

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF MATTAWA

The minutes of the Regular Meeting held Monday February 12, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the Dr. S.F. Monestime Council Chambers.

Council Present: Mayor Raymond A. Bélanger
Deputy Mayor Mathew Gardiner
Councillor Dexture Sarrazin
Councillor Fern Levesque
Councillor Loren Mick (online)
Councillor Garry Thibert

Staff Present: Paul Laperriere, Interim CAO/Treasurer
Amy Leclerc, Municipal Clerk/Revenue Services Clerk

*When a recorded vote is requested and the minutes indicate the recorded vote was "Unanimous" it means all Councillors present and noted above voted in favour unless otherwise indicated.

1. Meeting Called to Order

Meeting Called to Order by Mayor Bélanger at 6:00 p.m.

2. Announce Electronic Participants

Clerk announced that Councillor Mick was participating virtually and one member of the public was online.

3. Adoption of Agenda

3.1 To Adopt the agenda as presented or amended

Resolution Number 24-21

Moved by Deputy Mayor Mathew Gardiner

Seconded by Councillor Dexture Sarrazin

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the regular meeting agenda dated Monday February 12, 2024 be adopted.

CARRIED – unanimous

4. Disclosures of a Conflict of Interest

Councillor Sarrazin declared a conflict on agenda item # 10.4 and Deputy Mayor Gardiner declared a conflict on agenda item # 10.3

5. Presentations and Delegations

6. Adoption of Minutes

6.1 Regular Meeting of January 8, 2024

6.2 Special Meeting of January 31, 2024

6.3 To Adopt the minutes as presented or amended

Resolution Number 24-22

Moved by Deputy Mayor Mathew Gardiner
Seconded by Councillor Dexture Sarrazin

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council adopt the minutes of the Regular Meeting of Monday January 8, 2024 and the Special Meeting of Wednesday January 31, 2024.

CARRIED – unanimous

7. Notice of Motions

7.1 Volunteer Firefighter Tax Credit – Support Motion

Resolution Number 24-23

Moved by Councillor Fern Levesque
Seconded by Deputy Mayor Mathew Gardiner

WHEREAS Canada has 90,000 volunteer firefighters who provide fire and all hazard emergency services to their communities; in addition, approximately 8,000 essential search and rescue volunteers respond to thousands of incidents every year; and

WHEREAS many of these individuals receive some form of pay on call, an honorarium or are given some funding to cover expenses, but they do not draw a living wage from firefighting; and

WHEREAS without volunteer firefighters and search and rescue volunteers, thousands of communities in Canada would have no fire and emergency response coverage; and

WHEREAS in 2013 the Federal Government initiated a tax credit recognizing these individuals, and calling on the Federal Government to increase this tax credit from \$3,000 to \$10,000; and

WHEREAS volunteer firefighters account for 71% of Canada's total firefighting essential first responders;

- The tax code of Canada currently allows volunteer firefighters and search and rescue volunteers to claim a \$3,000 tax credit if 200 hours of volunteer services were completed in a calendar year;
- This works out to a mere \$450 per year, which we allow these essential volunteers to keep of their own income from their regular jobs, \$2.25 an hour;
- If they volunteer more than 200 hours, which many do, this tax credit becomes even less;
- These essential volunteers not only put their lives on the line and give their time, training and efforts to Canadians, but they also allow cities and municipalities to keep property taxes lower than if paid services were required;
- It would also help retain these volunteers in a time when volunteerism is decreasing.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council of the Corporation of the Town of Mattawa call upon the Government of Canada to support Bill C-310 and enact amendments to subsections 118.06 (20) and 118.07 (2) of the Income Tax Act in respect of rescue volunteer services from \$3,000 to \$10,000;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this resolution be shared with the Association of Fire Chiefs of Ontario, Association of Municipalities of Ontario and all Ontario municipalities.

CARRIED – unanimous

7.2 Excessive Noise from Engine Brakes – Support Motion

Resolution Number 24-24

Moved by Councillor Garry Thibert

Seconded by Councillor Fern Levesque

WHEREAS excessive noise resulting from the operation of moving vehicles falls under the jurisdiction of the Highway Traffic Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8. (“Highway Traffic Act”) which is enforced by provincially appointed officers; and

WHEREAS municipalities, including the Town of Mattawa, have received complaints from residents regarding noises associated with the use of engine retarder brakes on heavy vehicles; and

WHEREAS the Ministry of Transportation recommends the use of engine braking in certain circumstances, such as the downgrade located on McConnell Street to avoid overheating brakes, and as a form of backup brake if brakes fail; and

WHEREAS a higher engine noise is typically emitted for a short period of time (e.g. ten (10) to thirty (30) seconds), depending on the vehicle’s speed and vehicles may make a loud “chattering” or “jackhammer” exhaust noise when this braking system is engaged; and

