

CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HILTON
INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF HILTON BEACH

MINUTES

Joint Council Meeting

April 29, 2015

7:00 p.m.

Present:

Hilton Township Council: Pat Garside, Dianne Holt, Robert Jerrard, Dave Leask, Rodney Wood

Village Hilton Beach Council: Pat Davey, Greg Duma, Robert Hope, Julie Moore, John Wells

Clerks: Valerie Obarymskyj and Peggy Cramp

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

Reeve Wood agreed to chair the meeting and welcomed all council members as well as those residents in attendance. An agenda had been established to address some issues regarding the joint services of both municipalities including Fire, Library and Landfill as well as non-shared services including the Community Hall and Recreation.

Members of Hilton Township Council addressed the services currently included in the Fire Department's Mission Statement. The intent behind the discussion was to address the limited number of volunteers currently serving on the Fire Department and whether or not the capability was there to safely conduct interior firefighting. The issue of 'safety' was clarified as being in the interest of the volunteers themselves and in consideration of their own families. Hilton Township representatives stressed they were not questioning the competence of the volunteers and credited their commitment; however, concern remained that the individuals who have volunteered their time in both training and responding to fire calls should not be facing the risks associated with interior firefighting. It was thought that the majority of volunteers had signed up with the focus being to learn how to capably provide exterior firefighting in areas such as brush fires or keeping structural fires from spreading to neighbouring buildings. Hilton Township referred to the recent training session offered by Office Fire Marshal and Emergency Management (OFMEM) Fire Advisor, Bob Thorpe, who had confirmed the number of volunteers our Department had that were reasonably expected to respond to fire calls was inadequate in terms of required numbers for interior firefighting. Mr. Thorpe acknowledged that all fire departments on St. Joseph Island were now part of an Automatic Aid Agreement but this did not resolve the issue given the response time necessary for interior rescue was less than the time it would take additional volunteers to reach the scene from other municipalities. The value of the Automatic Aid Agreement was not being dismissed, but the expectations it delivered in terms of interior rescue were thought to be overstated given the fact fire doubles every sixty seconds.

Some council members considered the wording in the current Mission Statement to adequately address the issue as it stated 'interior and exterior firefighting' would be conducted at the discretion of the Fire Chief or Deputy Chief. It was noted that in the past it had been unusual for either Officer to be first on the scene to make that determination and subsequently that decision would then become the responsibility of the first to respond at the scene. It was noted that volunteers always had the option to refuse to carry out work in which they did not feel adequately trained. The expectation of the public was noted in terms of level of service for their tax dollars. It was stated that the benefits of interior firefighting were greater for the Village in terms of proximity to the fire hall. It was confirmed, however, that there had been multiple residential fires within the Village that had still resulted in a complete loss of the structure and interior firefighting, despite the close location, had not been possible. It was stated that it is the responsibility of the Fire Chief to ensure all members are adequately trained to deliver all the services included in the Mission Statement. In response, the reality of volunteer turnover was addressed as well as the length of time involved in training a volunteer to safely deliver interior rescue. The concern that too much was being expected from simply community-minded individuals was addressed. The suggestion was made that the volunteers themselves should be asked by the Fire Board about how they feel about delivering interior rescue and participating in the level of training required to safely do so. It was also recommended that Fire Advisor, Bob Thorpe be asked to participate in the discussion.

In addition to interior firefighting, Hilton Township questioned if the delivery of ice rescue was in the best interest of our volunteers noting the number of individuals that had died province-wide during professionally delivered ice rescue training exercises. It was confirmed that only two of our current volunteers participated in certified training several years ago. In-house training exercises are currently being offered to the volunteers but it was unknown if this form of training would be considered adequate by the Ministry of Labour (MOL). It was stated that the volunteers enjoyed the exercise as it was something different and that given we are a water-based community, it is a service that should be delivered. The time factor necessary for a successful ice-rescue was noted and questioned as to whether or not it was feasible. The possibility of the Coast Guard responding from Sault Ste Marie was questioned as well as the time factor involved. It was agreed that confirmation would be obtained to make sure the level of training currently offered meets the requirements of the MOL and NFPA standards; whether or not formal recertification is required, as well as any inspections/replacement of the associated equipment.

Hilton Township members advised they had recently completed an updated Simplified Risk Assessment which confirmed the need for a satellite firehall. Over half of the Township, including multiple subdivisions, are currently beyond the recommended 8 km distance from a responding firehall and as a result, many of the affected

residents either pay an insurance premium or are not considered protected by their insurance companies. This fact is because of the location of the existing firehall which is situated on the northern border of the entire Township. The Village stated that as the satellite would offer no benefit to Village ratepayers the associated cost should be assumed solely by the Township. The fact that the Hilton Union Fire Department is a jointly owned service between the two municipalities was noted with each community having its own set of specific issues. The Village's specific needs include the Marina, the trailer park, multiple commercial establishments, landfill and hydrant care. The main issue with the Township is its large geographical response area. A suggestion was made that the cost of any satellite be based on the population of each municipality but this would not be in conformity with the current Agreement which states all assets are owned and funded by both municipalities on a 50/50 basis.

Hilton Township provides administration/financial services for the Fire Department and it was noted that hydro costs have escalated over the past few months to a level that addresses the need for immediate improvements to the firehall. Renovation of the current firehall has been discussed over the last few years ever since a wall was removed to improve access to the new pumper vehicle. It was for this reason each municipality has contributed \$10,000 annually over three years to prepare for the suggested addition/renovation. It was confirmed that \$30,000 is currently available and earmarked for a new tanker and \$70,000 has been set aside for building improvements. As the result of budgeted and approved 2014 expenditures not being made over the past year, a surplus of over \$8,000 resulted as of December 31, 2014. The surplus was transferred to the Fire Working Capital account which now has a balance of approximately \$24,000. Rod Wood offered to look into the cost of various heating alternatives and the information would be presented to the Fire Board at the upcoming budget meeting.

