of Transportation** – Plow trucks vs tow trucks. This was requested at AMO. They denied the delegation last time but promised a meeting. Annette followed up with them regarding a meeting but have not received a reply.

Ministry of Transportation Number 2 – Province took over Hwy 174 and Gardiner and Don Valley Parkway – What about connecting links? – This could be joint with Renfrew and Madawaska Valley and Pembroke. 77 out of 444 municipalities have them. County is looking at others that justify uploading however these would then be downloaded to local tiers as we are responsible for connecting links. \$5.7 Million in competitive and conditional funding which does not include underground infrastructure such as water, sewer or storm elements is not enough to maintain these assets even if you are approved under the competitive process which is highly technical and cost municipalities just to apply. DVP has 90 lane km, 500 bridge decks and structures. Gardiner has 108 lane km with 32 bridges and structures. Hwy 174 has 108 lane km with 2 bridges and several structures. This is a total of 306 lane km and at least 534 structures. Connecting links across the province are a total of 352 km and 70 bridges. Request the Province to provide help to 77 municipalities versus the 2 municipalities of Toronto and Ottawa. Toronto and Ottawa have a combined population of 4 Million people and the 77 municipalities with Connecting Links have a combined population of approximately 2.2 Million.

**Ministry of Environment** - Recycling transition and rationalization for rural depots. Urban collection issues such as equipment must be less than 10 years old even if only used 2 days a week. Flexibility is needed for non-eligibles. Similar to policing very little control over levels of service. Cost is being covered by producers however if program is not convenient it will lead to less waste diversion and severely impact the municipalities ability to manage waste.

**Ministry of Finance** – Municipal Sustainability. 1% HST or other funding needed. Take back school boards so we don't have to hold their bad debts and give us tax room for infrastructure and operational needs. Rebate 100% of HST (which would be approximately 1% of our tax levy). Applications are due November 27<sup>th</sup>;

- d) Agreements – Committee was provided with a copy of an extension agreement for a lease that was approved in 2010. Committee directed staff to bring this forward as presented to be passed by by-law at the Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> 2024 meeting;
- e) The Sub Lease between the Museum and Our Space has been executed and proof of liability insurance has been received. The rent and utility payments have been established to ensure no increased cost to the Township and the rent is to be invested into capital improvements for the museum. The

Museum is going to provide us with a list of improvements to be made. The sublease expires April 30<sup>th</sup> 2025;

- f) We received a request from Bell Telecom to use a small corner of the property on John Street. Staff are recommending a similar lease to the one executed for Spring Creek Yard. The term proposed is from December 1<sup>st</sup> 2024 to May 31<sup>st</sup> 2025 in the amount of \$150 per month. It is a very small portion of the property. Committee directed staff to bring a lease forward with similar terms as the Tandem Lease of Spring Creek Yard to be passed by by-law at the Dec 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting;
- g) Election Act - The AMCTO working group put a lot of effort into the recommendations on the Election Act review and changes needed to the Municipal Elections Act. The most important aspect for Annette is public trust in the process. There are a lot of proposed recommendations that impact candidates themselves. Annette support most of these recommended changes and she has no opinion on some of them as they will not directly impact Bonnechere Valley. Annette recommends that council support this resolution as anything we can do to make the election process more transparent and accountable will sustain and hopefully boost public trust and participation in future elections;
- h) Since our last Council meeting CAO Annette Gilchrist met with Enbridge to analyze conversion of municipal buildings to natural gas where cost savings can be determined;
- i) Annette met with Algonquin College to continue discussions on a summer program for local municipalities to encourage attraction in the municipal sector;
- j) Annette attended a meeting on the rationalization of our depots for recycling, the county transportation master plan which is coming to its final stages and a ROMA Zone 6 update;
- k) For the remainder of November, Annette has a presentation for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs to the Northern Treasurers Association on Accountability, a Rural Transit meeting with our partners North Altona Wilberforce and Whitewater Region and an AMCTO Board of Directors meeting in Mississauga at the end of the month;
- l) Christmas Parade 2024 - The Rotary Club is taking the lead on the Christmas Parade. It will be held on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup> and will commence at 1pm. Those wishing to have a float or walk in the parade can register at the Township Office before December 6<sup>th</sup>;
- m) Interactive Career Expo 2025 - We received an email saying the applications for the Ontario Skills Trade Truck are backed up and we should hear back soon. When planning the career expo, we thought it would benefit the students to host the event before summer job hiring starts. We are proposing Friday, March 14<sup>th</sup> which is during March break. We have booked the Eagle's Nest. We would like to host from 10am-2pm. We will be contacting local employers to attend and will have career aptitude tests for attendees to take;
- n) Canada Day 2025 - Those who attended the youth summit wanted a rock-climbing wall, so staff obtained two quotes for bouncy castles from R-Jay's. One is like last year, and the other is like last year plus a rock-climbing wall. Committee agreed to a bouncy castle's and a rock-climbing wall for 2025, Total cost including HST and fees \$6724.14;
- o) Easter Egg Hunt 2025 - We had quite a few people show up very early, making it difficult to hold them off until it was time to start. They started a bit early, leaving those who showed up on time or a couple minutes late without much chocolate to hunt. We had to purchase more chocolate the day of and hand it out. This upcoming Easter Egg Hunt, staff would like to have it at McRae Park again but have them meet that the Geo-Trail parking lot and walk over to McRae Park when it is time for the hunt. This will avoid people starting their hunt early. This past year we had \$80 budgeted, and we spent \$129.24 for the additional chocolate, and still ran out. To have enough

- chocolate and plastic eggs, staff are recommending a \$200 budget for Easter Egg Hunt 2025 and Committee agreed;
- p) Emergency Management – The Emergency Management Exercise was completed on November 19, 2024 at the Eganville Arena.  
*Administrative Report Received.*

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

#### **(A) Correspondence "A"**

1. AMO Watchfile Nov 7
2. AMO Watchfile Nov 14
3. County Construction Update November 2024
4. County Council Summary October 2024

#### **(B) Correspondence "B"**

1. OPP Costs and Sustainable Funding
2. Provincial Projects and Excess Soil Management Practices
3. County of Renfrew Family and Children Services Letter and Resolution for Support
4. Food Bank Request

#### **(C) Correspondence "C"**

1. Establishment of Ontario Rural Road Safety Program
2. Fair Share and Redistribution of HST and Land Transfer Tax
3. Review and Amendments to the Municipal Elections Act Resolution

- B.1 Committee tabled the resolution for OPP Costs and Sustainable Funding;
- B.4 Committee agreed to the request of the Food Bank to have their door painted. Committee recommends that the Food Bank fundraise to pay for the painting;
- C.2 Committee recommends support of the Fair Share and Redistribution of HST and Land Transfer Tax;
- C.3 Committee recommends support of the resolution for Review and Amendments to the Municipal Elections Act;

### **NEW/UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- (1)** Library Update – Brent Patrick updated C;

### **ESTABLISH NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next Meeting will be held on Tuesday December 3, 2024 at 1:30 pm.

### **MEDIA SESSION**

### **CONCLUSION**

**MOVED BY**            **Brent Patrick**

**THAT:** the meeting adjourns at 3:23 p.m.

Carried

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Jennifer Murphy, Chair

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Annette Gilchrist, CAO/Clerk