



COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES

Tuesday, December 3rd, 2024

6:00 p.m.

Tay Valley Municipal Office – 217 Harper Road, Perth, Ontario
Council Chambers

ATTENDANCE:

Members Present: Chair, Deputy Reeve Fred Dobbie
Reeve Rob Rainer
Councillor Wayne Baker
Councillor Greg Hallam
Councillor Korrine Jordan
Councillor Angela Pierman
Councillor Marilyn Thomas

Staff Present: Amanda Mabo, Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk
Aaron Watt, Deputy Clerk
Sean Ervin, Public Works Manager (left at 8:05 p.m.)
Ashley Liznick, Treasurer

Regrets: Councillor Keith Kerr

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.
A quorum was present.

2. AMENDMENTS/APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was adopted as presented.

3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND/OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST AND GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

None at this time.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETINGS

i) **Public Meeting: Zoning By-Law Amendment(s) – November 5th, 2024.**

The minutes of the Public Meeting – Zoning By-Law Amendment(s) held on November 5th, 2024, were approved.

ii) **Public Meeting: Official Plan Amendment No. 8 (OPA 8) – November 5th, 2024.**

The minutes of the Public Meeting – Official Plan Amendment No. 8 (OPA 8) held on November 5th, 2024, were approved.

iii) **Public Meeting: Budget – November 26th, 2024.**

The minutes of the Public Meeting – Budget held on November 26th, 2024, were approved.

5. DELEGATIONS & PRESENTATIONS

i) **Delegation: The Hospice Hub.**

A. Janssen gave the presentation that was attached to the agenda.

Recommendation to Council:

“**THAT**, the Hospice Hub presentation to Tay Valley Township Committee of the Whole on December 3rd, 2024 be received for information.”

6. PRIORITY ISSUES

i) **Report #FIN-2024-14 – Year End Surplus Report for 2023.**

The Treasurer highlighted a surplus of \$633,489.

A Member questioned how this surplus was attained, the Treasurer explained that it was through several factors including:

- interest received on investments
- increases in bank interest rates
- increases in the supplementary tax billings
- increases in Building Permit revenues

Members discussed the feasibility of using surplus to reduce the 2025 tax levy a further one (1) to two (2) percent. The Treasurer recommended holding further discussion until addressing item 6 ii), the 2025 Draft Budget Final Review.

Recommendation to Council

“**WHEREAS**, the 2023 Year-End Surplus is \$633,489 and will be automatically transferred to the Contingency Reserve;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, of the 2023 surplus, \$250,000 be transferred from the Contingency Reserve to the Bridge Reserve, \$110,000 be transferred from the Contingency Reserve to the Township Office/Garage Reserve, \$140,000 be transferred from the Contingency Reserve to the Roads Construction Reserve.”

Item 6 ii) was discussed next.

The Treasurer provided additional details regarding reserves. The Bridge Reserve required funds to keep from dipping into deficit in the near future, which has been cautioned by the Treasurer in previous information sessions. The majority of the Municipal Office Reserve was utilized when the Municipal Office roof was replaced, and the Roads Construction Reserve requires the funds to ensure that current maintenance and service level of Township roads is maintained.

The Treasurer and Public Works Manager confirmed that infrastructure grants in support of roads projects have not been available for some time, and that a reliable Roads Construction Reserve is vital to maintaining road service levels.

The Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk added that transferring to Reserves as presented helps the Township meet current asset management obligations.

Members raised the question of redirecting some of the surplus to further reduce the levy. The Treasurer and Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk explained the financial implications of funding levy reductions or stabilizations from surpluses/reserves.

The Committee discussed keeping a healthy contingency reserve in case of unexpected expenses or an emergency.

Item 7 i) was discussed next.

ii) **2025 Draft Budget Final Review.**

The Treasurer explained that unexpected financial relief was received from the province to offset the increased OPP costs. The Township’s tax levy was reduced by 2.54%, resulting in a current proposed tax rate increase for 2025 of 7.37%.

