



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PUSLINCH PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Thursday, September 17, 2015

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Puslinch Community Centre
23 Brock Rd. South

FILE NUMBER: A09-GRA

MEMBERS: Mayor Dennis Lever – Chair
Councillor Susan Fielding
Councillor Ken Roth
Councillor Matthew Bulmer

The Chair advised that there were many different schemes for payments for the use of the facilities by the various groups. In an effort to level the playing field with respect to payments, during the 2014 and 2015 Budget discussions Council passed resolutions to waive the rental fees associated with the various facilities. In December 2014, during a Council Goals and Objectives meeting of Council, Council directed staff to conduct a review and provide draft policies for grants and in-kind donations based on comparator municipalities.

The Chair advised that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to seek the public's comments and questions on the draft policies that are before Council. No decisions will be made at tonight's meeting with respect to these policies. All comments and questions will be considered and come forward at a future Council date for consideration.

The Chair advised the attendees that those who wished to make comments should stand proceed to the microphone, state their name for the record and address their comments to those in attendance.

The Chair advised that once questions and comments from the Public had been completed that the Councillors in attendance this evening would have an opportunity provide comments and questions.

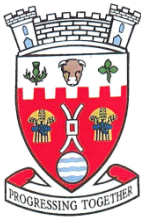
Presentations

The Chair introduced Mary Hasan, Director of Finance/Treasurer.

Ms. Hasan began her presentation with a summary of the information she would be providing to the attendees including: Council goals and objectives, Recreation and Parks Master Plan recommendations, reduced rate for the use of Township facilities, Grant Application Policy, total upset limit of grant funding, implementation strategy and future reporting

Ms. Hasan advised that a Special Council Meeting was held on December 22, 2014 for the purpose of setting goals and objectives for this term of Council. During that meeting one of the goals was the development of a Grant Application Policy prior to consideration of the 2016 budget and the development of a policy regarding the use of Township facilities by community groups prior to consideration of the 2016 budget. Ms. Hasan advised that the 2016 Budget discussions would be commencing on September 30, 2015.

Ms. Hasan advised that in May 2015, Council adopted, in principle, the Recreation and Parks Master Plan. One of the recommendations contained in the plan was that Council adopt a community grant system policy with an annual intake of



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applications from a set pool of money within the Township's budget through which community organizations can apply for funds to be used to offset start-up funds associated with a group or activity (but not ongoing operational costs); to install, build, renovate or upgrade smaller scale parks or recreation facilities that are needed within the community; and/or to assist with a special program or event that would not otherwise be financially viable but that provides a justifiable social or economic return to the Municipality as a whole.

Ms. Hasan advised that the Recreation and Parks Master Plan also recommended that Council also adopt a policy to address special requests for fee waivers in an equitable and transparent manner with an example that Council may wish to consider such fee waivers as providing each affiliated community organization with one two hour room rental free each year for an annual meeting.

Proposed Fee Reduction Policy

Ms. Hasan advised that staff have conducted research with respect to fee reductions and waivers and based on a survey of comparator municipalities staff are recommending that the policy include a reduced rate of 40% for the following facility rentals, Optimist Recreation Centre – Gymnasium, Arena, Rink, Puslinch Community Centre – Alf Hales Room, Archie MacRobbie Hall, and Kitchen, Sports fields, Rink board advertising, ball diamond advertising and electronic sign rental advertising.

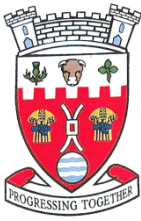
Ms. Hasan advised that organizations eligible for the fee reduction would include organizations in existence for at least one year, organizations who have their principal address in the Township and are operating as a not-for-profit organization or an unincorporated community group. In order to determine eligibility, the organizations would be requested to provide documentation including, a copy of its letters patent or articles of incorporation, a copy of its constitution and by-laws, a copy of its Notification of Charitable Registration letter from the Canada Revenue Agency with any supporting documentation indicating the applicant's status and terms of registration, if applicable.

Ms. Hasan advised that ineligible organizations would include: groups or organizations affiliated with any political party or event; individuals, commercial organizations, and coalitions such as ratepayer associations; hospitals, hospital foundations and hospital auxiliary groups or agencies; educational institutions including universities, colleges, schools and associated auxiliary groups; organizations not in good financial standing with the Township or in litigation with the Township and organizations that have not fulfilled any other obligations that they have with the Township.