The matter of ownership of the Hilton Union Public Library's (HUPL) book collection was questioned by Hilton Township. The issue was addressed last year with both the Village Council and the Library Board but no resolution was reached. The existing Agreement between the Village and the Township states that all assets of the library belong to the Village and the Township only shares the operational costs of the library on a 50/50 basis. If the Township does not own any share of the book assets, then the annual book purchase cost should not be part of the operating budget. The book collection has been included in the HUPL's financial statements as a tangible capital asset with an original value of approximately \$70,000 and depreciation shown in the \$35,000 range. The Township had received notice from the Village and the Library Board that it owns half the books but this is contradictory to what is stated in the formal Agreement. The Township asked that the Agreement be amended to reflect joint ownership if that is the position of the Village and HUPL.

The Village of Hilton Beach Council advised that they had received a report from the Ministry of Environment stating specific actions were required in regard to the landfill on the M and N Road. While the landfill is located within the boundaries of the Township of Hilton, it is owned and operated by the Village. The Township pays a fee to the Village on an annual basis so that its residents can use this service. The fee is currently based on the Township paying close to 70% of the associated costs and as a result of agreement by the Township in 2004, Hilton Township no longer is entitled to any share of the tippage fees. When agreeing to waive our share of the tippage fees in 2004, it was with the understanding such fees would be set aside in a reserve fund for post-closure costs. The current actions required by the MOE include a more frequent compacting of the household trash; cleaning up the windblown litter; reducing the size of the metal pile; professionally draining the tagged refrigerators; improving on the splash pads around the sludge deposit areas, adding signage identifying the drying trenches and maintaining a log book of sludge deliveries; producing a plan for the overall area. Hilton Township questioned the cost of implementing such changes in terms of how it might affect the Township's budget for this year. The costs were unknown at this time. The Village confirmed it was willing to speak with the Township Road Superintendent in terms of a road layout that would work well for both the residents and plowing/grading efforts. The possibility of selling the landfill to the Township was noted as it made sense in terms of both the location and the Township's equipment capabilities; however the priority at the present time was satisfying MOE's conditions. The Village noted that it has just amended its fee structure for tippage fees and the cost of a tandem load of shingles has been increased to \$200. Other fees have also increased and a summary of the new rates will be made available to the Township so it can advise its residents.

The Village addressed use of the Hilton Beach Community Hall as an emergency warming center for Township residents and noted the variety of maintenance costs associated with upkeep of the hall. Under the current Emergency Plan, the Royal Canadian Legion in Richards Landing is named as the emergency centre for all Island residents. As part of a recent provincial grant, the Village obtained a generator to permit use of its own hall as an emergency centre for its residents. Such generators require specific annual testing which can only be done by certified personnel with none located locally and as such, the cost of such service contracts is quite high. It was for this reason that St. Joseph Township requested all island communities share in the cost of the servicing contract for the generator located at the Legion. The Township of Hilton has contributed to that cost in the past and offered to do the same toward the cost of the Village's generator service contract.

The Village noted it has a new Recreation Committee and extended an invitation to the Township to participate in future events on a joint basis. The Recreation Committee is currently planning to do some improvements around Forbes Park to improve the beach area as well as holding a yard sale encompassing both communities. The tentative date for the yard sale is June 27, 2015.

Chair Rod Wood thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Reeve, Rodney Wood

Valerie Obarymskyj, Clerk Treasurer

F I R E - 911 for Emergencies

Build an Emergency Survival Kit *(courtesy of Emergency Management Ontario)*

Your emergency survival kit should have everything you and your family would need to be safe and take care of yourselves for at least three days immediately following an emergency.

The following list is broken down into the essentials, items you may need to meet your family's unique needs, and items to have ready in case you have to leave your home.

WHAT TO PUT IN YOUR SURVIVAL KIT

Essentials

- Food (non-perishable and easy-to-prepare items, enough for 3 days) and a manual can opener
- Bottled water (4 litres per person for each day)
- Medication(s)
- Flashlight
- Radio (crank or battery-run)
- Extra batteries
- First-aid kit
- Candles and matches/lighter
- Hand sanitizer or moist towelettes
- Important papers (identification, contact lists, copies of prescriptions, etc.)
- Extra car keys and cash
- Whistle (to attract attention, if needed)
- Zip-lock bag (to keep things dry)
- Garbage bags

Special Considerations

- Items for babies and small children—diapers, formula, bottles, baby food, comfort items
- Prescription medication
- Medical supplies and equipment
- Pet food and supplies
- Any other items specific to your family's needs

Extra Supplies for Evacuation

- Clothes, shoes
- Sleeping bags or blankets
- Personal items (soap, toothpaste, shampoo, comb, other toiletries)
- Playing cards, travel games, other activities for children

OTHER TIPS

- Pack the contents of your kit in an easy-to-carry bag(s) or a case on wheels.
- Store your kit in a place that is easy to reach, and ensure that everyone in your family knows where it is.
- Your kit does not have to be built overnight. Spread your shopping over a few weeks. Purchase a few items every time you go to the store.
- Your water supply is meant to cover what you would drink as well as what you might need for food preparation, hygiene and dishwashing.
- Check and refresh your kit twice a year—when the clocks shift to/from daylight savings time is a good time. Check all expiry dates and replace food and water with a fresh supply. Check batteries and replace as needed.
- Keep your cell phone or mobile device fully charged.