

**Township of South-West Oxford
Council Minutes
October 17, 2023**

Members Present: Mayor: Mayor David Mayberry, Paul Buchner (Ward 1), Peter Ypma (Ward 2), Valerie Durston (Ward 3),
Councillors: George Way (Ward 4), Jim Pickard (Ward 5), Craig Gillis (Ward 6)

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Mary Ellen Greb, CAO/Deputy Clerk
Julie Middleton, Clerk/Deputy CAO
Adam Prouse, Works Superintendent
Brooke Crane, Treasurer
Nicole Chambers, Records Management Co-ordinator/Clerk's Assistant

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor David Mayberry and a quorum was present.

Motion to Accept Agenda

Resolution No. 1 Moved by Paul Buchner
Seconded by George Way

RESOLVED that the regular meeting agenda for the October 17th, 2023 meeting of council be approved.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

None.

Minutes

October 3rd, 2023 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Resolution No. 2 Moved by Jim Pickard
Seconded by Peter Ypma

RESOLVED that Report CAO 18-2023: Mount Elgin Cemetery Board – Additional Grant Request for 2024 be received as information.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

CAO 19-2023: Financial Analyst Position on the Township Grid

Chief Administrative Officer Mary Ellen Greb provided Council with a report to provide them with the recommended placement for the Financial Analyst position on the Township Grid. She advised that the Financial Analyst position is recommended to occupy Grade 5 on the Township grid. The position placement is in keeping with the responsibilities of the position, in comparison to similar positions of responsibility in the Township. Staff will be looking at internal processes to realign some responsibilities from the previous financial administration role to other finance administration staff to maximize the grade 5 level responsibilities. The Financial Analyst position is an internal promotion and no hiring will take place.

Resolution No. 6 Moved by Jim Pickard
 Seconded by Peter Ypma

APPROVED
RESOLVED that South-West Oxford Council receive Report CAO 19-2023: Financial Analyst Position on Township Grid as information;

AND FURTHER THAT the Council authorize the pay grid to be amended to include the position of Financial Analyst at the Grade 5 level.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

CAO 20-2023: Development Charges Study 2023 Costs

Chief Administrative Officer Mary Ellen Greb provided Council with a report to request approval from Council to transfer funds from the Development Charges Reserve to cover the 2023 invoices for the development charges study. She advised that previously, development charge studies were billed to lower tier municipalities at the end of the process. The current study is being billed throughout the process to keep expenses within the fiscal year that the work takes place. The Township did not budget for any expenses for this project in 2023, with the rationale that the project would be billed in 2024. The overall cost of the study will not change; however, it will be divided between 2023 and 2024 based on the work that is completed.

The Township received a billing for the work for the months of May, June and July in September 2023 totaling \$2,724.12. It is anticipated that further billings will be received prior to year-end. The 2024 budget will include the balance of the required funds not expended in 2023, with a transfer from the development charges reserve. It is anticipated that the 2023 and 2024 expenses for the study will not exceed \$33,000.

The Township will be planning to put funds away on an annual basis moving forward to cover the development charges study. It was discussed that if the Township does not participate in the development charge study, then the Township will not be able to increase the amounts charged that the Township collects as development charges to support future development. The Township currently collects development charges for administration, fire, roads and transportation and parks and recreation.

Resolution No. 7 Moved by Peter Ypma
 Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that Council receive Report CAO 20-2023: Development Charges Study 2023 Costs as information;

APPROVED

AND FURTHER THAT Council approves the transfer of funds from the Township Development Charges reserve to cover the 2023 invoices for the study.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Appointments (continued)

7:25 p.m. - Laurie Canham Kilby, Ingersoll Skating Club - 2024 Grant Presentation

Laurie Canham Kilby, on behalf of Ingersoll Skating Club, presented their 2024 grant request to Council. They have requested \$2,000 from the Township in 2024 to be used towards the cost of ice rentals. The organization pays approximately \$8,000 monthly for ice time. They offer skating programming for youth as young as 2 years old up to adults. Registration is slightly down this year (15%); however, ice costs are up. Approximately 10% of their registration is made up of South-West Oxford residents. They currently have approximately 96 registrants.

