

**Township of South-West Oxford
Special Council Minutes
January 12th, 2021**

Members Present: Mayor: David Mayberry (Mayor)
Councillors: Paul Buchner (Ward 1)
Peter Ypma (Ward 2)
Valerie Durston (Ward 3)
George Way (Ward 4)
Jim Pickard (Ward 5)
Craig Gillis (Ward 6)

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Mary Ellen Greb, Chief Administrative Officer
Diane Larder, Treasurer
Adam Prouse, Works Superintendent
Julie Forth, Clerk

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m. by Mayor David Mayberry and a quorum was present.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

Motion to Accept Agenda

Resolution No. 1 Moved by Peter Ypma
Seconded by George Way

RESOLVED that the special meeting agenda for the January 12th, 2021 meeting of council be approved.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Discussion Items

Strategy Corp - Oxford County Service Delivery Review Consultation Workshop

John Matheson, on behalf of Strategy Corp, provided Council with an introduction of the workshop scheduled for today. He noted that the purpose of the workshop is to determine Council's interest in implementing the recommendations that were made in the Joint Oxford County Service Delivery Review report. He stated that Strategy Corp. has not been retained to do any

independent analysis of the report, and that they will not be expressing their views on that. They are meeting with Council today to facilitate the collection of Council's general views on implementation:

Mr. Matheson stated that Watson's Service Delivery Review report commented on two main types of recommendations: opportunities for cost savings and opportunities for service improvements. He advised Council that they will focus primarily on the five initiatives that may generate greater than \$40K in savings, this includes:

- Roads and Bridges, Culverts, Active Transportation and Structures;
- Parks and Recreation;
- Solid Waste Management;
- Police;
- Trails

With respect to Road and Bridges, Culverts, Active Transportation and Structures, Mr. Matheson asked Council what they consider to be the critical success factors in this area. The following comments were made:

- Two tier road system may require different maintenance standards for different classes of roads;
- Consideration will need to be given to the requirement to have separate shifts for works operators. Need to ensure that due diligence is done as this will increase the cost at the lower tier level – will a cost savings still be achieved?
- It may make sense for rural municipalities to take on maintenance of roads. Need to consider the difference between maintenance vs. capital. Need to look deeper to see what the potential savings may be;
- Union considerations will need to be taken into account.
- There would need to be risk free savings achieved;
- Storage of all materials, salt, sand and trucks would need to be considered;
- Council is open-minded to this, subject to due diligence. Want to make sure that there is an opportunity for improvement and cost savings.
- Capital expenses would likely be a greater expense than maintenance – funding would need to come along with that.

With respect to Parks and Recreation, Council expressed the following with respect to critical success factors:

- The Township doesn't operate any arenas or pools; everything is volunteer driven;
- Council doesn't think there is a lot of opportunity for cost savings in this area for South-West Oxford;
- South-West Oxford does not have parks and recreation staff other than administration staff;
- South-West Oxford is concerned about maintaining the volunteer base and how to support them;

- Cross-border services within this area are needed because at times there are not enough participants to make up a team within one area. The sports leagues rely on participation from surrounding municipalities;
- Council supports opportunities for efficiency through bulk purchasing so long as they have the ability to put their own specifications on what is purchased for the Township;
- South-West Oxford has a different kind of parks and recreation program and there is some reluctance to give up authority over this. The program is informal and volunteer driven.

With respect to Solid Waste Management, Council expressed the following critical success factors:

- South-West Oxford is providing waste collection services at the lowest bidder price (this was retendered by the County last year);
- Consider discussion regarding the cost of bag tags and landfill fees; suggest that bag tags should be priced to fully cover the cost of the service with the exception of recycling. More support towards a higher bag tag fee rather than a lower fee – to encourage diverting waste from the landfill;
- Six-day delivery within South-West Oxford has saved money and reduced greenhouse gas emissions – suggest that other municipalities may consider this option as well;
- Want to ensure that a system is maintained to encourage creative and innovative thinking. There is concern about being put into one system and not being able to try different things and learn from each other;
- Need to look at what is and isn't included in the blue box system. The new County contract removes some items from the blue box which leads to more going in to the garbage/landfill (ie. film plastic). This is a loss of service and has created angst within the community;
- May consider looking at frequency of large item pick – don't want to create more dumping issues which may be the result of eliminating large item pick and increasing bag tag fees.

With respect to Policing, Council expressed the following critical success factors:

- South-West Oxford does not currently have a police services board;
- If the province decides to consolidate, Council would be in support of one board for the County rather than individual ones;
- OPP currently operate out of Ingersoll and Tillsonburg and provide service to South-West Oxford.

