



FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

Thursday, April 15, 2021

An electronic meeting of the Finance and Administration Committee was held on Thursday, April 15, 2021, at 9:30 a.m.

Present were: Chair Jennifer Murphy
Warden Debbie Robinson
Vice-Chair Brian Hunt
Councillor James Brose
Councillor Glenn Doncaster
Councillor Michael Donohue
Councillor Robert Sweet

Regrets: Councillor Tom Peckett

Staff Present: Paul Moreau, Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk
Jeffrey Foss, Director of Corporate Services
Lee Perkins, Director of Public Works and Engineering
Shelley Sheedy, Director of Long-Term Care
Ginette Poole, Manager of Provincial Offences Administration
Daniel Burke, Manager of Finance
Rosalyn Gruntz, Deputy Clerk
Connie Wilson, Administrative Assistant, Finance Department

Chair Murphy called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. The roll was called, and no pecuniary interests were disclosed.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-45

Moved by Councillor Sweet

Seconded by Councillor Hunt

THAT the minutes of the March 18, 2021 meeting be adopted. CARRIED.

Chair Murphy welcomed Mr. Jean Souliere, Chief Executive Officer and Mr. Roberto Rego, Vice-President, Sales/Marketing/Government Relations of BusPatrol and Constable Chris Purdie, Upper Ottawa Valley OPP to overview a proposed School Bus Stop Arm Camera Project.

Committee questioned the costs associated with BusPatrol and how the business model works. Mr. Souliere advised that all connectivity charges, public service announcements, signage, customer support and adjudication services are supported and paid for by BusPatrol. In return, BusPatrol invoices the participating municipalities for an ongoing share of the new fine revenue that is collected to continue the ongoing maintenance.

Mr. Souliere advised that the first program in Ontario will go live in September and the County of Renfrew has the opportunity to opt into this upcoming program, which would be the simplest and fastest or the other option is to opt in directly, but there is no difference in cost for either option.

Councillor Doncaster entered the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Committee thanked BusPatrol for their presentation and advised BusPatrol that they would like further details on this program. Mr. Souliere confirmed that he would forward the information to Mr. Moreau. Committee directed staff to bring a detailed report of their findings and have BusPatrol as a delegation at a future session of County Council to ensure everyone understands the platform and modelling.

Administration Report

Mr. Moreau overviewed the Administration Department Report which is attached as Appendix A.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-46

Moved by Warden Robinson

Seconded by Councillor Sweet

WHEREAS the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) represents the interests of member municipalities on policy and program matters that fall within federal jurisdiction;

WHEREAS FCM's Board of Directors is comprised of elected municipal officials from all regions and sizes of communities to form a broad base of support and provide FCM with the united voice required to carry the municipal message to the federal government; and

WHEREAS FCM's virtual Annual Conference and Trade Show will be held June 1 to 4, 2021, during which time the Annual General Meeting will be held and followed by the election of FCM's Board of Directors;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Council of the County of Renfrew endorse Councillor Glenn Doncaster to stand for election on FCM's Board of Directors and appointments to Standing Committees for the period starting in June 2021 and ending at the AGM in 2022;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Council assumes all costs associated with Councillor Glenn Doncaster attending FCM's Board of Directors meetings. CARRIED.

Mr. Moreau overviewed the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus survey and noted that the format the County of Renfrew is utilizing for our electronic meetings is consistent with our peers.

Mr. Moreau advised Committee that last month he had committed to bring back the Procedural By-law revisions for Committee and Council's consideration as it relates to electronic meetings during a declared emergency and significant weather event.

Committee discussed the lead time for a significant weather event and Mr. Perkins confirmed that it is based on Environment Canada and generally there is a minimum of 12 hours' advance notice. Committee discussed their concerns regarding the definition of a significant weather event, how a significant weather event is determined (i.e. Legislation) and the varying weather conditions across the County.

Committee directed that staff include wording in the report to County Council asking Council members to carefully review this topic and be prepared to discuss it in further detail at County Council before a recommendation can be made.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-47

Moved by Councillor Donohue

Seconded by Councillor Hunt

THAT Item #4 - Declared Emergency and Electronic Meetings be severed from the Administration Report. CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-48

Moved by Councillor Donohue

Seconded by Councillor Hunt

THAT the Administration Department Report attached as Appendix A be approved with the removal of Item #4 - Declared Emergency and Electronic Meetings.

CARRIED.

Committee recessed at 10:40 a.m. and reconvened at 10:54 a.m. with the same persons present.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-49

Moved by Councillor Brose

Seconded by Councillor Hunt

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends that County Council direct staff to amend Section 6.1 of the Procedural By-law 85-10, as amended, to allow for the continuation of electronic participation of members of council in electronic meetings during a declared emergency and during a declared significant weather event as presented below;

AND FURTHER THAT section 2 – Definitions, of the Procedural by-law be amended to include the definition of a significant weather event emergency as defined by Ontario Regulation 239/02.

AND FURTHER THAT section 21 – Delegations, be amended to permit the participation of delegations to Committees and County Council via electronic means at the discretion of the presiding officer and the Clerk.

AND FURTHER THAT staff participation via electronic means at meetings of Committee and County Council be at the discretion of the Chief Administrative Officer. MOTION WITHDRAWN

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-50

Moved by Councillor Hunt

Seconded by Councillor Brose

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee direct staff to send the drafted amendments of 6.1 of the Procedural By-law to County Council for further discussion. CARRIED.

