

MINUTES

Council met at 4:00 p.m. for their first Regular Meeting of the month.

Present: Mayor Peterson, Councillors Banbury, Barnes, Demarest and Young.

Staff: Baer, Belanger, Borton, Davidson, Degier, Krug, and Matheson.

Mayor Peterson in the Chair.

1. Welcome

2. Call to Order

3. Approval of the Agenda

RESOLUTION #3

Moved by – Councillor Demarest
Seconded by – Councillor Barnes

Be it hereby resolved that the agenda for the May 15th, 2024 Regular Meeting of Council be adopted as printed, and circulated.

.Carried

4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None.

5. Adoption of Minutes

a. May 1st, 2024 Minutes of Council

RESOLUTION #4

Moved by – Councillor Banbury
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that the minutes of the May 1st, 2024 Meeting of Council be adopted, as printed and circulated.

.Carried

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

None.

7. Public Meetings

None.

8. Delegations / Presentations

None.

9. Correspondence

a. Specific

i. Township of Clearview, Council, re: Cemetery Transfer / Abandonment Administration & Management Support

RESOLUTION #3

Moved by – Councillor Demarest
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Whereas under the Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002 (FBCSA), when a cemetery is declared abandoned by a judge of the Superior Court Justice, the local municipality within whose geographic boundaries the land of the cemetery is located becomes the owner of the cemetery with all the rights and obligations in respect of the cemetery and the assets, trust funds and trust accounts related to it that the previous owner or operator possessed;

And Whereas over the last decade, there has been an increase in the number of churches and local cemetery boards initiating processes to transfer ownership or abandonment of their owned and operated cemeteries to the local municipality due to operational issues;

And Whereas municipalities experience the same issues and pressures that churches and local boards experience with the operation and maintenance of cemeteries within its jurisdiction, and additional transfers of cemetery lands only compound the burden on municipal taxpayers;

And Whereas cemeteries are important infrastructure where the reasonable costs for interment rights, burials, monument foundations, corner stones and administration charges do not sufficiently support the general operation of cemeteries;

And Whereas the interest earned from the care and maintenance fund(s) of a cemetery do not provide adequate funding to maintain the cemetery with the rising costs maintenance;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that Council of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim supports the Town of Bracebridge and requests that the Province through the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and the Bereavement Authority of Ontario (BAO) consider the following to assist municipalities in this growing concern of cemetery transfers:

- Provide annual funding (based on the number of cemeteries a municipality owns and operates) to municipalities to assist with the maintenance of inactive and active cemeteries;
- Provide free training opportunities for municipalities regarding cemetery administration; and,
- Investigate and support the design of universal cemetery software for use by municipal cemetery operators that can be offered at an affordable cost.

And that this resolution be circulated to the Hon. Todd McCarthy, Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery, Jim Cassimatis, BAO CEO/Registrar, and MPP Ernie Hardeman.

.Carried

- ii. Municipality of Huron Shores, Council, re: Urging the Government to Promptly Resume Assessment Cycle

RESOLUTION #4

Moved by – Councillor Demarest
Seconded by – Councillor Banbury

Be it hereby resolved that Whereas the assessment cycle is an essential process for maintaining the fairness and predictability of property taxes in our province;

And Whereas the pause in the reassessment cycle has created uncertainty and instability in property taxation, impacting both residential and commercial property owners;

And Whereas the government has delayed an assessment update again in 2024, resulting in Ontario's municipalities continuing to calculate property taxes using 2016 property values;

And Whereas both current and outdated assessments are inaccurate, increase volatility, and are not transparent;

And Whereas frequent and accurate reassessments are necessary to stabilize property taxes and provide predictability for property owners, residents, and businesses alike;

And Whereas the Government has announced a review of the property assessment and taxation system with a focus on fairness, equity, and economic competitiveness, and therefore further deferring new property assessment;

Now Therefore Be It Resolved that the Council of the Township of Blandford-Blenheim supports the Municipality of Huron Shores and hereby calls upon the Premier to promptly resume the assessment cycle to ensure the stability and predictability of property taxes while the Government conducts its review of the property assessment and taxation system, or respond with an alternative method for every municipality in Ontario to achieve fair taxation;

And That all Municipalities in Ontario and their constituents are encouraged to apply pressure to the Premier, daily, weekly, and monthly, to resolve the situation before it causes undo stress to everyone in the Municipality;

And That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Premier, the relevant provincial authorities, and the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, to make proper changes as quickly and efficiently as possible.

.Carried

b. General

i. Paul Michiels, Manager of Planning Policy, County of Oxford, Re: Initial Review of Bill 185 and Draft Provincial Planning Statement 2024; and,

ii. Paul Michiels, Manager of Planning Policy, County of Oxford, Re: Bill 185 and Provincial Planning Statement.

RESOLUTION #5

Moved by – Councillor Barnes
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that the general correspondence items be received as information.

.Carried

10. Staff Reports

a. Drew Davidson – Director of Protective Services

- i. FC-24-09 – April Monthly Report

RESOLUTION #6

Moved by – Councillor Banbury
Seconded by – Councillor Demarest

Be it hereby resolved that Report FC-24-09 be received as information.

.Carried

b. Ray Belanger – Chief Building Official

- i. CBO-24-05 – April Monthly Report

RESOLUTION #7

Moved by – Councillor Barnes
Seconded by – Councillor Demarest

Be it hereby resolved that Report CBO-24-05 be received as information.

.Carried

c. Jim Borton – Director of Public Works

- i. PW-24-12 – Monthly Report

RESOLUTION #8

Moved by – Councillor Banbury
Seconded by – Councillor Young

Be it hereby resolved that Report PW-24-12 be received as information.

.Carried

d. Sarah Matheson – Clerk

- i. DC-24-01 – Council Conference, Training and Education Policy

RESOLUTION #9

Moved by – Councillor Demarest
Seconded by – Councillor Banbury

Be it hereby resolved that Report DC-24-01 be received as information.

.Carried

11. Reports from Council Members

Mayor Peterson reported that Holiday weekend fireworks are in Princeton on Saturday May 18th with a rain date of Sunday May 19th.

12. Unfinished Business

None.

13. Motions and Notices of Motion

None.

14. New Business

None.

15. Closed Session

None.

16. Other Business

None.

17. By-laws

- a. 2434-2024, Being a by-law to provide for the adoption of budgetary estimates and tax rates for 2024, and to further provide for penalty and interest in default of payment; and,
- b. 2435-2024, Being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council.

RESOLUTION #10

Moved by – Councillor Young
Seconded by – Councillor Barnes

Be it hereby resolved that the following By-laws be now read a first and second time:

- a. 2434-2024, Being a by-law to provide for the adoption of budgetary estimates and tax rates for 2024, and to further provide for penalty and interest in default of payment; and,
- b. 2435-2024, Being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council.

.Carried

RESOLUTION #11

Moved by – Councillor Demarest
Seconded by – Councillor Banbury

Be it hereby resolved that the following By-laws be now read a third and final time:

- a. 2434-2024, Being a by-law to provide for the adoption of budgetary estimates and tax rates for 2024, and to further provide for penalty and interest in default of payment; and,
- b. 2435-2024, Being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council

.Carried

18. Adjournment and Next Meeting

RESOLUTION #12

Moved by – Councillor Demarest
Seconded by – Councillor Banbury

Whereas business before Council has been completed at 4:37 p.m.;

Be it hereby resolved that Council adjourn to meet again on Wednesday, June 5th, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.

.Carried

Mark Peterson, Mayor
Township of Blandford-Blenheim

Sarah Matheson, Clerk
Township of Blandford-Blenheim