

## THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PUSLINCH PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

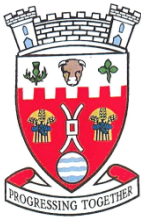
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>Wednesday June 20, 2018</b>
<b>TIME:</b>	<b>6:30 p.m.</b>
<b>PLACE:</b>	<b>Puslinch Community Centre, 23 Brock Road South</b>
<b>FILE:</b>	<b>Public Open House on the Proposed Changes to the Vacant Unit Tax Rebate Program and Vacant and Excess Land Property Tax Subclass Reductions</b>
<b>MEMBERS:</b>	<b>Mayor Dennis Lever – Chair Councillor John Sepulis Councillor Matthew Bulmer Councillor Susan Fielding Councillor Ken Roth</b>

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and remarked the purpose of this Public Open House is to inform and provide the public with the opportunity to ask questions, or to express views with respect to the proposed changes to the Vacant Unit Tax Rebate Program and Vacant and Excess Land Property Tax Subclass Reductions. The Councillors are here to observe and listen to the public's comments; however, Council will not make any decisions this evening.

### **Presentations:**

Mary Hasan, Director of Finance/Treasurer for the Township presented the following information:

- The Vacant Unit Tax Rebate Program was introduced in 1998 and it provided a tax rebate to owners of vacant commercial (30% rebate) and industrial properties (35% rebate).
- Rebates are shared between the Township, County of Wellington (County), and School Boards.
- Mandatory program was developed when provincial tax reform shifted business taxation from tenants to property owners.
- Assisted property owners in times of economic downturn who now assumed tax liability whether or not their property was tenanted.
- Erin, Minto and Wellington North have incorporated their Vacant Unit Tax Rebate Program as part of their Community Improvement Plan. The remaining lower tiers in the County are in the process of considering the elimination of the program.
- Municipalities proposing to phase-out and eliminate the Vacant Unit Tax Rebate Program from 2017 to 2020 were outlined.
- The financial implications associated with eliminating the Vacant Unit Tax Rebate Program were outlined.
- Vacant and Excess Land Property Tax Subclass Reductions are provided to commercial and industrial properties or portions of these properties in the Vacant and Excess Land Property Tax Subclasses and these properties are taxed at a fixed percentage rate below the tax rate of the broad class.
- These properties are discounted at 30% to 35% of the full Commercial and/or Industrial rates.
- There is general support in the County of Wellington and lower tier municipalities for the elimination of the Vacant and Excess Land Property Tax Subclass Reductions for the 2019 taxation year pending consultation with the local business community.
- Municipalities proposing to phase-out and eliminate the Vacant and Excess Land Property Tax Subclass Reductions from 2018 to 2021 were outlined.



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- The financial implications associated with eliminating the Vacant and Excess Land Property Tax Subclass Reductions were outlined.
- The benefits to Phase-Out or Eliminate the Rebates and Reductions include:
  - Eliminates the duplication of tax reductions as vacancy is presently accounted for in MPAC's valuation assessment.
  - Eliminates the disparity with residential properties.
  - Promotes tax equity – all properties pay annual taxes based on current value assessment.
  - Promotes healthy communities – reduces vacancies and derelict buildings.
  - Encourages landlords to best utilize their properties.
  - Eliminates administration costs.
  - Municipal and MPAC staff have more time to focus on building and maintaining the assessment base.
  - Reduces costly and time consuming appeals to the Assessment Review Board

### **Questions/Comments:**

There were no questions or comments and Mayor Lever declared the Public Open House closed. Council will take no action on this proposal tonight. Staff will be reporting at a later date with a recommendation for Council's consideration.

### **Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.