The Treasurer explained that because of this financial relief for the 2025 Budget, the 2026 Draft Budget process will begin at 2.54% tax levy increase to account for relief funds that may not be provided by the province again.

The Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk further explained that if the levy is decreased this year using reserves, that decreased amount needs to be added to the starting point next year.

A Member raised question and concerns over the necessity of the Recreation Casual position suggesting it be absorbed into Public Works operations.

The Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk indicated, and Public Works Manager confirmed that, without this position regular staff would be redirected from regular assigned tasks such as grading or cold patching to perform inspections and inspection related tasks.

A Member read a personal statement expressing support for municipal staff and the recent pay equity and compensation review – *attached, page 10*.

Recommendation to Council:

“**THAT**, a by-law to adopt the 2025 Budget be brought forward at the December 10th, 2024 Council Meeting.”

The Committee recessed at 7:26 p.m.

The Committee returned to session at 7:33 p.m.

iii) **2025 Fees and Charges Final Review.**

Recommendation to Council:

“**THAT**, the necessary by-laws to implement the updated fees and charges for 2025 be brought forward at the December 10th, 2024 Council Meeting.”

iv) **Report #FIN-2024-15 – Property Tax Due Dates.**

Recommendation to Council:

“**THAT**, the interim tax due dates be on February 26th, 2025 and April 28th, 2025;

THAT, the final tax due dates be on July 29th, 2025 and September 26th, 2025;

AND THAT, the necessary by-law come forward at the next Council meeting.”

v) **Report #FIN-2024-16 – Taxes and the Postal Service Disruption.**

Recommendation to Council:

“**THAT**, should the Postal Service Disruption continue into December and January, that Section 4.1.1 of the Tax Arrears Collection Policy be waived resulting in the monthly arrears letters for those months not being mailed;

AND THAT, alternatively the tax arrears letters be made available by phone, email, or in person should the taxpayer request it;

AND THAT, notice of this alternative option be advertised through the Township’s website, newsfeed, social media and notice boards.”

vi) **Report #PW-2024-22 – Blue Box Transition – Two Stream Collection.**

Recommendation to Council:

“**THAT**, Report #PW-2024-22 – Blue Box Transition – Two Stream Collection, be received for information.”

vii) **Report #CAO-2024-32 – Proposed Road Names – Kassy Lane and Pickgard Place.**

The Chief Administrative/Clerk informed the Committee that the affected property owners did not agree on the initially submitted road names, the Committee discussed option 3, choosing one road name from the applicants and one road name from the other affected property owners.

Recommendation to Council:

“**THAT**, the necessary by-law to name two existing Private Roads to Kassy Lane & Dannic Lane as outlined in Report #CAO-2024-32 – Proposed New Road Name – Kassy Lane & Dannic Lane, be brought forward at the next Council meeting.”

viii) **Appointment of Outdoor Rink Volunteers.**

Recommendation to Council:

“**THAT**, the Council of the Corporation of Tay Valley Township appoint the following volunteers for the Tay Valley Outdoor rinks, subject to the Criminal Records Check Policy:

- Erik Boysen
- Bill McCoy.”

The Committee returned to item 6 i).

The Public Works Manager left at 8:05 p.m.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

i) **Follow-Up: Support for the Motion on Sustainable Municipal Funding.**

Recommendation to Council:

“**WHEREAS**, the Council of the Corporation of Tay Valley Township supports the Town of Aurora’s motion to Request the Redistribution of the Provincial Land Transfer Tax and GST to Municipalities for Sustainable Infrastructure Funding;

AND WHEREAS, municipalities face growing infrastructure needs, including roads, bridges, public transit, water systems, and other critical services, which are essential to community well-being and economic development;

AND WHEREAS, the current sources of municipal revenue, including property taxes and user fees, are insufficient to meet these increasing demands for infrastructure investment;