7:35 p.m. - Ingersoll District Nature Club - 2024 Grant Presentation

Jim Eager, on behalf of Ingersoll District Nature Club, presented their 2024 grant request to Council. They have requested \$3,000 from the Township in

2024. These funds will be used to cover part of the cost of the follow-up second year treatment of phragmites in and around the pond. The Township provided a grant in 2023 for the initial treatment. The 2024 grant will also assist in helping to cover the cost of lumber and hardware for replacement benches along the trail that have worn out. The organization experienced an unforeseen event and cost this year – several bird feeders were deliberately vandalized along the trail.

7:40 p.m. - 4-H Club - 2024 Grant Presentation

Christy, on behalf of Oxford County 4-H Association, presented their 2024 grant request to Council. 4-H is a youth development program. They have 148 registrants in 2023. They have requested \$500 from the Township in 2024 which will be used towards the purchase of a backdrop curtain to be used for photos at promotional events and to match their tent and table cover.

Christy asked if the Township if they would be interested in hosting a community event in 2024 at which they could promote their program. This will be discussed with the Engage and Inform Committee and the Mount Elgin Hall Board.

Staff Reports (continued)

CAO 21-2023: Financial Strategies for the Purchase of New Vehicles and Equipment

Chief Administrative Officer Mary Ellen Greb provided Council with a report to provide them with options for consideration, to manage the increasing cost of new vehicles and equipment for services provided by the Township of South-West Oxford. She explained that in the case of emergency vehicles, purchasers have an expectation that the life span will be a minimum of 20 years. The Township purchased a new pumper in 2022 (delivered in 2023) at a cost of \$568,400. The same type of vehicle is scheduled to be purchased in 2024 at an estimated cost of \$720,000. In order to maintain our process of utilizing reserves to pay for fire trucks the Township will need to dramatically increase the transfers on an annual basis (the estimated increase in the 2024 budget is \$100,000, with increases to take place in each of the following years).

She suggested that Council consider taking out a debenture for a portion of the purchase of costly vehicles/equipment to help spread the cost over time. This would not be done every time a high-end purchase is made. It would be dependent on the Township's fiscal position as well as the economy at the time of the purchase. She provided Council with a sample debenture schedule for \$600,000. She explained that when working through the Township budget staff will need to know whether Council is willing to consider

a debenture scenario. If needed, staff may include this proposal in the Township's 2024 draft budget document.

Members of Council discussed the possibility of debenturing vehicles purchased; however, they expressed concern with respect to the amount of interest that would be required to be paid – this increases the cost of the vehicles by approximately 10%. Council expressed a lack of support for debenturing a depreciating asset.

It was discussed that there is not enough money in reserve funds to meet the required replacement cycle needs for emergency service vehicles in accordance with NFPA requirement (replacement every 20 years). While the Township has transferred money to reserves for future capital costs each year, this hasn't been enough and has not kept up with the increasing costs of these items. Purchases have been delayed in the past because the Township didn't have enough funds and now the Township is faced with several vehicles that require replacement at the same time. It was also discussed that the cost of all types of vehicles are continuing to increase.

Council provided direction to staff to include the amount that is required to be transferred to reserve to meet the Township's replacement needs. Council will discuss this matter further as part of the 2024 budget deliberations process.

Resolution No. 8 Moved by Paul Buchner
Secinded by George Way

RESOLVED that Report CAO 21-2023: Financial Strategies for the Purchase of New Vehicles and Equipment be received as information.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

7:55 p.m. - Ingamo Homes - 2024 Grant Presentation

It was noted that a representative from Ingamo Homes was not scheduled to attend. Their 2024 grant application is in follow up to their presentation to Council at the September 5th, 2023 Council meeting. Ingamo Homes is requesting \$10,000 from the Township in 2024. The funds would be used towards ongoing efforts related to advocacy and prevention work in relation to gender-based violence.

