
Committee of the Whole

April 11, 2019

Grey County Council met on the above date at 9:50 AM at the County Administration Building. Warden Selwyn Hicks assumed the Chair and called the meeting to order with all members present except Councillors Desai and Burley.

Councillor Little was in attendance on behalf of Councillor Desai.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

Delegations

Beaver Valley Outreach Update

Cathy Innes, Board Chair, and Carolyn Letourneau, Executive Director, provided an update on Beaver Valley Outreach (“BVO”).

Cathy Innes provided background information on BVO, including their vision, mission, and values. She shared a short video on BVO. Ms. Letourneau reviewed the organizational structure of BVO and provided an overview on the services offered by BVO and the people the services help.

Ms. Innes provided background information on the previous BVO location and the challenges relating to the building. BVO purchased a new building in Thornbury in June of 2018. She highlighted the benefits of the new building.

Ms. Innes asked County Council to consider an investment of \$20,000 a year for three years to help BVO with the mortgage of the new building.

Ms. Innes advised that the services provided by BVO are unique in the area. Ms. Letourneau noted that BVO does partner with the County for financial support for the EarlyON Child and Family Centre, the Children’s Reinvestment Funding, and community enhancement funds for programming. Kim Wingrove noted that the County provides approximately \$55,000 per year towards services provided by BVO.

Barb Fedy discussed how funds are distributed. She noted that each community is different in their needs. She noted the Ontario Works satellite office is located in the Golden Town housing location in Meaford, which operates four days a week. She also advised that her team travels to locations to provide services.

CW84-19 Moved by: Councillor Boddy

Seconded by: Councillor Milne

That staff bring back a report on the provision of grants to not-for-profit organizations.

Carried

Peter Frise, Vice President, Corporate & Client Services – Municipal Tax Equity Consultants

Kevin Wepler introduced Peter Frise from Municipal Tax Equity Consultants (“MTE”).

Peter Frise provided an overview of property tax and assessment concepts. He noted that assessments are based on market value assessments that are updated every four years. The assessments are phased in over the cycle period. He noted that assessment values are about the proportionate share of all real estate values (the assessment base).

A property’s value is only half of its assessment picture. In Ontario, property tax is distributed based on value and use. By having property classes and variable tax rates, taxes are seen to be distributed fairly.

Mr. Frise discussed upper-tier municipality tax policy responsibilities. He highlighted information to consider in the tax policy decision making process. He noted that the tax base is in continuous flux and must re-orient each year based on growth and valuation change. He provided information on assessment growth (or loss) and quantifying revenue growth. He outlined factors that have influenced the increase in value of farmland.

Mr. Frise discussed the phased in property assessment cycle. He noted the tax impacts of reassessment and related value changes as well as inter-municipal shifts within the County.

Mr. Frise discussed the farm class and noted that the farm class does not attach to the entire property typically. He noted that multi-portion farms with homes, experience a lower overall assessment increase. Mr. Frise discussed long term tax patterns. The farm class share of County tax projection is not increasing as much as the assessment projections.

Mr. Frise outlined tax ratios. Discussion occurred on the concept of tax fairness. Mr. Frise noted that “fairness” is a subjective concept. Discussion occurred on adjusting tax ratios. Residential is the biggest tax class and is affected the most with any shifts.

Mr. Frise noted that policy options allow for further adjustments to the distribution of the tax burden, including optional classes and sub-classes, vacant unit and land rebate programs. For 2019, the Province is phasing out rebates and sub-class discounts for the education portion of the tax bill.

Mr. Frise provided MTE’s recommended approach.

Mr. Frise discussed the municipal policy option of new argi-food business sub-classes. There are stipulations around eligibility and he noted implementation considerations.

Council recessed briefly and then reconvened.

Determination of Items Requiring Separate Discussion

No items were requested to be removed from the Consent Agenda and moved under Items for Discussion.

Consent Agenda

CW85-19 Moved by: Councillor Carleton Seconded by: Councillor Little

That the following Consent Agenda items be received; and

That staff be authorized to take the actions necessary to give effect to the recommendations in the staff reports; and

That the correspondence be supported or received for information as recommended in the consent agenda.

- i. **That the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority correspondence dated March 21, 2019 confirming that Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority will continue to provide Natural Heritage comments in the Planning process be received for information.**
- ii. **That Report FR-CW-10-19 regarding the quarterly purchasing report for Quarter 1 of 2019 be received for information.**
- iii. **That Report TR-CW-14-19 regarding the acquisition of road widening be received and that the property identified as Part of Lot 30 Concession 3 being Part 2 Plan 16R-6961; Geographic Township of Sullivan, Township of Chatsworth, County of Grey be acquired by The Corporation of the County of Grey.**
- iv. **That the Grey County Planning Active Development File List be received for information.**
- v. **That the Grey County Active Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) List be received for information.**
- vi. **That the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks Discussion Paper regarding Reducing Litter and Waste in Our Communities be received for information.**
- vii. **That the Minister of Infrastructure and Communities correspondence dated March 27, 2019 regarding the Gas Tax Fund be received for information.**
- viii. **That the correspondence from Roy Love and Virginia Stewart Love dated April 4, 2019 regarding the Farm Property Tax Rate be received for information.**

