

MINUTES - REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, January 28th, 2025 – 6:00 pm



PRESENT: Mayor Sheila Maxwell
Councillor David Maxwell
Councillor Grant Arnold
Councillor Chris Kresack
PRESENT VIRTUALLY: Councillor David Halvorsen

ALSO PRESENT: Karen Paisley, Clerk
Tara Wupori, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer
Leanne Maxwell, Treasurer

PRESENT VIRTUALLY: Rosalie Evans, Acting Clerk
Olabisi Akinsanya-Hutka, Human Resources Assistant
Peter Hart – SmartSence

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Maxwell called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.
Mayor Maxwell provided a statement of land acknowledgement.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RESOLUTION 2025 - 012

Moved by: Councillor Maxwell

Seconded by: Councillor Arnold

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the agenda for the regular council meeting of January 28th, 2025, be amended as follows:

- a) Confirming bylaw 2025-003 added to item 15.
- b) Typographical error corrected for the date of the social committee meeting to January 15th.
- c) Item 13.4 – correspondence from Lakehead Regional Planning Board referenced in Item 8.1 clerks report added to closed agenda
- d) Item 13.5 – Human Resources added to the closed agenda.

AND, FURTHER, THAT the agenda, as so amended, be approved.

CARRIED

3. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

No declarations were made.

4. TOWN HALL SEGMENT

No members of the public had registered to speak at the Town Hall Segment.

5. DEPUTATIONS

Peter Hart from Sustain Energy, "SmartSence" presented to Council. He provided an overview of SmartSence products as outlined in the pamphlet provided to council. SmartSence monitors and installs items that monitor energy efficiencies for the municipal buildings. Mr. Hart advised Council his company pre-applies for grants for these projects on the municipality's behalf, secures the costs of the contract and are the contractor that installs the items approved for the project. Projects are submitted on a first come first served basis. They do not sub-contract and install the items themselves. The budget for the grant is up to \$200,000.

Council will discuss this project and provide feedback to Mr. Hart once Council decides if they'd like to move forward with the project.

6. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

- 6.1. Minutes – Regular Council Meeting – January 14, 2025
Members present reviewed the minutes. No errors or omissions were noted.

RESOLUTION 2025-013

Moved by: Councillor Arnold
Seconded by: Councillor Kresack

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the minutes for the open session portion of the regular council meeting of January 14, 2025, be approved, as circulated.

CARRIED

7. DISBURSEMENT LIST

7.1. Payment Register

The Treasurer responded to questions from members present.

RESOLUTION 2025-0014

Moved by: Councillor Arnold
Seconded by: Councillor Maxwell

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council approve the disbursements represented by electronic bank payments, check numbers 7250 to 7277, and payroll totalling \$126,366.98.

CARRIED

8. REPORTS FROM MUNICIPAL OFFICERS

8.1. Clerk's Report

The Clerk reviewed her report with members present and responded to questions.

The Clerk presented applications submitted by the Lakehead Rural Planning Board for review. Council directed the Clerk to inform the Lakehead Rural Planning Board to proceed with the hearings as Council had no questions or comments.

Council approved the purchase of an additional monitor for the Clerk's workstation.

Clerk advised Council that she's been in contact with AllNet, Conmee's website development provider to confirm our website was AODA compliant. AllNet advised they are compliant and recommended Conmee update their web development platform to Catalysis, which is an upgraded web development platform. The Clerk contacted the municipality's IT vendor (MicroAge), who advised they will investigate the advisability of upgrading the web development platform.

At the request of Council, the Clerk located the cleaning service that cleaned the Municipality Hall floors in 2022. The company is ADIS Cleaning services. The Clerk is directed to contact ADIS to request a quote and book a cleaning for April or May.

The Clerk created an inventory tracking spreadsheet for facility supplies. Clerk will provide this document to facilities management to complete.

Council approved the purchase of additional filing cabinets for the Administration Office. Clerk to contact Lori Holland and locate purchase invoices from previous purchases.

Council approved administration to attend the AMCTO conference virtually. Clerk will purchase the livestream package. All administration can attend workshops of interest under one package.