Staff Reports (continued)

CAO 22-2023: Hall, Parks and Recreation Staff Position Proposal

Chief Administrative Officer Mary Ellen Greb provided Council with a report to bring forward information from the Township's Hall, Park and Recreation Subcommittee, as well as a draft job description for a new proposed staff position. She stated that a subcommittee was formed to examine the support structure for the hall, park and recreation committees and whether there is justification to consider a dedicated staff person to deal with hall/park/recreational matters. Currently these matters are assigned to the building department or public works. It is anticipated that the demand for these services may increase over the next few years. The Township may also be called upon to take over bookings for facilities (possibly including showing renters through the halls, collecting money, etc.). Programming would not be a responsibility of the proposed position.

The subcommittee agreed that there is a need for a dedicated staff person to deal with hall/park/recreational matters. It is anticipated that the responsibilities currently being undertaken by existing staff, as well as increasing maintenance requests by the committees would be transferred to the proposed new position to provide a more proactive approach to the operation of Township facilities. Some consideration may be given to taking grass cutting in-house when the current contract expires; and/or if/when the Township is no longer responsible for the provision of garbage/recycling collection. This may come forward as a separate staff report to council sometime in 2024. If council wishes to consider moving forward with this proposed new staff position, the financial implications will be calculated and included in the 2024 draft budget. Consideration may also be given to budgeting for only a portion of the year (i.e., 6 months).

Members of Council shared the following comments in relation to the proposal:

- Overall concerns with other budget pressures going into the 2024 budget deliberation process. The Township can't afford the new staff position at this time.
- The position has been presented as a management level position which is not what Council intended initially when the subcommittee was established.
- There is some support for the proposal – there has been an increased demand on staff when it comes to Township's facilities, maintenance, repair and operations.
- Committee volunteer membership is aging and they are not able to take on the same level of responsibilities. Expectations are changing.

- The Township needs an individual that will do the required work (i.e., ongoing maintenance and repairs), not just someone that will oversee the work. It was discussed that the individual would be expected to do as many of the required tasks as possible.
- It is unclear at this time what the time commitment will be for the various jobs that come up and are needed at the halls.
- Hall boards don't all have the same level of volunteer involvement. The hall boards are losing members.

Appointments (continued)

8:15 p.m. - Mary Jane Phillips, Co-Founder/Director - Cycles of Life for Supportive Transitional Living - 2024 Grant Presentation

Mary Jane Phillips, on behalf of Cycles of Life for Supportive Transitional Living, presented their 2024 grant request to Council. They have requested \$5,000 from the Township in 2024. These funds will be used to purchase items that are no longer being donated to the organization to provide food support to people within the community. She advised Council that they have had over 22,000 visits to the tables within Ingersoll, Tillsonburg and Woodstock so far this year (this includes men, women and children). It was noted that the amount of donations received has changed with the recent cost of living increases. Grant funds are proposed to be used towards purchasing required items and gas to get items to their destinations. The organization has not received grant funding from the Township in the past.

Ms. Phillips advised that she has approached Ingersoll for funding as well as South-West Oxford. She has not submitted a request to the Town of Tillsonburg yet.

In response to an inquiry from Councillor Ypma, Ms. Phillips advised that approximately 60% of visits to the tables are new faces. She explained that the organization is different than the Helping Hand Food Bank because people are not required to have an address or disclose their income – at the Helping Hand Food Bank individuals are limited to a certain number of visits.

Councillor Durston commended Ms. Phillips for the work that they are doing and stated that members of the community that utilize the services are overjoyed at receiving toothbrushes or socks and enjoy the conversations they have at the table – they feel like they are a part of the community and that they are accepted.

8:25 p.m. - Steve Gradish, Tillsonburg Minor Hockey/South Oxford Minor Hockey - 2024 Grant Presentation

Steve Gradish, on behalf of Tillsonburg Minor Hockey, presented their 2024 grant request to Council. They have requested \$2,000 from the Township in 2024. The funds will be used towards ice rentals, specialized instructors for skills development and any necessary teaching aids and equipment. Approximately 10% of registration comes from the Township of South-West Oxford each year. Annual registration cost for each player is \$660.