Corporate Services Department

Mr. Foss overviewed the Corporate Services Department Report which is attached as Appendix B.

Mr. Foss overviewed the COVID-19 Financial Summary to December 31, 2020 and noted that there is no negative financial impact to local rate payers through property taxes due to the fact that all COVID-19 related expenses are fully recovered through provincial funding or federal safe restart funding.

Mr. Foss overviewed the Unaudited 2020 Financial Statements for the General Revenue Fund for year-end December 31, 2020. Mr. Foss noted that each Committee overviewed their respective financial statements.

Mr. Foss noted that the final transfer from the Canadian Pacific Railway to the County of Renfrew was to occur in 2020 but legal counsel is still working through the land transfer details.

Committee discussed whether we should continue to budget for the provision for unallocated funds account or if we should create an unallocated funds reserve and the Treasurer recommended that any decision on an annual contribution to either the provision for unallocated funds or an unallocated funds reserve could be made during our annual budget deliberation process with Standing Committees and Council.

Committee directed that Mr. Foss include a Schedule of Reserves in the 2020 Unaudited Financial Statements that are going forward to County Council.

Mr. Foss overviewed the Municipal Property Assessment Corporations' (MPAC) update indicating that property assessments for the 2022 property taxation year will continue based on January 1, 2016 assessed values and in addition, consultation will be held on the timing and valuation date for the next assessment with outcomes to be communicated this fall.

Mr. Foss overviewed the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) update regarding the renaming of the Federal Gas Tax to the Canada Community-Building Fund and Committee directed that when the detailed criteria is released, the Senior Leadership Team members are to prepare a report on priorities and opportunities for use of the funding for Council's consideration.

Mr. Foss overviewed the draft letter regarding the shortage of Justices of the Peace and the Incident Report to be sent to the Ministry of the Attorney General, and advised Committee that our Provincial Offences staff, as well as all courts in Ontario, are very concerned with the massive backlog of court matters and the difficulty they are facing in rescheduling these matters due to the lack of court dates. Ms. Poole advised that as an example, the audio court held on Monday,

April 12, 2021 dealt with 265 matters, it started at 9:00 a.m. and finished at 5:00 p.m.

Warden Robinson indicated that she will distribute this letter to the Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus members and have it placed on the agenda of an upcoming meeting for their support.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-51

Moved by Councillor Donohue

Seconded by Councillor Brose

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends that the incident report prepared by the Provincial Offences Office for the County of Renfrew be sent to the Ministry of the Attorney General; AND FURTHER THAT the letter requesting additional court dates be sent from the Warden to the Regional Senior Justice of the Peace. CARRIED.

Mr. Foss advised that he met twice with the Tax Policy Working Group. During the first meeting, consensus was obtained on the setting of tax policy for 2021 and the second meeting was to overview amendments to the industrial property class ratio. The Tax Policy Working Group is recommending that County Council approve a reduction in the Industrial Broad Class ratio from 3.159778 in 2021 down to the Provincial Threshold of 2.63, phased in over a two year period beginning in 2022. Mr. Foss advised that all lower-tiers will attempt to adopt their budgets prior to June 18 to ensure tax rates are entered into the Online Property Tax Analysis system (OPTA).

Mr. Foss advised that the tax policies adopted and tax rates are consistent with what was discussed at the Budget Workshop and the next time there is a reassessment in Ontario, a full tax policy presentation will be made to County Council.

Warden Robinson departed the meeting at 12:45 p.m.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-52

Moved by Councillor Brose

Seconded by Councillor Sweet

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends to County Council that a By-law setting the starting 2021 tax ratios for County purposes and lower-tier purposes for the year 2021 be adopted at the next session of County Council. CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-53

Moved by Councillor Hunt

Seconded by Councillor Brose

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends that County Council approve at the next session that the 2021 tax ratio By-law include a revenue neutral ratio for the Landfill class at 1.189066. CARRIED.

Mr. Foss noted that the landfill class will change in a reassessment year.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-54

Moved by Councillor Hunt

Seconded by Councillor Donohue

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends that County Council approve at the next session that the 2021 tax rates for the County of Renfrew include a calculation to apply a municipal budgetary tax increase to the industrial and large industrial classes equal to 50% of the tax rate increase over the 2021 notional tax rate for the residential class. CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-55

Moved by Councillor Donohue

Seconded by Councillor Hunt

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends that County Council approve a reduction in the Broad Industrial Ratio down to the Provincial Threshold of 2.63, phased in over a 2 year period beginning with the 2022 taxation cycle. CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-56

Moved by Councillor Hunt

Seconded by Councillor Brose

THAT the Finance and Administration Committee recommends to County Council that a By-law to Establish the 2021 Tax Rates for County of Renfrew Purposes be adopted at the next session of County Council. CARRIED.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-57

Moved by Councillor Sweet

Seconded by Councillor Brose

THAT the Corporate Services Department Report attached as Appendix B be approved. CARRIED.

New Business

Mr. Moreau overviewed a letter that was received from the Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) in response to our Council directed letter of January 27, 2021. Mr. Moreau advised that this letter would be included as an Information item in his Administration Report at the May Finance and Administration Committee meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. FA-C-21-04-58

Moved by Councillor Donohue

Seconded by Councillor Brose

THAT this meeting adjourn and the next regular meeting be held on May 13, 2021. Time: 1:00 p.m. CARRIED.