



Ward Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 8, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

S.H. Blake Memorial Auditorium

1. Westfort Ward Meeting

Chair: Councillor Kristen Oliver

2. Resource Persons

Kathleen Cannon, Director - Revenue - Corporate Services and Long-Term Care

Sharla Knapton, Municipal Advisor - Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC)

Flo-Ann Track, Council and Committee Clerk

3. Attendance

There were 4 individuals in attendance, as follows:

Morris Hrycyshyn, Greg Dubois, Jason Veltri, Sharla Knapton

4. Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Chair, Councillor Kristen Oliver welcomed Guests, members of Administration, individuals attending in person and those watching online and at home.

5. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the Westfort Ward meeting held on March 1, 2022, for information.

6. MPAC Presentation

Sharla Knapton, Municipal Advisory - Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) provided a PowerPoint Presentation relative to the above noted and responded to questions.

Discussion was held relative to the above noted. Some items discussed were as follows:

- Questions relating to property assessment can be directed to: Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, 1-866-296-6722, email: sharla.knapton@mpac.ca
- Questions relating to Municipal property taxes can be directed to: City of Thunder Bay - Revenue Division, 1-807-625-2255
- Questions relating to property tax paid in unincorporated areas of northern Ontario outside municipal boundaries can be directed to:

The Provincial Land Tax Office, 1-866-400-2122, email: plt@thunderbay.ca, or go to the Ontario Ministry of Finance website for information regarding Provincial Land Tax

7. Sports Facility

The Chair received the following question via email:

Why has the current Council ignored the private sector Expressions of Interest previously submitted as requested by the past Council for an Indoor Turf Facility?

The Chair provided the following response:

The past Term of Council requested that Expressions of Interest be submitted for an Indoor Turf Facility.

At the December 12, 2022 Council received a deputation from Soccer Northwest and passed a motion directing Administration to review the deputation and report back with information, or a recommendation for Council's consideration.

8. Traffic Concerns

The Chair received the following question via email:

Its is quite apparent that the city's police force is understaffed and overworked, but the lack of traffic enforcement on Walsh by St. Patrick High School is ridiculous.

Disobeying the pedestrian crosswalk, failing to stop at the 3 way stop located at Sprague St. and Walsh St., then speeding all the way to Franklin St.

This area is used by students attending St. Patrick's High School and St. Elizabeth School on Selkirk St., families walking with their pets and seniors. Now that the sidewalks have become dangerous due to melting snow then freezing, the only option is walking on Walsh St. Someone is going to be seriously injured. What can be done as this is ongoing 7/24 365

The Chair provided the following response:

The areas mentioned are areas of concern, the speed limit is posted 40 km/hr to protect pedestrian traffic.

Speeding occurs across the city; traffic patrols are conducted regularly and as often as Police resources allow.

The Government allows Municipalities to use Automated Speed Enforcement Programs. Council is hoping to implement such a program and has directed Administration to review automated speed enforcement programs, funding sources and information from communities currently using automated speed enforcement programs to assist with traffic enforcement.

9. Intergovernmental Affairs Committee Update

Councillor Kristen Oliver, Chair - Intergovernmental Affairs Committee provided an overview and update relative to the work of the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee, an advisory Committee of Council, as follows:

- mandate of the Committee is to look at the issues that are coming forward:
 - identify what resources or supports are available
 - advocate for additional resources or support at the local, provincial and/or federal levels
 - work with Administration to make recommendations and find solutions

Some of the Committee's current priorities are:

- Homelessness, Poverty Reduction Strategies, Drug and Substance Addictions, Mental Health, and Vulnerable Populations:
 - the Ministry of Health should administer Mental Health and Substance Abuse resources,

- Municipalities have had to identify creative ways to provide resources, support and solutions recognizing that the delivery of health care is a provincial responsibility and the pressure on municipalities to deliver services is not sustainable
 - the City has been working collectively with several service organizations and agencies to provide support and wrap-around services for individuals suffering with mental health and addictions
 - Community Safety & Well Being Committee, comprised of more than forty service organizations and agencies, is doing amazing work
 - identifying gaps in service availability
 - reducing or eliminating duplication of services
 - collaboratively working on fact-based solutions to address the situation with available resources
 - a proposal has been presented to the Provincial Government to provide a Mental Health and Addiction Facility to service Thunder Bay and the surrounding area to address the opioid crisis
 - statistically opioid overdose and death is four times greater in Thunder Bay than other municipalities
 - requires capital investment
 - collaborating with community partners to find available property and resources
- Economic Development:
 - Alstom Manufacturing, formerly Can Car, Bombardier:
 - major private industry contributor in Thunder Bay
 - employment
 - tax base
 - manufacturing transportation products for Canadian and U.S. markets
 - historical value
 - Local Content Protection Policies