Mr. Gradish also presented the 2024 grant request for South Oxford Minor Hockey (level A division). They are requesting \$2,000 to be used towards player and skills development. He explained that this is a higher level of competition; as such, they have hired a full-time skills development company to work with the players. The cost is approximately \$1,800 to play at this level for the season.

Discussion took place regarding Ontario Minor Hockey Association's rules and regulations with respect to boundaries and the various levels of play.

8:35 p.m. - Don Taylor, Sweaburg Parks and Recreation - 2024 Grant Presentation

Don Taylor, on behalf of Sweaburg Parks and Recreation, presented their draft 2024 operating budget and capital plan to Council. He advised that in 2024, the committee would like to install a Pickleball Court at an estimated cost of \$27,000. The court is proposed to be located at the Tommy Williams Park – west of the pavilion.

With respect to the proposed operating budget, Mr. Taylor advised that repairs to the baseball diamond are also needed (clay and leveling) in 2024. The foul ball safety net is also in need of repair.

Staff Reports (continued)

CAO 22-2023: Hall, Parks and Recreation Staff Position Proposal (continued)

Chief Administrative Officer Mary Ellen Greb suggested that staff take Council's comments into consideration and that they report back with a proposal for a more 'hands-on' position with the potential to evolve going forward.

Members of Council shared the following additional comments:

- Concerns in relation to the required education experience – 'related experience' may be more appropriate to include in the job description.

- Concern was raised with respect to lack of clarity when it comes to who to contact at the Township office when issues do arise.
- The proposed position is about preserving our volunteer hall board members – there is concern that we will continue to lose volunteers.
- Upkeep at some of the Township halls has not been done well and it shows. This is about maintaining Township facilities in a way that members of the community will want to visit and use.
- Volunteers can't be expected to respond when a toilet overflows.
- More staff support will allow volunteer hall board members to focus on programming and community events and not ongoing maintenance.
- Council also doesn't want to discourage members of the community from doing this type of work if they don't want to do it.

Resolution No. 10 Moved by Paul Buchner
 Seconded by Valerie Durston

RESOLVED that Council receive Report CAO 22-2023: Hall, Parks and Recreation Staff Position Proposal as information;

AND FURTHER THAT Council provide direction to staff to continue to work on the proposal and review it based on the feedback received from Council and that a follow up report be brought back for further consideration and discussion.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

TR 01-2023: 2024 Budget Public Meetings Schedule and Direction

Treasurer Brooke Crane provided Council with a report to seek Council's direction on the 2024 Draft Budget guidelines to ensure the budget is consistent with Council's objectives and priorities. It seeks general direction for an annual tax levy incremental increase. This report also recommends a timetable of the 2024 Budget meetings for Council's consideration.

Councillor Gillis advised that he is not available to meet the week of November 28th. Mayor Mayberry encouraged Council and staff to aim to have the budget completed at the December 5th Council meeting.

Resolution No. 11 Moved by Jim Pickard
 Seconded by George Way

RESOLVED that Council receive Report TR01-2023: 2024 Budget Public Meetings Schedule and Direction as information;

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorizes an additional Special Council Meeting to take place on Tuesday, November 28th at 6:30 p.m. on a tentative basis.

AND FURTHER THAT Council authorizes a change to the start time of the Regular Council meeting scheduled on Tuesday, November 21st, 2023 to begin at 6:30 p.m.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Discussion Items

Timing of Tax Bills/Due Dates (Councillor Paul Buchner)

Discussion took place regarding the timing of tax due dates. Chief Administrative Officer Mary Ellen Greb explained that there are many options that are available to residents for payments on a quarterly or monthly basis in addition to preauthorized payments. She advised that some individuals pay weekly via electronic payment through online banking. The prescribed dates give the Township the greatest amount of flexibility when it comes to month end and additional payments coming in after the due date.