Ms. Hasan provided information in chart format which indicated which organizations received in-kind contributions during 2014 including the amount received and the financial impact of the 40% reduction to those groups under the proposed policy. Ms. Hasan advised that based on the Township's calculations, in 2014, the various groups received a combined total of \$25,862 of in-kind donations.

Proposed Grant Policy

Ms. Hasan advised that organizations eligible for Township grants would include organizations which have been in existence for at least one year, have their principal address in the Township, are operating as a not-for-profit organization or an unincorporated community group and organizations who propose to use proceeds for the benefit of the Township and its residents, organizations who are able to demonstrate that there is volunteer involvement in the day to day provision of its services and demonstrate financial need and information indicating the impact on the activity should the funding not be received.



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Ms. Hasan advised that in order to determine eligibility, the organizations would be requested to provide documentation including a copy of its letters patent or articles of incorporation, if applicable; a copy of its constitution and by-laws; a copy of its Notification of Charitable Registration letter from the Canada Revenue Agency with any supporting documentation indicating the applicant's status and terms of registration, if applicable; a copy of its most current budget; a copy of its most current financial statements and a list of its Board of Directors.

Ms. Hasan advised that the organizations ineligible under the proposed grant application policy would include, groups or organizations of a religious nature, groups or organizations affiliated with any political party or event; individuals, commercial organizations, and coalitions such as ratepayer associations; hospitals, hospital foundations and hospital auxiliary groups or agencies; educational institutions including universities, colleges, schools and associated auxiliary groups; organizations not in good financial standing with the Township or in litigation with the Township; organizations that have not fulfilled any other obligations that they have with the Township; and organizations that have entered into an agreement for the use of a municipally owned or controlled facility at a nominal rate.

Ms. Hasan advised that the Recreation and Parks Master Plan also recommended that ongoing operational costs not be funded by the grant program, therefore ineligible funding requests would include: donations to charitable causes, travel or accommodations, uniforms, personal equipment, banquets, entertainment; attendance at conferences, workshops or seminars; personnel costs; insurance and accounting costs; operating costs and retroactive costs for purposes which have already occurred; funding of prior year deficits and political campaigns, parties or events.

Ms. Hasan advised that in addition to the provision of grants to various groups the Township has been providing additional services to organizations including provision of photocopies and mailings free of charge on behalf of certain community organizations.

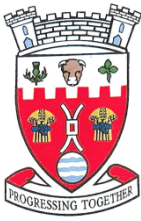
Ms. Hasan advised that as indicated in the Township's User Fee By-law No. 076/14, photocopy costs for community groups and neighbourhood associations are exempt, however, staff are recommending that mailings completed on behalf of certain community organizations be discontinued in accordance with the Township's agreement with Pitney Bowes on the use of the postage equipment.

Ms. Hasan advised that past practice has been for the Township to pay for the advertising costs associated with the Optimist Santa Claus Parade, Aberfoyle Fall Fair, and the Plowing Match. Staff are recommending that the Township provide advertising on the Township's website for qualified applicants hosting community events for the benefit of the Township and its residents and should a qualified applicant request reimbursement of advertising costs for advertisements for special events in local newspapers, the applicant should include this as part of their annual grant request.

Classes of Applications - Donations

Ms. Hasan advised that the draft grant policy includes a number of different classes including the following:

Donation including a fund request of up to \$500. This would include grants for organizations that are community-based and fairly represent both their own interest and those of the community in which they serve. Services, programs and activities must demonstrate a benefit to the Township and its residents. The requirements for this grant is a letter from the applicant indicating detailed information regarding the grant request including how the funding requested meets the evaluation criteria including organizations that demonstrate collaboration, positive community engagement and civic pride, promote volunteerism, participation and leadership development, foster a healthy,



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safe and active community, fiscal and overall accountability and responsiveness to existing community need.

Sponsor or Contributor including a fund request of greater than \$500 and up to \$3,000. These grants are to be given to organizations for the purpose of a community event or program that benefits the Township and its residents. Ms. Hasan advised that examples include the Santa Claus Parade, Fall Fair, Canada Day Pancake Breakfast and Fireworks, and the Mill Creek Stewardship Ranger Program. Completion of a Grant Application Form would be a requirement.