8.2. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer reviewed her report with Council and responded to questions.

8.3. Deputy Clerk-Treasurer's Report

The Deputy Clerk-Treasurer reviewed her report with Council and responded to questions.

8.4. Public Works Report

Council reviewed Public Works report. If there are any questions Council to forward to the Clerk.

8.5. Fire Chief's Report

No report was presented at this meeting.

8.6. Council Member Reports

Mayor Maxwell reported she attended the social committee meeting on January 15th. The Clerk was in attendance as well as one other resident. Ideas for social activities were discussed. It was suggested a poll be posted on the municipal website to canvass events the residents would like to see happen. We currently do not have enough members on the committee to arrange social events. The Fire Auxiliary would like Mayor Maxwell to contact them. She will be reaching out to them to discuss events they will be involved in participating. Mayor Maxwell hopes to have more information on the next report.

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Mayor Maxwell reported that she had positive interaction with the Ministers at the ROMA conference. Minister Calandra was interested in The Pines on Hume long term care home project and would like to see the plans. The delegates met with the Deputy Minister for SOLGEN. They discussed funding for the Fire Department. They also met with the Deputy Fire Marshall, and they discussed options for funding through OFM. The delegates met with the Minister of Education and discussed school bus transport issues and school funding needs. Mayor Maxwell offered for the Minister to visit Kakabeka School and have a tour. The delegates discussed Conmee's intersections, more lighting for the intersections, and the rumble strips at Sistonen's Corner with the Minister of Transportation. They advised the Minister that our Fire Department is often deployed to calls at that location. The delegation discussed paramedic issues, lack of doctors, and funding needs for the District Health Unit with the Minister of Health. Mayor Maxwell provided a copy of Janet DeMille's report to the Minister.

Councillor Arnold reported he attended the AGM for the District Health Unit on January 15th. The TBDHU did a study with food necessities and how much money was available for food. Councillor Arnold provided the information to Councillor Kresack for his board meeting with the Food Bank. On February 11th there will be an Impact presentation by zoom regarding shared services with the communities and the implications of insurance, which he's signed up for. Councillor Arnold will be attending the LRCA AGM plus the board of directors meeting on January 29th.

Councillor Maxwell reported he met with the Food Cycler group at the ROMA trade show. Food Cycler have lowered their limit to 5 to 10 units for smaller municipalities and he offered to bring this back to Council. Councillor Maxwell is suggesting Conmee support 5 to 10 Food Cycler Units. Councillor Maxwell also talked to "Dependable Fire Trucks" at the trade show. They have one brand new unit left for \$629,000. This is a pumper truck unit that included shelving. The company advised the shelving add-on would be an additional cost of \$50,000 to \$60,000. This unit included pike poles, ladders, and some shelving. Councillor Maxwell saw several cyber-security booths at the trade show. Council had discussion around Conmee's cyber security. Conmee does have a modern security system and insurance. Councillor Maxwell has set up the security cameras at the public works garage. He completed a generator report on Sunday and reset the ice rink shed lighting to go off at midnight and go on at 6:00 pm. The generator enclosure needs to be shovelled out and the trail to the propane tank needs to be shovelled as well. He will contact the assistant facilities manager to complete this task. Councillor Maxwell would like someone to look at the AV system in the hall before the comedy show on February 22nd. He is suggesting Steve Lazar from Backstage Sound. Council is requesting the Clerk reach out to someone to look at this issue. There are also some concerns with electrical in the municipal building which may need to be investigated as well. Electrical work will need to be budgeted for this year.

Councillor Kresack reported there is no food bank meeting until next month. He spoke with Ray Holland who confirmed the pumper truck was meant to have the body come off and put onto another unit. The running unit, that includes the engine, and transmission needs to be replaced. The service body with all the drawers, cabinets, sliders and equipment is still in good condition. The pump is like new. The air system would be replaced by a new truck with a new compressor. The foam is a compressor issue which would be fixed with a new cab. Replacing a stand-alone compressor is too expensive or the part is not available. The current pumper truck was supposed to run for 15 years and be replaced with another truck. The old truck was supposed to go to a secondary position. Council discussed options and who to reach out to for estimates for a replacement cab and chassis.

