

Special Council Meeting Minutes – December 11th, 2007

**The Corporation of the Township of Lake of Bays
MINUTES**

There was a special scheduled meeting of Council held at 6:00 p.m., on December 11th, 2007 in the Council Chambers of the Township of Lake of Bays Municipal Offices, Dwight, Ontario.

Attendance

Mayor	Janet Peake
Councillors	Ben Boivin
	Virginia (Ginny) Burgess
	Nancy Tapley
	Ruth McEachern Ross
CAO/Treasurer	Don Chevalier
Administrative Assistant	Nicole Tye
22 members of the public	

REGRETS

Councillor	Margaret Casey
	Philip Cote

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m., on December 11th, 2007, by Mayor Peake

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Resolution # 2(a)/12/11/07

Councillor Nancy Tapley and Councillor Ruth Ross

Be it resolved that the Special Council Meeting Agenda dated December 11th, 2007 be adopted as approved.

3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Nil

4. TENDERS

Nil

5. DELEGATIONS

At the meeting members of the public were encouraged to express any concerns they may have with respect to the “customer service” within the Township of Lake of Bays. The following comments are divided into departments for simplicity:

Administration

General

- On-going tax increases without increased services.
- Concerned about unfair return for value of taxes paid in Ril Lake area.
- More taxes are being received from the northern section of the municipality without any improvements/services being offered.
- Seasonal residents and remote year-round residents are not always utilizing services for which their respective tax dollars are paying.
- Improvements to the current election process required.
- Time-lines for real estates transactions are 8-10 days and the municipality is responding to information requests in 3-4 weeks—requests for services need more timely responses to overcome inefficiencies in both offices.
- Consider “live” voice (i.e. > 1 receptionist) rather than voice recording at 635-2272.

Bylaw

Water Access points

- Experiencing extensive bureaucratic red-tape for usage of water access points.
- Hours of use at water access points for contractors should be extended.
- Continue with policy and enforcement of illegal camping at municipal water access points.

ATV's

- Concerned with increased ATV traffic on the trails within the municipality (i.e. boundary roads) and would like Council to be aware and cautious of ATV associations coming into the area.

Enforcement

- More consistent enforcement of illegal structures constructed on privately-owned land (permits) and/or road allowances (licence of occupation).

Building

Communication

- Better communication between the building and planning departments required.
- No problems with the building department in respect to telephone calls being returned.
- Regular frustration in dealing with staff and thinks there needs to be better management/coordination between departments.
- Both contractors and individuals experience the same difficulties in dealings with the building and planning departments.
- Concerned about the time it takes municipal staff to deal with matters internally.
- More public meetings to review proposed changes in building code.

Flexibility

- In contractors' dealings with building officials.
- Contractors are required to submit two sets of plans with application. and one set remains at the municipal office.
- Inspection failed because set of the plans were not on site.
- Contractor cannot always be present during scheduled inspection.
- Suggested inspectors carry set of plans to construction site.
- Automatic fee of \$75 to re-book an inspection for seemingly small oversights.
- Need a more cooperative approach and respect for contractors.
- Enforcement of building code with military zeal.
- CBO has the authority through a clause in the building code for the "equivalency" in a building and would like to see this practiced where necessary to avoid hiring an engineer to approve the "alteration".
- No compromise or flexibility exhibited by building officials with contractors.
- Huntsville seems to be able to do inspections anytime; whereas, the Lake of Bays appears to have strict rules in place as to "when" and "where".

Inspections

- Inspectors fail job when it may be only 3% incomplete, this happens when contractors pre-book inspection and anticipate that the job will be complete.
- Extenuating circumstances may occur beyond their control that may delay completion.

- Contractors would like to see a process implemented whereby the contractors have the ability to contact the inspectors in the morning and avoid extra expense or delay.
- Consider utilizing Huntsville building department staff when the municipality is experiencing shortage of staff.
- Delays in inspections are costing contractor's money.

Applications

- Building application process deemed overwhelming and sometimes contractor placed in defensive position due to adversarial approach by inspectors.
- Satisfied with the building department and the turn-around time on applications.

Fire

- Commend Baysville Fire Department for fast courteous fire and medical services.

Public Works

Generally, quick response to road issues.

South Camp Lake and North Tasso Lake Road

- Condition poor, resulting in personal vehicle scraping along pavement.
- Tasso Lake Road requires significant capital improvement; particularly the pot/water-hole near civic address "1120".
- Monitor seasonally-maintained road from Tasso Lake to Camp Lake Road for patching.

Toad Lake

- Condition of boat landing poor and inadequate snow removal.

South Portage Road

- Concerns with inadequate sanding operations on slopes/hills of South Portage Rd.
- Concerned about speed issues on South Portage Road.

Walker Lake Road

- Concerns about the inadequate snow removal.
- Consider changes to 1 kilometer section (icy strip where 3 accidents had occurred due to poor drainage) when proposed improvements to Walker Lake Drive scheduled in the summer of 2008.

Cooper Lake Road

- Condition of Cooper Lake Road is poor.
- Numerous attempts at patching does not appear to be working.
- Tends to be “quick fix” and temporary.
- Turn-around for trucks inadequate.
- Private driveway opened to accommodate plow turn around.

