



MUNICIPALITY OF NORTH MIDDLESEX

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

The Electronic Regular Meeting of the Council of the Municipality of North Middlesex was held on Wednesday May 6, 2020 under the provisions of Section 238 (3.3) and 238 (3.4) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* as amended, without physically being present at 229 Parkhill Main Street, Parkhill.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Ropp called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with a quorum present by way of livestream on the North Middlesex You Tube Channel.

2. ROLL CALL

Mayor Brian Ropp

Deputy Mayor Adrian Cornelissen

Councillor Ward One – Doreen McLinchey

Councillor Ward Two – Joan Nichol

Councillor Ward Three – Gord Moir

Councillor Ward Four – John Keogh

Councillor Ward Five – Andrew Hemming

CAO/Director of Operations – Jonathon Graham

Clerk Jackie Tiedeman

Director of Economic Development and Community Services – Mike Barnier

Infrastructure Supervisor, Jonathon Lampman

Treasurer, Tracy Johnson

Fire Chief, Greg Vandenheuvel (absent)

3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST (in writing) - None

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

MOTION #090/2020

MOIR/NICHOL: That the April 8th Special and Emergency Meeting Minutes be approved as presented.

CARRIED

5. PUBLIC MEETINGS (Postponed until a later date to be determined)

6. DELEGATION (Postponed until a later date to be determined)

7. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

a. Jackie Tiedeman, Clerk – Stop Up and Close portion of road allowance in former McGillivray Township

MOTION #091/2020

NICHOL/HEMMING: That Council receive the report regarding “Stop up and Close Road Allowance in the former Township of McGillivray” and

That the By-law be considered for all readings in order that staff and the client may proceed with finalization of the land transfer documentation; and

Further that Council approve a 50/50 cost share of the financial obligation of legal fee's required to finalize this land transaction.

CARRIED

b. Jackie Tiedeman, Clerk – COVID 19 – Land Use Planning Updates

Staff advised Council that the preferred option within this recommendation would be to continue with the pause in processing of planning applications under present conditions. Staff assured that they will continue with ongoing monitoring of conducting public meetings electronically and would be ready to recommend changes to that pause when appropriate to do so. In addition, staff would be recommending that when the order is lifted that Council could consider accommodating more planning applications at all council meetings rather than once per month as well as the potential for adding meetings to the summer schedule if deemed necessary.

MOTION #092/2020

CORNELISSEN/HEMMING: That Council receive the report entitled “COVID 19 related Land Use Planning Changes”; and

That Council continue with the pause on any consideration of planning applications at the present time until a reopening plan of services has been provided by the Province in regards to planning applications. This will also allow staff an opportunity to evaluate how the required public input will work with respect to the electronic meeting process, which is currently being used for Council Meetings. Staff will continue to work with applicants to facilitate complete application that would be ready for processing once a public meeting method has been established whether it be electronically or traditional method. This may include a provision for accommodating several planning applications on upcoming agendas outside of the normal routine.

CARRIED

c. Vic Stellingwerff, Chief Building Official – Building Department Activities up to March 31, 2020

MOTION #093/2020

MCLINCHEY/MOIR: That Council receives the Building Activity Report for January – March 2020 as information only.

CARRIED

d. Jonathan Lampman, Infrastructure Supervisor – Dixon Drainage Works – Appoint Engineer

MOTION #094/2020

NICHOL/HEMMING: That Council receive this report and appoint R. Dobbin Engineering Inc. as Engineer to the Dixon Drainage Works.

CARRIED

e. Jonathan Lampman, Infrastructure Supervisor – Watson Drain Improvement

MOTION #095/2020

MOIR/KEOGH: That Council receive the request for improvement to the Watson Drain under Section 78 of the *Drainage Act RSO 1990*.