WHEREAS this noise can be amplified if the vehicle has no muffler or an improper muffling system; and

WHEREAS noise emissions from commercial vehicles form part of the Ministry of Transportation’s inspection process; and

WHEREAS installation of “courtesy” signs that request the drivers to limit the use of loud compression style brakes are difficult to enforce and there is evidence of these types of signs not being beneficial.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Province of Ontario be requested to enhance enforcement for deficient muffler systems to address concerns around excessive and unnecessary noise from engine brakes;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this motion be forwarded to Premier Doug Ford, the Minister of Transportation, MPP Vic Fedeli, MP Anthony Rota and Association of Municipalities.

CARRIED – unanimous

8. Correspondence

8.1 Mattawa & Area Police Services Board – New Board Composition for 2024

Council spoke on correspondence item # 8.1 and will provide a motion to appoint Councillor Ross as the current representative of the Town of Mattawa.

8.2 Todd Doherty, MP – 988 Crisis Line

Council spoke on correspondence item # 8.2 and will be supported at the next meeting.

8.3 AMO – Policy Update on Social & Economic Prosperity Review

Council spoke on correspondence item # 8.3 and will be supported at the next meeting.

8.4 FONOM – Motion for Consideration on Social & Economic Prosperity Review

Council spoke on correspondence item # 8.4 and will be supported at the next meeting that will encompass both item # 8.3 & 8.4.

8.5 Luce Zeus – Changes to Council Agenda Format

Council spoke on correspondence item # 8.5

8.6 Nipissing East Mayors – Letter to Minister of Long-Term Care on Cassellholme

Council spoke on correspondence item # 8.6

8.7 FONOM – Support for Changes to Ontario Health & Safety Act

8.8 Embridge Gas Inc. – Future of Natural Gas in Area

8.9 NBMCA – Drinking Water Source Protection 2nd Notice of Draft Proposed Updates

Council spoke on correspondence item # 8.9 and requested the draft proposal be sent to OCWA for comment.

9. Standing Committee Recommendations/Reports – Motions

9.1 Corporate Services Committee – Motion for Rising Municipal Insurance Costs

Resolution Number 24-25

Moved by Councillor Garry Thibert

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Mathew Gardiner

WHEREAS Ontario Municipalities are experiencing higher insurance rates at each renewal with limited access to insurance providers willing to quote on municipal insurance needs; and

WHEREAS the Town of Mattawa's insurance premiums have consistently increased heavily over the past four years; and

WHEREAS these annual increases are unsustainable and divert funds from critical municipal services as one of the most significant constraints in limiting yearly tax levy increases.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the Town of Mattawa directs staff to send a letter to the MPP for Nipissing calling for action to reduce insurance costs;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

CARRIED – unanimous

9.2 Public Services Committee – Motion for Fire Apparatus Subsidies

Resolution Number 24-26

Moved by Councillor Fern Levesque

Seconded by Councillor Loren Mick

WHEREAS By-Law 06-05, being a By-Law to Establishing and Regulating a Fire Department established service level standards for the Corporation of the Town of Mattawa Fire Department; and

WHEREAS apparatus and equipment are directly tied to the delivery of fire protection services authorized by Council in By-Law 06-05, and a safe, reliable and diverse fleet is required to serve operational needs; and

WHEREAS fire Apparatus is governed by industry best practices, the application of law and recognized industry partners, including the Ontario Fire Service Section 21 Guidance Notes, National Fire Protection Association Standards, The Occupational Health and Safety Act, and Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS); and

WHEREAS Fire Underwriters Survey (FUS) is a provider of data, underwriting, risk management and legal/regulatory services focusing on community fire- protection and fire prevention systems in Canada, establishing apparatus replacement schedules based on safety and risk mitigation practices; and

WHEREAS no provincial funding is available for new fire trucks, yet, small and rural municipalities must meet the same standards set by FUS as larger municipalities for fire equipment, including additional pressure to move fire trucks out when they reach a specific age, even though they can still meet the safety regulations.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Town of Mattawa directs the Interim CAO/Treasurer to draft a letter to MPP Vic Fedeli requesting a meeting to discuss the life span of fire apparatus, specifically pertaining to the replacement of fire trucks due to insurance requirements;

AND FURTHER THAT the Interim CAO/Treasurer draft a letter to FUS requesting the creation of a new community fire-protection and fire prevention insurance system that does not put all municipalities under the same umbrella, with distinct categories for rural and urban municipalities;

AND FURTHER THAT this resolution be sent to Premier Doug Ford, the Honourable David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, Paul Calandra, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing requesting a response on this matter;

AND FURTHER THAT this resolution be shared with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), the Association of Municipalities Ontario (AMO) and Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM).