Project Funder including a fund request of greater than \$3,000. These grants are to be given for special purposes and/or projects for an activity deemed to be of significant value to the Township and its residents. Requirements include completion of a Grant Application Form, Presentation of grant request to Council during budget process, Post project reporting within three (3) months of the project's completion or within three (3) month's of the organization's fiscal year-end, whichever comes first. The Report is to include financial statement and/or receipts, outlining how the funding was utilized and how it contributed to the overall goals and objectives of the organization with the final report to be presented to Council.

Ms. Hasan provided an overview of the total grant and in-kind funding including and excluding the \$25,000 of grant funding provided to Puslinch Lake Conservation Association as it compared to other comparator municipalities.

Ms. Hasan advised that staff have recommended that Council set a maximum threshold of grant funding as a percentage of the previous year's tax levy and that total grant funding not exceed 0.5% of the previous year's approved tax base to be more in line with the comparator municipalities reviewed.

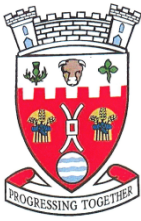
Ms. Hasan advised that this amounts to \$16,832 based on the 2015 taxation levy of \$3,366,369 and that staff are recommending to Council that this limit be applied for the 2016 budget year.

Ms. Hasan advised that with respect to Budget approval, the first step is for applications to be reviewed by the Finance Department for completeness and to ensure organizations applying for funding meet the eligibility requirements. The Finance Department will prepare a report as part of the Operating Budget process providing Council with summarized information regarding the requests and amounts requested. The purpose of the report is to ensure approved grant funding is in line with the set pool of money allocated for grants as recommended in the Recreation and Parks Master Plan and adopted as part of the Grant Application Policy.

Ms. Hasan advised that with respect to implementation staff are recommending that the reduced rate of 40% be effective January 1, 2016 and details be included as part of the User Fee By-law for 2016 and that the grant and in-kind policy be effective for the 2017 budget process with the Township sending letters to previous funding recipients in June/July of 2016 providing details of the new process and application requirements. The Township will place advertisements in the local newspaper and Township website in June/July of 2016 regarding the program.

Ms. Hasan advised that for the 2018 budget and future year budgets, only an advertisement will be included in the local newspaper and Township website regarding the program to invite applicants to apply for funding. The deadline for submission of the required documentation will be by 2:00 pm on the last business day of August 2017.

Ms. Hasan concluded her presentation by advising that the next steps are for staff to report back in 2016/2017 with regard to organizations under separate agreement,



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establishment of a facility use agreement with the Upper Grand District School Board and sports facility user fees collected from the various sports clubs.

Questions/Comments

The Chair thanked Ms. Hasan for her presentation and then introduced the Township staff who were in attendance at the meeting.

The Chair asked if there were any members of the public who wished to voice a comment or question. The Chair reminded those that wished to voice comments or questions, come to the microphone and state their name for the minutes that were being taken.

Mr. Bruce Joy, Puslinch Soccer Club, commented that he would prefer that the Township keep the 100% in-kind in place as he would prefer that any monies that would go to the Township for room rentals could be used to buy equipment for the club.

Mr. Joy inquired as to how much money the Township had been setting aside for the 10 year plan to carry out other recommendations in the Recreation and Parks Master Plan.

Ms. Hasan advised that she did not have that information available this evening.

Mr. Joy inquired as to when the Township would begin implementation the other recommendations contained in the Recreation and Parks Master Plan.

The Chair advised that during the 2016 Budget discussions, Council would be selecting those items from the plan in which it will be built into the 2016 Budget. The Chair advised that some monies had been put into reserves.

Karen Landry, CAO-Clerk advised that a report would be coming forward to Council on October 7, 2015, with the dates in which the budget will be discussed including the date for a Public Meeting with respect to the 2016 Proposed Budget which will include details regarding items and spending amounts.

Mr. Brian Rheal, Puslinch Lake Conservation Association Treasurer provided information regarding the history of Puslinch Lake and the dredging project including information regarding the Township's involvement in the technical report for the project. Mr. Rheal advised that in addition to the monies received from the Township, the project has received personal money from the residents of the lake to support the project. The timeline for the project is 6 years and they are now in year 3 of the project with the eastside of the lake being completed. Mr. Rheal expressed concerns regarding project completing on time should the funding from the Township no longer be available. Mr. Rheal stated that the money provided by the Township ensured the health of the lake.