CARRIED

f. Jonathon Graham, CAO/Director of Operations – Appointment of CBO Services from Middlesex Centre on a temporary basis

Mr. Graham provided a brief update on the process for hiring the new Chief Building Official under the new Shared Services Model with Southwest Middlesex and Adelaide Metcalfe. In the meantime, it is necessary to put in place this contingency plan to ensure there is no disruption of building department services.

MOTION #096/2020

MCLINCHEY/CORNELISSEN: That Council approve the agreement and retention of Middlesex Centre for the services of Chief Building Official (CBO) for a period of six (6) months.

CARRIED

g. Jonathon Graham, CAO/Director of Operations – Evolta Electronic Building Permit Services

Several questions were asked by Council on the new system and responded to by staff. Mr. Arnie Marsman, CBO from Middlesex Centre, also had the opportunity to provide further insight into the new software based upon his direct usage in his municipality. The software program is also referred to as “Cloud Permitting”. There was concern expressed with how building permits will be received for those that are not inclined with technology or just don’t have access to the internet. Staff assured Council that paper applications cannot be refused and staff would work with individual needs as required.

After careful consideration, the following motion was introduced:

MOTION #097/2020

MCLINCHEY/MOIR: That Council approve the undertaking and implementation of an electronic building permit application/submission process by the 3rd party contracted service of Evolta/Cloud Permits

And that staff be directed to evaluate and report back to Council prior to the six month “no obligation” Evolta trial period ends and assess value and uptake of use.

CARRIED

8. PASSING OF ACCOUNTS

Compilation of accounts from March 26 – April 29, 2020 in the amount of \$884,956.19

MOTION #098/2020

NICHOL/HEMMING: Be it resolved that the following Bills and Accounts be approved

for payment:

General Cheques \$152,057.70

Direct Deposit \$518,403.68

On-line/PAP \$213,998.59

Cemetery Cheques \$496.22

CARRIED

9. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Lake Huron Primary Water Supply Joint Mgmt Board (Cr. Hemming) Next Meeting June 4th.

b. ABCA (Deputy Mayor Cornelissen) Board of Directors Meeting April 23, 2020 – Deputy Mayor Cornelissen advised that the tree planting program will still proceed as planned.

c. BWRA (Cr. McLinchey) Board of Directors Meeting March 26, 2020

d. EDAC (Cr. Moir) Cancelled

e. LSAC – (Cr. Nichol) Cancelled

f. Recreation Committee (Cr. Hemming) Cancelled

g. Water/Wastewater Committee (Cr. Moir) Cancelled

h. Policies Review Committee (Cr. Nichol) Cancelled

i. Fire Committee (Cr.Keogh) Cancelled

j. OCWA Client Advisory Board (Jonathon Graham)

10. CORRESPONDENCE

a. Watson & Associates – Comments on Draft Regulation – changes to Development Charges Act
(action: receive and file)

b. North Middlesex Community Policing Minutes February 2020
(action: receive and file)

Cr. Nichol requested (on behalf of the Committee) that the speed radar be placed on Queen St/West Corner Drive – Ailsa Craig. CAO Jonathon Graham advised he will make the arrangements for this.

c. Ontario Clean Water Agency Client Update – April 20, 2020
(action: receive and file)

d. Solicitor General – Update on mandatory Community Safety and Wellbeing Plan
(action: receive and file)

e. Grey County – Motion Support regarding exemption 100% exemption of excise tax on 100% Canadian wine
(action: receive and file)

f. Town of Midland – Council request direct payment of federal funds to Municipalities to waive property taxes for the year 2020
(action: receive and file)

g. Town of Kingsville – council request for electricity billing relief during COVID 19
(action: receive and file)

h. Wellington County – Committee Report on Farm Property Class Tax Rate Programme
(action: receive and file)

i. Township of Mapleton – request Province to review the Farm Property Class Tax Rate Programme

MOTION #099/2020

CORNELISSEN/KEOGH: That the Council of the Municipality of North Middlesex hereby supports the motion from the Township of Mapleton as follows:

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario implemented changes to property assessment and introduced taxation reform which came into effect in 1998;

AND WHEREAS prior to 1998 farm properties were subject to taxation at the base residential tax rate and qualified farmers applied annually to the province to be reimbursed 75% of the farm portion of the taxes paid to the local municipality; AND

WHEREAS the province changed the method of delivering farmer's rebates by creating the Farm Property Class Tax Rate Programme under the jurisdiction of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA);

AND WHEREAS rather than apply annually and wait for property tax rebates, the delivery of the programme shifted to local municipal governments and onto the property tax system;

AND WHEREAS eligible farmland assessment values are now locally subsidized by 75% of their full current value assessment (CVA) to produce a lower weighted assessment base which is used for tax rate setting purposes;

AND WHEREAS the effect of the locally subsidized weighted assessment shifts an increased burden of tax onto all other property classes within the municipality;

AND WHEREAS these taxation reforms were originally supposed to be revenue neutral and offset by funding from the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund (OMPF) and its predecessor the Community Reinvestment Fund (CRF);

AND WHEREAS the province has been reducing support from the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund while the cost of the farm tax rebate programme is continuously increasing;

AND WHEREAS an economically competitive agricultural industry provides affordable food and agricultural products to all Ontarians and is a provincial objective that should be cost shared amongst all of its citizens;

AND WHEREAS the cost of this programme disproportionately falls upon property taxpayers in rural municipalities;

AND WHEREAS higher property taxes in rural municipalities is creating economic competitiveness issues between rural and urban municipalities;

AND WHEREAS the province hasn't undertaken a review of this programme since it was implemented in 1998;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Township of Mapleton requests that: 1. The Province of Ontario undertake a review of the Farm Property Tax Class Rate Programme to determine: a. The appropriateness of the cost of the Farm Property Tax Class Rate Programme falling disproportionately amongst rural residential and business property owners when the benefit of an economically competitive agricultural industry and affordable food and agricultural products is a provincial objective that should be

shared amongst all taxpayers in Ontario; b. The adequacy of funding being provided to rural municipalities to offset the cost of the Farm Property Tax Class Rate Programme; c. The differences between the amount of property taxes paid in rural and urban municipalities and the root causes of those differences; d. Economic competitiveness concerns with disproportionately higher average property taxes being paid in rural municipalities; e. Other methods of delivering the farm tax rebate programme to farmland owners where the cost can be shared province-wide.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this motion be sent to Hon. Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, Hon. Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Hon. Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance, Hon. Ernie Hardeman, Minister of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs, MPP Randy Pettapiece, Hon. Ted Arnott, all Ontario Municipalities, Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) and Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).

CARRIED

j. Middlesex London Health Unit - Monthly Board of Health Update (February & April)
(action: receive and file)

Several motions of support were received by email since the last council agenda regarding a variety of matters as a result of COVID. Proposed actions within the motions have since been enacted by the Province (ex. including community gardens as essential services, waiving restrictions to allow for quorum during electronic meetings etc reduction of peak rate charges) therefore have been filed.

11. OTHER OR URGENT BUSINESS

a. Jonathan Lampman, Infrastructure Supervisor – Updated Council on the status of the Beechwood Bridge project. After careful consideration of the RFP documents, he advised that the Engineering Consulting Services will be Spriet Associates for this project.

b. Jonathon Graham, CAO/Director of Operations – Mr. Graham explained Natural Gas Expansion Program opportunity that Council could consider applying for. The purpose of the program is to further increase access to natural gas by making financial support available for new expansion projects. This program offers an opportunity to drive economic development and enhance the quality of life and prosperity of families and businesses across Ontario. Enbridge Gas is proposing to work together to bring natural gas to unserved communities and they would submit the project to the Ontario Energy Board for funding consideration. It was explained that a motion of Council is required to

initiate the first step in the process. Mr. Graham advised that he had worked with the Mayor and Mr. Barnier to come up with a few target areas for consideration in the municipality that would be considered readily accessible for expansion. It was also noted that the chance for being accepted into the program are very low however it was felt that the Municipality should at least test the waters.