West Oxbow Lake Road

- Local contractor plows seasonally-maintained road.
- Would like municipality to re-consider taking on responsibility by possibly paying contractor (approximately \$5,000/per year).
- 3 volunteer firefighters for the Interlaken Station residing on West Oxbow Lake Road.

Snow Plowing

- Concerned about arrangement for plowing of seasonally-maintained roads and obtaining timely medical assistance for recently developed medical condition.
- Consider plowing hill at end of Muskoka Road 8.
- Consider snow plowing of turnarounds/parking areas with smaller equipment.
- Consider tendering for winter plowing and day labour summer work for contractors to keep some work within the community.

Ril Lake

- Inadequate road maintenance of Ril Lake area roads.

Misc.

- Concerned with speed of tandem trucks on Muskoka Rd 8.

Recreation

- Concerned with poor condition and maintenance of water access points.

Planning

Communication

- Improve communication between the building and planning departments required.
- Both contractors and individuals experience the same difficulties in dealings with the building and planning departments.
- No response to multiple telephone messages.
- Concerned about the time it takes staff to deal with matters and stressed the poor communication occurring between building and planning departments.
- Experiencing regular frustration due to seemingly poor coordination between departments as contractors have strict time-lines also.
- For denied requests back up paperwork or copy of the bylaw excerpts explaining reason for denial would allow for more accurate and professional explanations by contractor to respective clients.
- There seems to be a lot of cross-over work happening in the municipality that ultimately costs money for the taxpayer (i.e. fish habitat studies, etc.).

Development Permit

- Causing too many delays and too complex.
- By-laws and the development permit system are complex and generally everything appears to be forbidden or “guilty until proven innocent.”
- Professional staff is required by contractors for municipality’s complex development permit application system.
- Development permit has the “us versus them” approach.
- Permit for landscaping can take upwards of 4-6 weeks without any leniency in process.
- Non-returned telephone calls growing problem; understands staff busy but would like acknowledgement of telephone call and provide approximate time-line for response to question.
- Concerned with the development permit and required attendance at Council 4 times this year to monitor project status.
- Development permit is unacceptably slow process, perhaps more staff required.
- Development permit system is overwhelming and causing such problems that relocating business is being considered.
- Development permit system is challenging.
- Requires more consultation with municipal staff to evaluate how the individual policies apply to specific properties.
- Labour intensive and often difficult to schedule additional meetings with staff resulting in delays in projects and more frustration.

Flexibility

- Local engineer refuses to work with local contractors' projects within the municipality due to adversarial position taken by staff.
- Planning department needs to exercise more flexibility as opposed to having all matters taken to Council for approval.
- Every project is site specific and more flexibility required.

Municipal Building/Staff

- Municipal office use to be friendly place; not the case now.
- Municipal staff rigid and combative with applicants and their agents.
- Negative tone in office.
- No longer helpful.
- Prefer to see things return to user-friendly approach.
- Generally, municipal staff does a good job.
- Municipal staff direction/assistance to applicants lacking- instead, quote "chapter and verse" of policies, etc.

Questions

Paint Lake

Written response to following three questions requested:

- What is Council's position on the re-location of the Paint Lake boat launch?
- What is Council's position on the 170ft dock on Paint Lake as it is a Navigational hazard?
- Does Council support the proposed closure of the Dorset Library?

General

- Concerned about the algae in Lake of Bays as this is source of drinking water for many ratepayers.
- Proposed changes at local landfill transfer sites to be shared with public.
- Compliance with provincial legislation for Accessibility for all Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- Expressed desire for high speed internet in Sinclair/Finlayson ward and generally throughout the municipality.
- Satisfied with Sinclair transfer site personnel.
- Timing of perceived problems (reactive versus proactive) causing unnecessary deferrals.
- Suggested semi-annual meetings to discuss customer service (i.e. next March, 2008 day-time).

- Requested written response from the municipality stating proposed action to issues raised at customer service meeting.

6. MINUTES

Nil

7. COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Nil

8. REPORTS AND BY- LAWS

Nil

9. CORRESPONDENCE

Nil

10. MUNICIPAL COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Nil

11. MAYOR'S REPORT

Nil

12. CLOSED SESSION

- (a) A closed session, if deemed necessary, is scheduled to commence at the end of the meeting.

13. BUSINESS ARISING FROM CLOSED SESSION

Nil

14. CONFIRMING BY- LAW

- (a) By-law #07-168, being a by-law to confirm the proceedings of the special meetings of Council held on December 11th, 2007 at the Dorset Environmental Science Centre, 1026 Bellwood Acres Rd, Dorset, Ontario at 1:00 p.m. and in the Council Chambers of the Township of Lake of Bays Municipal Offices, Dwight, Ontario at 6:00 p.m.

15. ADJOURNMENT

- (a) To Adjourn

Resolution #15(a)/12/11/07

Councillor Ruth Ross and Councillor Nancy Tapley

Be it resolved that the Special Council Meeting of the Corporation of the Township of Lake of Bays adjourn at 8:10 p.m. to meet again on December 18th, 2007, at 9:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers of the Municipal Office, Dwight, Ontario.

Carried