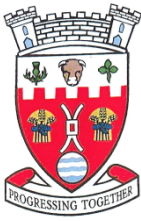
Peter Clarke, Rotary Club of Guelph South, advised that they have held a pasta dinner fundraiser for many years at the Puslinch Community Centre and requested clarification as to whether the reduced rate was 40%.

Ms. Hasan advised if your rental was \$1,000 that the group would pay \$600.

Mr. Clarke inquired as to when the 2016 Proposed User fee would be adopted as they intend to hold their event in February 2016.

Ms. Hasan advised that the proposed fees would be implemented January 1, 2016, and that a staff report with respect to user fees would go forward to Council in October.

Mr. Cameron Tuck, Flambrough Orthodox Baseball League, advised that his group was in the early stages of organizing a fundraiser in 2016, with the proceeds to go towards



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the Puslinch baseball diamonds. Mr. Tuck inquired if the proposed policy would allow for groups to make requests of Council to waive rental fees for fundraising events.

Ms. Hasan advised that the policy would permit a 40% reduction for the group on their rental rate.

Mr. Tuck was concerned that the rental fees could not be waived given that the fundraiser was to benefit the township facilities. Mr. Tuck advised that this was a grey area in the policy that was not addressed.

Ms. Debbie Huether, Mount Carmel-Zion Church, read a letter that was submitted earlier to the Township which outlined the many benefits the senior luncheons provide and expressed concerns regarding the provision of those luncheons should the Church be required to pay.

Ms. Kelli Todd Wallace, resident on Puslinch Lake, recommended that should the Township decide not to continue funding for the Puslinch Lake project that a special area rate or tax be implemented by the Township to fund the project. Ms. Todd Wallace also recommended that the Township consider setting aside tax dollars for services which Puslinch Lake did not receive such as sewer, water and garbage collection and put these monies towards the lake project.

The Chair advised that both himself and the CAO have looked into establishment of a special tax rate for this project, however, this option is unavailable. The Chair advised that all residents were on septic and wells and that garbage collection was available to only a small amount of residents in the Township. The Chair advised that garbage collection is a County of Wellington service and they are in the process of reviewing their collection policies.

Ms. Todd Wallace advised that if funding is not available for the Puslinch Lake dredging project it will affect the 100 homes around the lake and their property values. Ms. Todd Wallace indicated that if this is the result, that residents will leave the lake area which will affect the entire municipality.

Mr. Vince Kilmkosz indicated he owns several properties in the Township, is on the board for the Aberfoyle Fall Fair and will be the 2016 President for the Puslinch Optimist Club. Mr. Kilmkosz asked as to whether HST was charged on the rental fees.

Ms. Hasan advised that HST was charged.

Mr. Kilmkosz indicated that both the Optimist Club and Fall Fair are struggling to engage volunteers for their various events. Mr. Kilmkosz indicated that if the in-kind donations were not provided by the Township that they would experience additional difficulties and this could result in events not taking place. Mr. Kilmkosz indicated that other service clubs in Guelph are facing the same issues and have had to scale back their events.

Mr. Kilmkosz advised that the Aberfoyle Fall Fair was close to folding up due to the rain for the past 2 years. Mr. Kilmkosz believed that \$25,000 was not a significant amount of in-kind donations to service clubs.

The Chair advised that the proposed policies were a request of Council and staff was requested to report back with recommendations.

Mr. Cameron Tuck advised that the proposed policy indicated that political events would be excluded to receive fee waivers and advised that in the past the Optimist Club held All Candidates nights for municipal, federal and provincial elections and inquired as to whether fees would need to be paid for these events.



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Ms. Karen Landry CAO-Clerk advised that the use of township facilities for political events would need to be reviewed when the Township conducts a review of its Code of Conduct Policy and Election.

Ms. Sarah Bailey a resident of Puslinch stated that she considers Puslinch to be a unique Township and it would be difficult to compare to other municipalities. Ms. Bailey believes that this would need to be considered when looking at the numbers.

Ms. Barb Hagey a resident of Puslinch and member of Mount Carmel-Zion Church inquired as to why the Recreation Master Plan did not include anything for Seniors.

The Chair indicated that the Recreation Committee was in the process of working with individuals in Guelph to provide senior activities.