Councillor Halvorsen reported he attended the Lakehead Police Board meeting on January 16th. It was the first time quorum was reached. He feels the police aren't listening to the board's suggestions. He acknowledges the municipality must form part of this committee, but he doesn't feel that the municipality is getting value for money spent.

8.7. Other Agencies' Reports

These reports were listed, for information, in the Clerk's report at Item 8.1.

RESOLUTION 2025-015

Moved by: Councillor Kresack

Seconded by: Councillor Maxwell

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council received the reports presented as listed in Section 8 of this evening's agenda.



9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1. Event Checklist

Council would like a copy posted in the facilities storage room bulletin board, in the red book in the janitor's room, and on the kitchen board in the hall.

10. BY-LAWS

There were no by-laws presented at this meeting.

11. CORRESPONDENCE

11.1. List of Resolution Support Requests from other Municipalities

Council reviewed the list of resolutions. Council expressed its desire to support all the resolutions listed.

RESOLUTION 2025-016

Moved by: Councillor Halvorsen

Seconded by: Councillor Arnold

WHEREAS Elections rules need to be clear, supporting candidates and votes in their electoral participation and election administrators in running elections;

AND WHEREAS legislation needs to strike the right balance between providing clear rules and frameworks to ensure the integrity of the electoral process;

AND WHEREAS the legislation should also reduce administrative and operational burdens for municipal staff, ensuring that local election administrators can run elections in a way that responds to the unique circumstances of their local communities;

AND WHEREAS the Municipal Elections Act 1996 (MEA") will be 30 years old by the next municipal and school board elections in 2026;

AND WHEREAS the MEA sets out the rules for local elections, the Assessment Act 1990 and the Education Act, 1990 also contain provisions impacting local elections adding more places for votes, candidates and administrators to look for the rules that bind the local democratic process in Ontario;

AND WHEREAS the MEA can pose difficulties for voters, candidates, contributors and third-party advertisers to read, to interpret, to comply with and for election administrators to enforce;

AND WHEREAS, while local elections are run as efficiently and effectively as can be within the current legislative framework, modernization and continuous improvement is needed to ensure that the MEA is responsive to today's needs and tomorrow's challenges;

AND WHEREAS, to keep public trust and improve safeguards, the MEA should be reviewed considering the ever-changing landscape which impacts elections administration, including: privacy, the threats of foreign interference, increased spread of mis-information, and the increased use of technologies like artificial intelligence and use of digital identities;

AND WHEREAS the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario ("AMCTO") reviewed the Act and has provided several recommendations including: modernizing the legislation, harmonizing rules, and streamlining and simplifying administration;

AND WHEREAS AMCTO put forward recommendations for amendments ahead of the 2026 elections and longer-term recommendations for amendments ahead of the 2030 elections;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council for The Corporation of the Township of Conmee calls for the Province to update the MEA with priority amendments, as outlined by AMCTO, before the summer of 2025, and commence the work to review and re-write the MEA with longer-term recommendations ahead of the 2030 elections;

AND, FURTHER, THAT this resolution be forwarded to its originator, The Corporation of the Township of Terrace Bay, to AMCTO, to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, to the Minister of Education, to the Minister of Public Business Service Delivery, to the Ministry of Finance and Conmee's local MPP.

CARRIED

RESOLUTION 2025-017

Moved by: Councillor Maxwell

Seconded by: Councillor Kresack

WHEREAS the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is considering amendments to the Municipal Act, 2001 relating to integrity commissioners and Codes of Conduct for municipal Councils in Ontario;

AND WHEREAS the Ministry is requesting comments from municipalities relating to the changes;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council for the Corporation of the Township of Conmee agrees with the position taken by the Council of The Corporation of the Town of Hawkesbury, being that:



In circumstances where there is a recommendation (from the municipality's integrity commissioner, with which the Integrity Commissioner of Ontario agrees), to remove and disqualify members of council (and certain local boards) for a period of four years for the most serious code of conduct violations, a concurring resolution from Council should be acceptable if passed with a majority of the members of Council eligible to vote on the resolution; and should not require a unanimous vote from the members of Council.