Agenda Items & Correspondence

#176 - Township of Zorra Correspondence/Staff Report re: Road Authority Jurisdiction

Resolution No. 12 Moved by Peter Ypma
 Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford provide direction to staff to send a letter of support for item #176.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

#177 - LPRCA Board of Directors Meeting Minutes of September 6, 2023

Resolution No. 13 Moved by Jim Pickard
 Seconded by George Way

RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive agenda and

correspondence item #177 as information and that they be noted and filed.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Accounts Payable Report

October 17th, 2023 - Accounts Payable Report

Resolution No. 14 Moved by George Way
Seconded by Peter Ypma

RESOLVED that the following Accounts be approved for payment:

Accounts Payable for October 1 st to October 14 th , 2023	\$328,662.71
Bi-Weekly Payroll #20	\$50,044.03
Total:	\$378,706.74

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Information Items & Correspondence

#178 - Town of Cobourg Resolution re: Illegal Land Use Enforcement

#179 - Town of Cobourg Resolution re: Catch and Release Justice in Ontario

#180 - Township of Howick Resolution re: Catch and Release Justice in Ontario

#181 - Township of West Lincoln Resolution re: Challenges faced by Smaller Developers in Ontario Communities

#182 - Township of Alnwick/Haldimand Resolution re: Establishing a Guaranteed Livable Income

Resolution No. 15 Moved by Paul Buchner
Seconded by Valerie Durston

RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive information and correspondence items #178 to #182 inclusive as information and that they be noted and filed.

RESOLVED that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford receive the following minutes as information:

- Engage and Inform Committee Minutes of September 6th, 2023;
- Environment and Energy Innovation Committee Minutes of September 6th, 2023;
- SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee Minutes of September 5th, 2023.

Discussion on the motion:

A correction was noted in the Engage and Inform Committee meeting minutes – the Winter Walk for Warmth is scheduled on February 24th, 2024.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Council Round Table

Council members shared updates from their respective wards and community involvement. Salford Pork Chop Supper will take place on November 7th, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. at the Salford Community Centre. Mount Elgin Roast Pork Dinner is coming up on Sunday, November 5th (eat-in or take-out is available). Pickleball is running again every Wednesday from now until Christmas at the Mount Elgin Community Centre – this will pick up again in January. Planning for Christmas in the Village (Dereham Centre) is underway. Rural Oxford Economic Development Corporation presented their draft budget with a proposed 20% increase. Sweaburg Lions Club received a grant for clean-up at the Trillium Trail. Old Fashioned Christmas (Sweaburg) is scheduled on December 2nd, 2023. Beachville Museum budget will be coming forward to Council on November 7th. Beachville Parks and Recreation has completed their draft budget – this will come to Council on November 7th. The Beachville Parks and Recreation Committee will be hosting their Halloween dance on October 28th, 2023 at the Beachville Legion. Mayor Mayberry has spoken with the County and Oxford MP Arpan Kanna regarding the railway tracks in Beachville on Zorra line – he will follow up on this matter again.

CAO Mary Ellen Greb provided Council with details of the year-to-date construction value as at the same time last year – this is slightly down in 2023.

Confirmatory By-law

By-Law No. 61-2023 - To confirm all actions and proceedings of Council (October 17th, 2023)

Resolution No. 19 Moved by Paul Buchner
 Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that By-law 61-2023 being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council held Tuesday, October 17th, 2023 be read a first, second and third time this 17th day of October, 2023.

AND FURTHER THAT the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the By-law and affix the corporate seal.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Adjournment

Resolution No. 20 Moved by Jim Pickard
 Seconded by Valerie Durston

RESOLVED that there being no further business, the Council meeting be adjourned at 9:40 p.m. to meet again on Tuesday, November 7th, 2023 at 9:00 a.m.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

CLERK: Julie Middleton

MAYOR: David Mayberry

This document is available in alternate formats upon request.