

COUNTY OF RENFREW



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS of the COUNCIL OF THE CORPORATION OF THE COUNTY OF RENFREW

- Special Session -

County Council
Pembroke, Ontario
January 7, 2022

SPECIAL SESSION

The Special Session of the Council of the Corporation of the County of Renfrew met at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, January 7, 2022.

The Warden, Debbie Robinson, presided.

Warden Robinson cited the Land Acknowledgement, identifying that the meeting was being held on the traditional territory of the Algonquin People.

The meeting opened with a moment of silent reflection and the singing of the National Anthem.

The roll was called and all members were found to be present except Councillor Grills and Councillor Keller. No pecuniary interest was disclosed.

Councillor Tiedje stated an objection to going into a closed meeting. Warden Robinson ruled to move forward into a closed meeting.

Moved by Councillor Sweet

Seconded by Councillor Lynch

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council move into a closed meeting pursuant to Section 239 of the Municipal for the purpose of a position, plan, procedure, criteria or instruction to be applied to any negotiations carried on or to be carried on by or on behalf of the municipality or local board. CARRIED.

Moved by Councillor Love

Seconded by Councillor Brose

THAT this resume as an open session of County Council. Time: 9:21 p.m.
CARRIED.

Council recessed at 9:50 a.m. Council reconvened at 10:01 a.m. with the same persons present.

Moved by Councillor Love

Seconded by Councillor Regier

That County Council suspend Section 66, Notice of Motion provisions of the County of Renfrew Procedural By-Law 85-10, as amended for the purpose of the special meeting of County Council held on January 7, 2022. CARRIED.

Councillor Emon overviewed the Closed 2022 Ontario Winter Games Report which is attached as Appendix I.

Councillor Peter Emon, Chair of the 2022 Ontario Winter Games Committee brought in and read the resolutions of the following report:

RESOLUTIONS

1. 2022 Ontario Winter Games

Recommendation: THAT County Council approves that the 2022 Ontario Winter Games be postponed until the Winter of 2023.

Background to 2022 Ontario Winter Games

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused severe economic and social disruptions across the globe, and the recent restrictions that have been announced as a result of an especially virulent Omicron variant of the virus has meant further cause for concern of large gatherings and events. Originally planned for February 24 through to March 6, 2022, the Ontario Winter Games was

meant to be a sign of the County's reemergence from the pandemic, and a signal that the Province is back open for business. The gathering of more than 3,500 participants and spectators was going to help drive a boost to the local economy and showcase large social events where we could celebrate being together after such a long struggle. Unfortunately, now is not the time to celebrate.

Since direction was provided to staff from County Council in October, the Games Organizing Committee and its host of volunteers worked diligently to overcome the logistical challenges with the hopes of hosting the Games in 2022, but unfortunately, the pandemic and the rising concerns of an impending variant were already beginning to impede our efforts.

As it became increasingly clear that this new Omicron variant was overwhelming our Province and forcing new restrictions, Warden Debbie Robinson, Chair Peter Emon and County/Winter Games staff held several conversations with Provincial Games staff about the implications of the Games happening amidst an increasingly difficult to control pandemic. There is uncertainty around the availability of the sporting venues, the availability of secondary accommodations (short-term rental accommodations), the lack of emergency/health personnel and the unease of hosting a Games in the midst of a circulating variant that knows no boundary. Furthermore, we do not have the infrastructure or sufficient experienced staff to manage testing, screening, tracing and isolation protocols that would be required to ensure the safety of all participants. To that end Warden Robinson and Chair Emon convened conversations and meetings with MPP John Yakabuski, Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke and the Honourable Lisa McLeod, Minister of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries to determine what, if any, steps would need to be taken to postpone these Games to another time.

On Tuesday, January 4, 2022, MPP Yakabuski and Minister McLeod, along with Province of Ontario staff, confirmed that postponing the Games until 2023 was a viable scenario and gave their full support to this action, given the current health crisis in the Province. Upon the passing of this recommendation, Minister McLeod will begin the necessary work to reallocate the Winter Games funding to the following year, while her staff will work with their Provincial counterparts to determine appropriate dates

in 2023 that align with the Provincial Sporting Organizations and other major tournaments that are scheduled in Winter 2023.

We remain confident that we can host the best Ontario Winter Games ever and feel that this is the right decision to make at this time.

Moved by Councillor Emon

Seconded by Councillor Lynch

THAT County Council reconsider the following resolution adopted at the October 27, 2021 meeting:

“THAT County Council reassures the Province of Ontario and the community of its intention to proceed with the hosting of the 2022 Ontario Winter Games and authorizes the Director of Development and Property and/or Chief Administrative Officer and the 2022 Ontario Winter Games Ad-Hoc Committee to sign contracts and enter into agreements as is necessary and consistent with the funding designated for the event.” CARRIED.

Moved by Councillor Hunt

Seconded by Councillor Donohue

THAT County Council approves that the 2022 Ontario Winter Games be postponed until the Winter of 2023. CARRIED.

The Report was adopted as presented.

Moved by Councillor Doncaster

Seconded by Councillor Brose

THAT By-law 4-22, being a By-law to Confirm the Proceedings of the Council of the County of Renfrew at the meeting held on January 7, 2022 be now numbered, deemed read three times and passed. CARRIED.

Moved by Councillor Peckett

Seconded by Councillor Lynch

THAT County Council adjourn. Time – 10:20 a.m. CARRIED.