With respect to Trails, Council expressed the following critical success factors:

- Trails in South-West Oxford are primarily operated by volunteers;

- Coordination of maintenance equipment may be valuable;
- South-West Oxford's financial commitment towards trails is fairly limited;
- MNR and Trails Canada discourage anyone else getting involved in the maintenance of their trails – comes down to trail ownership;
- Three trails in South-West Oxford – they are not owned by the Township;
- Not sure there is a big savings with respect to trails to be achieved within the Township;
- There are no current proposals to add trails within the community. This would be volunteer driven and maintained.

With respect to opportunities for cost savings within smaller initiatives, Council shared the following comments:

- Suggest that there may be a greater business case for *animal control services* if all five rural municipalities tendered this service together – may result in more bids;
- The *Community Emergency Management Coordinator (CEMC)* responsibilities of the lower tier municipalities may be better delivered by one CEMC for the County. CAO Mary Ellen Greb stated that she doesn't think that the costs for this service are being captured accurately. There are not currently dedicated hours towards this position at the lower tier level, the responsibilities are in addition to the other responsibilities of the staff position. The level of service in this area could be improved with dedicated support at the County level. There is reluctance among some municipalities to have a combined effort; South-West Oxford is willing to do this. This is an area where there is duplication and a lack of a coordinated effort;
- With respect to *planning matters and public meetings*, South-West Oxford is in support of this recommendation. This provides an opportunity to improve the service and reduce the timelines to get projects completed for residents and businesses that want to see progress made in their operations;
- South-West Oxford is in favour of *joint purchasing* where possible;
- *Cemeteries* within South-West Oxford need to be left for now. There is no paid staff except the Treasurer who does the treasury work for the boards. The boards and cemeteries continue to be run by volunteers. It is expected that there will be requests in the future to transfer the responsibilities to the Township. Some of the boards are struggling financially;
- With respect to *economic development*, it may be difficult to have one organization for the entire county. Urban vs. rural municipalities are often competing for the investment;
- Extension of *servicing* from one municipality to another is also an issue for growth and development;

- *Joint training* should be explored when there are opportunities to do so;
- Suggest one county-wide library board;
- Service Sharing Group is currently looking at standardizing boundary road and service agreements;
- VOIP and 511 have been implemented.

In considering the goals of the Service Delivery Review overall, Council made the following comments:

- South-West Oxford is a collaborative municipality and is willing to look at sharing services. This is something South-West Oxford considers during everyday practice when opportunities arise. Drainage superintendent services is another area which CAOs are encouraged to explore possibilities for sharing;
- Council wants to encourage backyard composting in response to organic waste – working to encourage participation within the community;
- Council is open to opportunities for improvements and potential cost savings based on the business case and full analysis;
- Council is generally long-term thinkers and like to give consideration to the end-of-life cost as part of their analysis;
- Want to ensure that there is a need and benefit to any changes;
- With respect to roads, lower tier maintenance responsibility was a recommendation in a previous study and not implemented. Don't like to see the money spent on the evaluation of services and then not make the service improvement;
- South-West Oxford would like the process to move forward as quickly as possible to get to the recommendations;
- Want to ensure value for money, service levels and a good fit for South-West Oxford models (ie. volunteers run);
- South-West Oxford has made a lot of progress using technology and sharing resources with other municipalities;
- Rural and urban municipalities have slightly different cultures – this needs to be remembered and protected;
- Among the rural municipalities there is a willingness to work together. There may be things that the County can work in partnership with the urban municipalities and other services with the rural municipalities;
- Want to be careful that services are not downloaded or uploaded if there is not actually a savings. Want to ensure that whichever level delivers the service is the best one to do it.

Confirmatory By-law

Resolution No. 2 Moved by Valerie Durston
Seconded by George Way

RESOLVED that By-law 06-2021 being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council held Tuesday, January 12th, 2021 be read a first, second and third time this 12th day of January, 2021.

AND FURTHER THAT the Mayor and Clerk are hereby authorized to sign the By-law and affix the corporate seal.

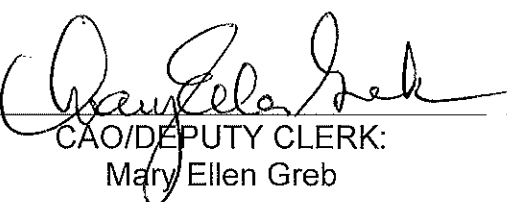
DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

Adjournment

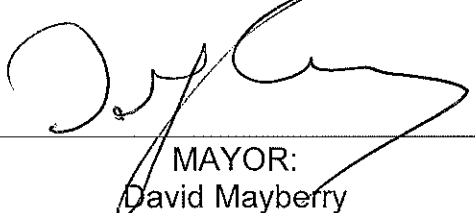
Resolution No. 3 Moved by Jim Pickard
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that there being no further business, the Special Council meeting be adjourned at 11:02 a.m. to meet again in regular session on Tuesday, January 19th, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried



CAO/DEPUTY CLERK:
Mary Ellen Greb



MAYOR:
David Mayberry