

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAR FALLS

MINUTES of the Special Meeting of Ear Falls Council
Ear Falls Municipal Council Chambers
August 12th, 2016 @ 10:00 a.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Deputy Mayor Simon called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Deputy Mayor Tracey Simon, Councillor Rob Eady, Councillor Dan Sutton, Clerk Treasurer Administrator Kimberly Ballance, Deputy Clerk Treasurer Paulette Covell, the Honourable Bob Nault, Member of Parliament for Kenora, Melissa Dawe, Parliamentary Assistant, and 1 member of the public.

3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

None declared.

4. MATTERS FOR WHICH SPECIAL MEETING WAS CALLED

4.1 Ear Falls Priority Projects.

Deputy Mayor Simon welcomed Mr. Nault to the meeting.

Mr. Nault provided an update on some of the files that he has been working on. The Ontario-Canada Agreement will be signed at the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Conference and this will permit the rollout of Ontario projects under this funding package. Most of the projects that will qualify for funding are water and sewer projects, particularly those that are shovel ready. The signing of the Ontario-Canada Agreement at this point may have delayed projects in the north from starting during this construction season, however this is a 10-year program and will provide many opportunities for infrastructure funding.

Council advised that the Water Treatment Plant Intake project will remain as the community's priority infrastructure project.

Council discussed with Mr. Nault the denial of the Waste Disposal Site Enhancement project under the Small Communities Fund.

Council discussed the Township's pending application with FedNor for an Economic Development Officer. Mr. Nault advised that FedNor funds for the year have been allocated and recognized that communities across the region are unable to move projects forward without the support of the agency.

Mr. Nault advised that Economic Development was a key priority for the Federal Government and that a number of meetings would be

forthcoming with members of the forestry sector on labour availability and training requirements.

Council and Mr. Nault discussed the availability and provision of electricity to northern communities with construction planned to start in 2018. This would be a prime opportunity for the development of an all-weather road for these northern communities.

Council discussed the Township's applications to the Canada Summer Jobs Service as the community did not receive any funding in 2016. This was disappointing since providing jobs for youth is critical to youth retention.

The three major initiatives that will be identified in the Federal budget are:

- Health Care
- Climate Change Initiatives
New funding will be available for water, sewer and roads projects under the upcoming climate change initiatives, since severe weather events are impacting this critical infrastructure in ways that were previously improbable. This is an area that engineers are now considering when developing new infrastructure. Climate change initiatives will also include renewable energy projects. In Northern Ontario hydro electricity requirements have been clearly put forward as a concern, both from a cost and an availability perspective.
- The Economy

Council discussed the Township's Heritage Trail project and its denial under the New Horizons for Seniors Funding program. Mr. Nault suggested that an application under the social infrastructure funding would perhaps be a better program

Intercommunity transportation is an ongoing issue for the communities in the region and it is anticipated that an announcement will be made in the near future. This will need to be linked to a future all-weather road to the north. Transportation methods are intimately linked to people's access to health care.

Cottage lot development was a recent topic of discussion between Mr. Nault, Roger Valley, Councillor for the City of Dryden, and Premier Kathleen Wynne. This topic will likely receive additional attention as it is important to the economy in the north.

Economic Development is a key topic that the region needs to work on as a region. Economic Development Officers are doing a great job of working on their individual municipality's projects, however perhaps there needs to be more regional cooperation on projects in order to advance the economy in the region. This has been initiated but additional work is necessary.

Council noted that they appreciated the changes made with respect to the Experimental Lakes Area and discussed the review of the Waterways Protection Act. Federal legislation is under review and

will be brought forward for debate in due course.

Council discussed internet availability and internet speed in northern Ontario. In 2006 the Federal Government set a minimum target of 15 mbps for broadband in Canada, and in 2016 the Ontario Government has committed to some funding for this region. Clarification was requested on whether FedNor would play a role in the ongoing development of broadband development in the north.

Council requested that Mr. Nault consider and lobby for the Northern Residents deduction to be indexed in line with the increased cost of living in the north. This is critical for the success of businesses, residents and youth retention in the region. Mr. Nault advised that he would follow up with Council on this.

Mr. Nault thanked Council for their attendance at this meeting and requested that additional information on the status of funding applications be sent to his office.

Deputy Mayor Simon thanked Mr. Nault for his attendance.

5. ADJOURNMENT

RESOLUTION NO. 211

Moved by Dan Sutton. Seconded by Rob Eady.

RESOLVED THAT this Special Meeting of Council adjourn at the hour of 11:07 a.m.

Carried.

Mayor

Clerk