Several questions were asked by Council and responded to by staff. The following motion was then brought forward for consideration:

**MOTION #100/2020
NICHOL/MCLINCHEY**

WHEREAS the Municipality of North Middlesex is committed to ensuring that when there is opportunity to seek infrastructure upgrades for its residents that it responds to these potential project expansion and/or upgrades whenever it is viable and financially feasible to do so; and

WHEREAS the Municipality of North Middlesex has identified some initial readily accessible areas within the boundaries of the community that do not currently have access to natural gas as an alternative source of energy; and

WHEREAS the Council of the Municipality of North Middlesex deems it appropriate to hereby seek Enbridge Gas Inc. support in undertaking the application process for the Support for Natural Gas Expansion within the Boundary Limits of the Municipality of North Middlesex via the following corridor(s):

- **County Road #81 from Mount Carmel Drive to West Corner Drive**
- **County Road #81 from Elginfield Road (County Road 17) to Centre Road/Townsend Line Intersection**
- **Argyle Road (extension) from Bear Creek Drive to Nairn Road (County Rd 17)**

WHEREAS the Council of the Municipality of North Middlesex is aware that in order to support project economics that Enbridge Gas Inc. will apply a 23 cent/m³ System Expansion Surcharge to all customers connected through the proposed project for a defined period of time of up to 40 years as a contribution toward recovery of the cost of the proposed project; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the limits as identified above be included on Enbridge Gas' list of projects being proposed to the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) for consideration for financial support through the Natural Gas Expansion Program

CARRIED

12.COMMUNICATIONS (including County Council)

Mr. Graham advised that the Provincial Emergency Order has been extended to May 18th. Most administrative staff continue to work from home at the present time. In the meantime, senior staff will be working on a return to work plan in order to be ready for when the order is lifted. The Municipality will likely be following the lead set by the County of Middlesex in this regard with respect to timing. Staff are also working very closely with the Library to ensure continuity within the Shared Services Building as well as the facility in Ailsa Craig.

Deputy Mayor Cornelissen reminded Council that the County will be providing their annual Warden and CAO visit electronically on May 7th a 1:00 p.m.

AMO conference has been officially cancelled.

The Clerk advised that the scheduled May 20 Regular Meeting will be cancelled due to being under Provincial Emergency Order. She advised that the next meeting would be June 3 at 6:00 p.m. As the provisions for holding an Electronic Meeting with no physical presence is allowed under the Emergency Orders the format for June 3 may be changed accordingly.

13.CLOSED MEETING (UNDER SECTION 239 OF THE *MUNICIPAL ACT*)

None

14. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS ARISING FROM CLOSED MEETING

None

15.READING OF BY-LAWS

By-law #36 of 2020 – Repeal Certain Appointment (MLEO – Vic Stellingwerff)

By-law #37 of 2020 – to authorize the execution of an agreement for services under the Building Code Act and appoint Acting Chief Building Officials from Middlesex Centre (this By-law also repeals the appointment of Vic Stellingwerff who recently retired)

By-law #38 of 2020 – Establish Tax Rates for 2020

By-law #39 of 2020- Stop up and Close portion of road allowance in McGillivray Township

By-law #40 of 2020 Confirming

MOTION #100/2020

MCLINCHEY/MOIR: That By-laws #36-40 of 2020 be read a first and second time

CARRIED

MOTION #101/2020

HEMMING/NICHOL: That By-laws #36-40 of 2020 be read a third time and final time

CARRIED

16.ADJOURNMENT

MOTION #103/2020

MCLINCHEY/KEOGH: That the meeting adjourn at 7:00 p.m.

CARRIED

MAYOR

CLERK