AND, FURTHER, THAT this resolution be sent to the originating municipality, The Corporation of the Town of Hawkesbury, and to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Conmee's local MPP.

RESOLUTION 2025-018

Moved by: Councillor Arnold

Seconded by: Councillor Halvorsen

WHEREAS municipalities rely on child welfare agencies to not only protect children and youth from abuse or neglect, but provide critical crisis intervention, early intervention, and preventative services;

AND WHEREAS the work of child welfare agencies ensures that children receive necessary care at the most crucial times;

AND WHEREAS, the lack of access to healthcare, mental health supports, poverty reduction initiatives and affordable housing takes a significant toll on families and caregivers, making the roles of child welfare agencies ever more important in filling these gaps;

AND WHEREAS, despite their important role, child welfare agencies throughout Ontario are critically underfunded, which inhibits their ability to provide effective and immediate care when required;

AND WHEREAS children in society present with complex behaviours, translating into higher intervention costs, and increases costs for, and pressure on, police and emergency service providers;

AND WHEREAS, there is an alarming increase in youth homelessness;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of The Corporation of the Township of Conmee supports and endorses the letter to the Honourable Premier Ford and the Honourable Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, written recently by Mayor Jerry Acchione of the City of Woodstock, urging the Province to prioritize and support the financial needs of child welfare agencies across Ontario;

AND, FURTHER, THAT this resolution be sent to the originating municipality, The Corporation of the City of Woodstock, to Premier Ford, Minister Parsa, and Conmee's local MPP.

11.2. Correspondence from Ontario Heritage Trust – Doors Open Ontario 2025

This correspondence was presented for information only.

11.3. Correspondence from Lisa Thompson – Minister of Rural Affairs

This correspondence was presented for information only.

11.4. Correspondence from Debbie Hoover – Hymers Fair 2025 Sponsorship and Advertisement

Council approved sponsoring Hymers by providing a ½ page of advertising and \$100 for the fair.

RESOLUTION 2025-019

Moved by: Councillor Maxwell

Seconded by: Councillor Arnold

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council received the correspondence listed in Section 11 of this evening's agenda.

CARRIED

12. UPCOMING MEETING DATES

The list of upcoming regular Council meeting dates was available for review. No changes were proposed.

A brief recess took place at 7:59 p.m.

13. CLOSED SESSION

RESOLUTION 2025-020

Moved by: Councillor Arnold

Seconded by: Councillor Kresack

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the time being 8:06 p.m., Council enter Closed Session under the authority of those paragraphs of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended, for which the meetings were closed, in order to consider Items 13.1, being the Closed Session minutes of the Council meetings held January 14, 2025; and, under the authority of paragraph 239(2)(b) of the same legislation, in order to consider Items 13.2, 13.3, and amended agenda Item 13.5 involving personal information about identifiable individuals. Item 13.4 being resolved in open session during the Clerk's report at Item 8.1.

CARRIED

During closed session, the following procedural resolution was passed:

RESOLUTION 2025-021

Moved by: Councillor Maxwell

Seconded by: Councillor Kresack

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the time being 9:39 p.m., Council rise from closed session and report in open session.

CARRIED

Open session resumed.

14. REPORT FROM CLOSED SESSION

RESOLUTION 2025-022

Moved by: Councillor Arnold

Seconded by: Councillor Kresack

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Closed Minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on January 14, 2025, be approved; AND, FURTHER, THAT Administration be authorized to proceed as directed in closed session.

CARRIED

15. CONFIRMING BY-LAW

1.1. By-law 2025-003

RESOLUTION 2025-023

Moved by: Councillor Maxwell

Seconded by: Councillor Kresack


BE IT RESOLVED THAT By-law 2025-003 be passed;

AND, FURTHER, THAT the Mayor and Clerk be authorized on behalf of the Township of Conmee to affix their signatures to By-law No. 2025-003, being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of this evening's meeting.


CARRIED

16. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to attend to, the mayor declared the meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.



Mayor Sheila Maxwell



Clerk Karen Paisley