AND WHEREAS, the Province of Ontario currently collects the Land Transfer Tax (LTT) on property transactions in municipalities across the province, generating significant revenue that is not directly shared with municipalities;

AND WHEREAS, the Federal Government collects the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on property transactions, a portion of which could be directed to municipalities to address local infrastructure needs;

AND WHEREAS, redistributing a portion of the Provincial Land Transfer Tax and GST to municipalities would provide a predictable and sustainable source of funding for local infrastructure projects without creating a new tax burden on residents or homebuyers;

AND WHEREAS, a redistribution of a portion of the existing Land Transfer Tax and GST would allow municipalities to better plan and invest in long-term infrastructure initiatives, supporting local economic growth and improving the quality of life for residents;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Council of the Corporation of Tay Valley Township formally requests the Provincial Government to consider redistributing a portion of the Land Transfer Tax collected on property transactions to municipalities;

THAT, the Council of the Corporation of Tay Valley Township calls on the Federal Government to allocate a percentage of the GST collected on property sales to municipalities;

THAT, this redistribution of the Land Transfer Tax and GST should be structured to provide predictable and sustainable funding to municipalities, allowing for better long-term planning and investment in infrastructure projects that benefit local communities, thus ensuring that local governments receive a fair share of the revenue to address critical infrastructure needs;

THAT, copies of this resolution be forwarded to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Premier Doug Ford, the Ontario Minister of Finance, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, local Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Provincial Parliament (MPPs);

AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED THAT, copies of this resolution be forwarded to all 444 Municipalities in Ontario, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) for their endorsement and advocacy.”

- ii) **24-11-28 – Council Communication Package.**

Recommendation to Council:

“**THAT**, the 24-11-28 Council Communication Package be received for information.”

8. COMMITTEE, BOARD & EXTERNAL ORGANIZATION UPDATES

- i) **Bolingbroke Cemetery Board** – *deferred to the next meeting.*

- ii) **Committee of Adjustment**

The Committee reviewed the minutes that were attached to the agenda.

- iii) **Fire Board.**

The Committee reviewed the minutes that were attached to the agenda.

- iv) **Library Board.**

The Committee reviewed the minutes that were attached to the agenda.

- v) **Pinehurst Cemetery Board.**

The Committee reviewed the minutes that were attached to the agenda.

- vi) **Lanark County OPP Detachment Board** – *deferred to the next meeting.*

- vii) **Green Energy and Climate Change Working Group** – *deferred to the next meeting.*

- viii) **Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority Board.**

The Committee reviewed the minutes and report that were attached to the agenda.

- ix) **Rideau Valley Conservation Authority Board.**

The Committee reviewed the minutes and summary that were attached to the agenda.

- x) **Lanark County Traffic Advisory Working Group** – *deferred to the next meeting.*

xi) **County of Lanark.**

The Reeve reported that:

- Christa Lowry has stepped down as Chair of Community Services, there will be an election held for the position at next County Council
- a new Warden and Committee chairs were elected, Toby Randell as Warden, Steve Fournier as Corporate Services Chair, Richard Kidd as Economic Development Chair, and Brian Dowdall as Public Works Chair

The Deputy Reeve reported that:

- County Council received a presentation on wild parsnip control, in 2024 five (5) crews patrolled 380km of road removing the invasive species of plant. Patrols will occur bi-annually
- Lanark County contains 11,580 acres of community forest, a valuable asset in eliminating carbon gas

9. CLOSED SESSION

None.

10. DEFERRED ITEMS

*The following items will be discussed at the next and/or future meeting:

- *None.*

11. ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 8:11 p.m.


Chairperson


Aaron Watt, Deputy Clerk

PRIORITY ISSUES

Residents, fellow council members, and staff whom are present here tonight, I want to address concerns which have been brought up by different residents through their correspondence to us or presentations made at the public meeting. In doing this, I want to ensure first.... that I am practicing decorum and being professional by not disclosing or discussing any ideas, words or numbers shared by anyone during the closed budget meeting we took part in as council members. If I do this, through you the chair, please inform me since this is against our code of conduct.