CARRIED – unanimous

10. Staff Reports – Motions

10.1 2024 ROMA Conference – Report # 24-06R

Resolution Number 24-27

Moved by Councillor Fern Levesque
Seconded by Councillor Loren Mick

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Town of Mattawa receives Report # 24-06R titled 2024 ROMA Conference.

CARRIED – unanimous

10.2 John Dixon Public Library – Report # 24-07R

Resolution Number 24-28

Moved by Councillor Fern Levesque
Seconded by Councillor Garry Thibert

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Town of Mattawa receives Report # 24-07R titled John Dixon Public Library.

AND FURTHER THAT Council approves funding for the John Dixon Public Library for the 2024 year for the amount of \$72,000 payable in monthly installments of \$6000.

AND FURTHER THAT Council directs the Interim CAO/Treasurer to provide, in writing, notice that the John Dixon Public Library seek other sources of revenues and become a self-sustained operation moving past 2024.

LOST – Recorded vote and the vote was as follows:

For: Mayor Bélanger, Councillors Levesque, Thibert

Against: Deputy Mayor Gardiner, Councillors Sarrazin, Mick

10.3 2024 Voyageur Days – Update # 1 – Report # 24-08R

Deputy Mayor Gardiner declared a conflict of interest on Report # 24-08R and removed himself from council chambers.

Resolution Number 24-29

Moved by Councillor Garry Thibert
Seconded by Councillor Loren Mick

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Town of Mattawa receives Report # 24-08R titled 2024 Voyageur Days – Update # 1.

CARRIED – Recorded vote and the vote was unanimous

Deputy Mayor Gardiner returned to chambers and his seat.

10.4 Hiring Procedure – Report # 24-09R

Councillor Sarrazin declared a conflict of interest on Report # 24-09R and removed himself from council chambers.

Resolution Number 24-30

Moved by Councillor Fern Levesque
Seconded by Councillor Loren Mick

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Town of Mattawa receives Report # 24-09R titled Hiring Procedure.

AND FURTHER THAT Council approves the new hiring procedure and directs the Interim CAO/Treasurer to implement the procedure.

CARRIED – Recorded vote and the vote was at follows:

For: Mayor Bélanger, Deputy Mayor Gardiner, Councillors Levesque, Thibert

Against: Councillor Mick

Councillor Sarrazin returned to chambers and his seat.

11. By-Laws

11.1 By-Law 24-04 – Appointment of Deputy Clerk

BEING a by-law to appoint a Deputy Clerk for the Corporation of the Town of Mattawa

Resolution Number 24-31

Moved by Deputy Mayor Mathew Gardiner

Seconded by Councillor Fern Levesque

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council of the Town of Mattawa adopt By-Law Number 24-04 which is a by-law to appoint Sabrina Poullas as Deputy Clerk.

CARRIED – Recorded vote and the vote was unanimous

12. Old Business

13. New Business

14. Questions from Public Pertaining to Agenda

15. In Camera (Closed) Session

15.1 Committee of Adjustment Member at Large

In accordance with the Municipal Act, 2001 Section 239 (2)(b)

b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees

15.2 Divestiture of The Rosemount Valley Suites (Affordable Seniors Housing)

In accordance with the Municipal Act, 2001 Section 239 (2)(c)

c) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board

Resolution Number 24-32

Moved by Councillor Dexture Sarrazin

Seconded by Councillor Fern Levesque

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this Council proceed in Camera at 7:54 pm in order to address a matter pertaining to: b) personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees; and c) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the municipality or local board employees.

CARRIED – unanimous

16. Return to Regular Session

Resolution Number 24-33

Moved by Councillor Garry Thibert

Seconded by Deputy Mayor Mathew Gardiner

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the regular meeting of council reconvene at 8:39 p.m.

CARRIED – unanimous

Mayor Bélanger advised that the closed session was to discuss the Committee of Adjustment Member at Large applications and the divestiture of the Rosemount Valley Suites.

17. Motions Resulting from Closed Session

Resolution Number 24-34

Moved by Deputy Mayor Mathew Gardiner
Seconded by Councillor Dexture Sarrazin

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council appoints D’Arcy Lamothe as Member at Large for the Committee of Adjustment which will be formally adopted by By-law at the next regular meeting of Council.

CARRIED – unanimous

18. Adjournment

18.1 Adjournment of the meeting

Resolution Number 24-35

Moved by Deputy Mayor Mathew Gardiner
Seconded by Councillor Dexture Sarrazin

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the February 12, 2024 meeting adjourn at 8:41 p.m.

CARRIED – unanimous

**Approved Minutes as Certified by
the Municipal Clerk**