- United States has local content protection policies
- City is advocating for similar legislation to protect local content and jobs across Canada
- seeking final assembly requirements, for large willing stock purchases
- also asking that maintenance contracts not be considered as part of the local content requirement, to ensure we have people working at this plant
- Guns & Gangs:
 - Police are successfully shutting drug houses down but continue to experience more pressure given that the Thunder Bay is a hub
 - impacts every part of our community
 - the Federal Government has flowed over \$100M to the Province to fight Guns and Gangs, Thunder Bay has not received any of these funds
 - Thunder Bay's drug crisis is recognized nationally, and based on the statistics, we should be prioritized to receive funding
 - the City is lobbying the Federal Government to direct funds to the municipality, statistical proof demonstrates the need for further assistance in fighting guns and gangs
- Housing:
 - working in collaboration with Thunder Bay District Social Services Administration Board
 - urging the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to establish a working table to address homelessness
 - solution requires the collaboration and support from Federal and Provincial Ministers, Ontario First Nation Leaders, and property owners
 - recognize this is a complex issue we cannot solve on our own
 - the City is a willing partner and is advocating for the province to work collaboratively with municipalities to provide housing and health care

- Population Crisis:
 - need to attract 40-50 thousand people between 2035 - 2040 to ensure vacant positions are filled when the Baby Boomers and Generation X retire
 - need to build the tax base
 - Thunder Bay has seen remarkable success with the Rural and Northern Immigration Pilot Program, receiving operational support through CEDC from FedNor to deliver the pilot program, hoping this initiative continues
- IGA continues to collaborate with other committees and cities across the province and the country:
 - Ontario Big City Mayors
 - working together to find solutions for the issues that all communities are experiencing
 - homelessness
 - drug crisis, substance addictions
 - quality of life
 - advocating for the creation of a National Summit

10. Ward and City Issues

10.1 2023 Westfort Ward Infrastructure Projects

The Chair provided an overview relative to the following Westfort Ward infrastructure projects, scheduled for the 2023 construction season:

- watermain, sanitary sewer, sidewalk and street light replacement on Brock Street between Brown Street and Edward Street
- pavement rehabilitation on Brock Street from Brown Street to Heath Street
- pavement rehabilitation on Arthur Street from Mounddale Avenue to Highway 61
- sidewalk replacement on the south side of Francis Street from Edward Street to Ford Street

- Mountdale Boat Launch - improved drainage and erosion control
- Vickers Park - playground replacement
 - some historical features will remain in place
 - turtle has had a facelift
 - more accessible equipment
 - safer playground surface

10.2 Daylight Savings Time

The Chair provided the following, for information:

Reminder to advance your clock by one hour before you go to bed on Saturday, March 11, 2023, Sunday, March 12, 2023 is the beginning of eight months of extended daylight into the evening.

10.3 10 Digit Dialling

The Chair provided the following, for information:

The CRTC has mandated 10-digit dialing across Canada. Starting April 1, all Tbaytel Mobility customers will be required to dial the 807-area code followed by the 7-digit number for all local calls. Ten-digit dialing will follow later in the year for Tbaytel Home Phone and Business Voice customers. This change is necessary to support the new national 9-8-8 emergency phone number for mental health and suicide prevention services launching on November 30. To learn more, visit Tbaytel's website.

10.4 Resolute Pulp and Paper Mill Sale

The Chair received the following question via email:

What is the IGA doing to ensure continued operation and viability of the Resolute Pulp and Paper Mill?

The Chair provided the following response:

IGA is in direct communication with Mill Management and the Company

- advocating to the Federal and Provincial Governments

- expressing the importance and necessity of the Mill to our community and to the region
- jobs
- Co-Gen opportunities

10.5 Street Lights at Cherry's Corner

A constituent suggested that the lights at Cherry's Corner be changed to a crosswalk to save money.

10.6 Sports Plex

A constituent provided an overview relative to a bubble style multi purpose facility erected by the Edmonton Scottish Council Society in Edmonton in 2015.

Discussion was held relative to the above noted.

The Chair provided the following information:

- Council has reviewed several options for a multi use facility
 - there is a growing need for a facility
 - many benefits
 - extends playing season through the winter
 - draws people to the area
 - economic growth
 - promotes activity
 - bubble style facilities cost more to maintain
 - requires replacement every 15 years

10.7 Pedestrian Trail Crossing - James Street

The Chair received the following question via email:

What is the status of the pedestrian trail crossing at the tracks on James Street?

The Chair provided the following information:

The project is currently under review by the Engineering Department, completing a traffic study, to determine next steps.

10.8 OPG Land

The Chair received the following question via email:

What is happening at the OPG land on the island?

The Chair provided the following information:

Existing infrastructure is being torn down by the owner, but we are not aware of their plan for the property.

10.9 Potential Use - former Can Car Plant

A Constituent asked if the city could advocate to the owners of the former Can Car facility to manufacture water bombers?

The Chair provided the following for information:

The Alstrom plant, formerly known as Can Car, is currently tooled to manufacture other items. We can share this information with CEDC.

11. Adjournment

The Chair thanked Guests, members of Administration, individuals attending in person and those watching online and at home.

The meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.