The main budget line which residents are concerned about, rightfully so, and have asked for clarification, rightfully so, is staff wage increases. I voted yes for this for numerous reasons. I am not falling under the regime of the CAO (we have disagreed over different subjects) or being made somehow "falling in line" behind staff as insinuated by individuals. I am making a decision based on information which will allow maintaining the quality of services provided from waste site staff, road crew to office staff.

On July 30th, 2024, AMO, the Association of Municipalities in Ontario published a document titled "Careers that Builds Communities". One of the best practices stated by this body was and I quote "to regularly review and update compensation and benefits." This is found on page 14 of their document. Through their research, 43% of employees state pension and benefits is what they like most about their job and the same percentage, 43% want to see their base salary/wage improved. Other provincial municipal bodies discuss in their findings what's called, "Competitive base pay".

If we here at the municipality of Tay Valley want the same services such as waste site hours, recreational activities, municipal office hours, road maintenance etc. to be maintained we need the good staff which we have. In the past year we have lost a clerk to another township due to wage being a factor and other senior staff members have been approached by other municipalities.

In the spring, we as council, received information comparing our township to surrounding townships. This was completed by an outside agency. From this I looked at;

- 1) Pay equity
- 2) Compensatory Pay

Pay equity is law. It falls under the Ontario Pay Equity Act. If not followed this township is then dealing with the Labour Board. So that, I definitely support.

The second part is Compensatory Pay. Compensatory pay can be reasoned as internal equity pay or competitive pay. This is the most important when wanting to retain the staff you have and acquire new staff. This is where comparing staff's education, experience, decision making and reasonability's need to be looked at because experienced, municipal staff are in demand and hard to find. We here at Tay Valley have so many good staff that live in Tay Valley itself, have relatives who live or play sports in Tay Valley or have worked for years here and are professional, knowledgeable staff. They deserve to be paid competitive wages, or we will lose them.

With this in play I considered not only the different local municipalities used in the comparison, but the fact that according to Gallup, Feb. 27, 2023, the cost of losing and

replacing an employee can range from one-half to two times the employee's annual salary. This is just one of the hidden costs of not maintaining staff. Who wants this cost added to operating costs and in return to the budget. Placing more workload on remaining coworkers, longer hours etc. will also take place.

Another staff income measurement which I have heard about is the notorious Sunshine List. People's wages that are on the Sunshine list are not always based on a set salary but takes into factors such as overtime which has to be paid out. If one looks at this list and looks at other factors, not just the pay of a specific position, but factors such as average salary, total salary paid and average raises, Tay Valley Township is not far off. Only 2% over with 2 closest municipal neighbours and 12 % less than another one.

In August 2022, the Fraser Institute completed a study on 25-30 municipalities around Ontario. 40-50% of their operating budgets were spent on wages. That was in 2022. Here we are in 2024 and Tay Valley is spending only 29% on wages, which is 37% of the levy. This comes from the approximately \$2.85 million which has been budgeted.

Back to maintaining the level of services being provided. The Fraser Institute on April 24, 2024 highlighted that the operating expenditures from office staples to staff wages has grown 2.5 times faster than general inflation. And then double that of the population. That logically means that the population (TVT residents, including myself) are naturally going to have to pay more to maintain the same level of services unless our municipality's population grows. In conclusion, I support staff wage increases to retain the staff team we have now and to acquire capable, experienced staff as needed. It's a way of stating to those staff here at Tay Valley, you are appreciated, you are doing a good job and carry on.

As one young, I'd say 30ish year-old male, red haired, wearing a baseball hat, carrying some papers out of the township office one day, said to me (because I was wearing a Tay Valley coat), "That's good staff in there. They know their stuff"

We need to keep those good staff. Those good staff who know their stuff.

For that reason and the many facts I have shared, I am supporting the wage increase.