Ms. Barb Hagey stated that the residents don't want Guelph involved.

Mr. Bill Sims recommended that an additional \$7 could be collected on behalf of the Township for Puslinch Lake Residents and suggested that Grants and provincial funding could be used for the project. Mr. Sims stated that it was important that something be done to benefit the whole Township.

Ms. Lois Howlett, a Puslinch resident advised that she wears many hats in the community including volunteer.

Ms. Howlett believes that volunteers offer so much to the community that consideration should be given to how the building of the Puslinch Community Centre was funded.

Ms. Howlett indicated that she donated \$500 towards the costs of the building in a time when she had young children and finances were limited.

Ms. Howlett believes that Community Centre is poorly maintained with the lack of audio equipment for the municipal all candidates night, only one stove for use, and believes it is a disgrace.

Ms. Howlett questioned as to how much in-kind contributions volunteers have provided to the community.

Ms. Howlett believes this is a money grab resulting from bureaucracy and believes this is a make work project that somebody needs to do to justify the increase in the number of staff at the Township office.

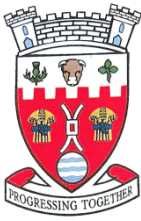
Ms. Howlett believes that the provision of a budget was an unreasonable request and that we need to come back to our roots.

Kelli Todd Wallace recommends that the Township impose a small tax increase if they need the money.

The Chair advised that all comments and recommendations would be considered through the budget process.

The Chair asked if the members of Council wished to voice a comment or ask questions.

Councillor Bulmer thanked all those in attendance this evening and believes that it was appropriate that we are hear meeting in a gift from the community.



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Councillor Bulmer indicated that the community has been instrumental in the development of activities and buildings in the Township including, the tennis club, Optimist Recreation Centre and in fact the land that those activities take place on was donated by the Agricultural Society and any policy development shall reflect those gifts.

Councillor Bulmer inquired if it was possible to quantify the value of the \$25,000 in-kind contributions to the community.

The Chair advised that you would need to know what type of event the group was having before a value could be placed on it.

Councillor Bulmer indicated that he would be interested in learning from the groups what the value of the in-kind contributions are to those groups.

Councillor Bulmer stated that Puslinch is a unique community and questioned as to what percentage of facilities in other municipalities were received as gifts from the community.

Ms. Hasan indicated that this matter was not looked into in the development of the policy.

Councillor Bulmer advised that it would be nice to know what percentage of facilities were donated by the community in other municipalities.

Ms. Hasan indicated that staff could make this request of other municipalities.

Councillor Fielding thanked those in attendance for coming out this evening and indicated that it shows the care for the community.

Councillor Fielding expressed concern that removing monies from the groups means a dollar not going back into the community.

Councillor Fielding indicated that as a Councillor she needs to look at fiscal responsibility.

Councillor Fielding indicated that if individuals had any questions that they should contact her to discuss the matter.

County Councillor Don McKay advised that he is involved in 3 organizations in the Township including: the Optimist Club who provides a scholarship for Puslinch residents and the group provides a lot to the community; Friends of Mill Creek who through volunteers have been dedicated to improving the creek. Councillor McKay advised that the grant received from the Township assists with the Ranger Program which has been in existence for the past 10-12 years Councillor McKay advised that 100 percent of the kids who have participated in the Ranger program have gone on to environmental programs and environmental careers; and the Agricultural Society who has dedicated the lands to the Township for the building of the community centre in exchange for the 3 days of the fair and have been doing so for the past 175 years.

Councillor McKay indicated that Puslinch is a unique community and believes that if organizations were required to pay that the Township may lose the organization. Councillor McKay indicated that maybe the Township needs to lead by example.

Councillor Roth thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting and advised that the Township will take all comments made at tonight's meeting into consideration. Councillor Roth advised that user fees are used to maintain facilities and if fees are not collected then Council needs to consider whether funding is obtained through taxes.



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The Chair inquired as to whether there were any additional comments or questions.

There were no further questions.

The Chair advised that all comments made at tonight's meeting would be taken into consideration by Puslinch Council and those who have signed in and indicated that they wish to be notified further with respect to this matter will be advised when this matter will come forward again to Puslinch Council.

The Chair thanked staff for all their work on development of the draft policies and advised that the Township will endeavor to come up with a system that is fair and transparent.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at 8:31 p.m.