



Special Council Meeting Minutes

Monday, March 23, 2020 5:30 PM

60 Fairview Avenue West, Essex, Ontario

Shaheen Room

Present:

Mayor Larry Snively

Deputy Mayor Richard Meloche

Ward 1 Councillor Joe Garon

Ward 1 Councillor Morley Bowman

Ward 2 Councillor Kim Verbeek

Ward 3 Councillor Chris Vander Doelen

Ward 3 Councillor Steve Bjorkman

Ward 4 Councillor Sherry Bondy

Also Present:

Chris Nepszy, Chief Administrative Officer

Doug Sweet, Director, Community Services/Deputy CAO

Jeffrey Morrison, Director, Corporate Services/Treasurer

Robert Auger, Town Solicitor, Legal and Legislative Services,
Clerk

Jack Barron, Manager, Information Technology

Alex Denonville, Manager, Strategic Communications

A Special Council Meeting was held for the purpose of updating Council on the Town of Essex's continuing response to measures related to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6 P.M.

2. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

There were no declarations of conflict of interest.

3. Adoption of Published Agenda

a) Special Council Meeting Agenda for March 23, 2020

Moved by Councillor Vander Doelen

Seconded by Councillor Verbeek

(SP20-03-003) That the published agenda for the March 23, 2020 Special Council Meeting be adopted as presented.

Carried

4. Reports from Administration

- a) Chris Nepszy , Chief Administrative Officer

CAO Verbal Report re: Update to Council on the Town of Essex continuing response and measures related to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic.

Chris Nepszy, Chief Administrative Officer reported that the CAO's in the region have been meeting and trying to deliver the same services in their municipalities. Mr. Nepszy noted that it is a struggle to be on the same page. The Emergency Notification was something that was done as a region and has not changed what we do as a municipality. It does allow the municipality to be more nimble with procurement, and to be flexible with staffing. Mr. Nepszy noted that Emergency Plans are set up for disasters and the potential loss of staff, they are not set up for a reduction of services and staffing. Currently the doors are closed to the public but the town is still operating as usual but by other methods such as online and by phone. The arenas and pool are closed, but staff is being redeployed to catch up maintenance in the facilities and provide extra cleaning in the Town Hall and at the Gesto office.

- b) Chris Nepszy, Chief Administrative Officer

CAO Verbal Report re: By-Law 1903 being a by-law to Delegate Authority to the Chief Administrative Officer during a COVID-19 emergency.

Chris Nepszy, Chief Administrative Officer reported that the proposed By-Law 1903 contains a number of delegations to ensure continuity for business purposes and would only be enacted during a time of emergency declared under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. Mr. Nepszy stated that although the by-law contains delegations to administration that may be enacted during a time of a declared emergency, there are a number of restrictions on the delegations. Mr. Nepszy noted that administration must continue to comply with the Town's by-laws, policies and procedures. The delegation of authority is for emergency purposes only and will only be used if imperative, otherwise Council will continue to make the required decisions and receive ongoing updates and information concerning any emergency measures that take place. Mr. Nepszy also stated

that a formal report will be presented to Council at a future Regular Council Meeting and if required, a confirmation by-law will be brought that lists these delegated decisions which Council has been made aware of when the declared emergency has ended. Mr. Nepszy noted that the delegation permits a very limited scope of action and that no one is able to make decisions on their own. Decisions will require two to three staff and must be recorded for Council. The proposed by-law has been drafted with checks and balances with the CAO, Treasurer and Town Solicitor and is only operable during a declared emergency under the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act.

Moved by Councillor Vander Doelen

Seconded by Councillor Bowman

(SP20-03-004) That By-Law 1903 being a by-law to Delegate Authority to the Chief Administrative Officer during a COVID-19 Emergency, be read a first, a second and third time and be adopted on March 23, 2020.

Carried

c) Legal and Legislative Services Report 2020

Re: Procedural By-Law 1681 Amendments to Permit Electronic Participation for Council Meetings.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Meloche

Seconded by Councillor Bjorkman

(SP20-03-005) That Legal and Legislative Services Report 2020-06 entitled Procedural By-Law 1681 Amendment to Permit Electronic Participation for Council Meetings prepared by Robert Auger, Town Solicitor, Legal and Legislative Services/Clerk dated March 23, 2020 be received;

That Public Participation in Council Meetings be limited to livestream or other available electronic means until such time as provincial orders related to the declared Provincial State of Emergency have expired; and

That By-Law 1902 being a by-law to amend Procedural By-Law 1681 so as to permit electronic participation in a meeting as specified therein, be read a first, a second and third time and be adopted on March 23, 2020.

Carried

- d) Jack Barron, Manager, Information Technology

Re: Verbal presentation pertaining to virtual/video meetings.

Chris Nepszy, Chief Administrative Officer detailed some of the procedures and best practices for participating in a virtual meeting.

Jack Barron, Manager, Information Technology provided an overview of virtual meetings including options for backup.

Chris Nepszy, Chief Administrative Officer further explained the options for virtual meetings including Teams and Zoom.

Moved by Councillor Bjorkman

Seconded by Councillor Verbeek

(SP20-03-005) That the verbal presentation pertaining to virtual/video meetings presented by Jack Barron, Manager, Information Technology be received.

Carried

5. Correspondence

- a) Laurie Brett

Re: Property Tax Relief during COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic.

- b) Councillor Bondy

Re: Letter to the Province of Ontario and Ontario Energy Board in regards to the elimination of time of use for Hydro rates during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic.

(SP20-03-006) That Council send a letter to the Minister of Energy, Greg Rickford, to suspend “time of use” billing during the quarantine period as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and

That this letter be sent to the Ontario Energy Board, the Premier, and our local member of Parliament Taras Natyshak and all Ontario Municipalities.

Councillor Verbeek requested a recorded vote.

Recorded	Support	Opposed
Councillor Verbeek	X	
Councillor Bjorkman	X	
Councillor Bondy	X	
Councillor Vander Doelen		X
Councillor Bowman		X
Mayor Snively	X	
Councillor Garon	X	
Deputy Mayor Meloche	X	
Results	6	2

With a recorded vote of six (6) in support and two (2) opposed the motion **Carried.**

- c) Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Re: Providing Flexibility for Municipalities to Hold Local Meetings during
Emergencies

Moved by Councillor Bjorkman

Seconded by Councillor Bowman

(SP20-03-007) That the correspondence listed in Agenda Items 5a) and 5c) be received and supported.

Carried

6. Adjournment

Moved by Deputy Mayor Meloche

Seconded by Councillor Steve Bjorkman

(SP20-03-008) That the meeting be adjourned at 6:32 PM

Carried

Mayor

Clerk