Carried

Items for Direction and Discussion

FR-CW-11-19 2019 Tax Policy

Moved by: Councillor Bartnicki

Seconded by: Councillor Clumpus

That Report FR-CW-11-19 regarding 2019 property tax policies be received; and

That the 2019 tax policies remain the same as 2018 for:

- **Tax Ratios**
- **Tax Reductions for Mandated Subclasses of Vacant Lands**
- **Tax Reductions for Farmland Awaiting Development Subclasses**
- **Optional Classes of Property; and**

That the County utilize all of the optional capping tools available in order to move as many commercial properties as possible towards full current value assessment (CVA) based taxation; and

That the necessary By-laws be drafted for Council's consideration and approval; and

That staff bring back a report to Council on the flexibility that has been provided in 2019 by the Provincial Government regarding the current vacancy rebate reduction programs to seek input and direction.

Primary Amendment

CW86-19

Moved by: Councillor Milne

Seconded by: Councillor Woodbury

That clause two of the above resolution be amended to reduce the farm tax ratio to .24%.

Carried

Councillor Soever requested and received approval from Council to share a PowerPoint presentation related to property assessment values.

Secondary Amendment

CW87-19

Moved by: Councillor Soever

Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

That Grey County request that the Government of Ontario review whether taxation using the current value assessment is achieving its policy objectives or is it unfairly targeting our farmers, seniors and long term residents living on fixed incomes, merely because they live in an area with rapidly increasing property values; and

That a representative of the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation be invited to attend an upcoming Council meeting to discuss their valuation methodology and the upcoming 2020 current value assessment.

Carried

Main Motion as Amended

CW88-19

Moved by: Councillor Soever

Seconded by: Councillor Bartnicki

That Report FR-CW-11-19 regarding 2019 property tax policies be received; and

That the 2019 tax policies remain the same as 2018 for:

- **Tax Ratios, save and except the farm tax ratio, which shall be reduced to .24%**
- **Tax Reductions for Mandated Subclasses of Vacant Lands**
- **Tax Reductions for Farmland Awaiting Development Subclasses**
- **Optional Classes of Property; and**

That the County utilize all of the optional capping tools available in order to move as many commercial properties as possible towards full current value assessment (CVA) based taxation; and

That the necessary By-laws be drafted for Council's consideration and approval; and

That staff bring back a report to Council on the flexibility that has been provided in 2019 by the Provincial Government regarding the current vacancy rebate reduction programs to seek input and direction; and

That Grey County request that the Government of Ontario review whether taxation using the current value assessment is achieving its policy objectives or is it unfairly targeting our farmers, seniors and long term residents living on fixed incomes, merely because they live in an area with rapidly increasing property values; and

That a representative of the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation be invited to attend an upcoming Council meeting to discuss their valuation methodology and the upcoming 2020 current value assessment.

Carried

Council recessed and then reconvened.

Delegation

Climate Change Action Plan

Scott Taylor introduced Louis Helps and Gursewak Singh, students from the University of Guelph who completed a study on Climate Change Action Plan for Grey County as a part of their studies.

Mr. Taylor noted that staff will be bringing a report to the April 25th Committee of the Whole meeting, which will include a link to the study.

Louis Helps provided an overview of the purpose of the study, being mitigation of the impact on climate change and adaptation. He noted the methodology for the study, being a review of in-province and out-of-province climate action change plans.

Gursewak Singh provided information from the out-of-province scan, including in the County of Annapolis in Nova Scotia and the Regional District of Central Kootenay in British Columbia. Mr. Singh discussed the in-province scan, including the Region of Waterloo and Huron County.

Mr. Helps discussed the jurisdictional scan that sought ongoing practices to expand county-wide, practices to be improved, and assets to be modernized. He discussed the policy and operational recommendations.

Councillor Paterson left the meeting.

Discussion occurred on energy efficient options and road design options.

Warden Hicks thanked the students for their work and presentation.

Items for Direction and Discussion Continued

Addendum to PDR-CW-06-18 Plan of Subdivision Davenport Revised Submission – Georgian Bluffs

CW89-19 Moved by: Councillor Keaveney Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

That Addendum to Report PDR-CW-06-18 regarding an overview of revised plan of subdivision application 42T-2017-05, that now proposes to establish a plan of subdivision consisting of twenty nine (29) single detached dwelling lots on lands described as Part of Lot 27, Concession 3, (geographic Township of Sarawak) in the Township of Georgian Bluffs, be received for information.

Carried

TR-CW-09-19 Award of RFT-TS-01-19 Grey Road 13 Road Rehabilitation, Pulverizing and Hot Mix Paving – Grey Highlands

CW90-19 Moved by: Councillor O'Leary Seconded by: Councillor Hutchinson

That Report TR-CW-09-19 containing the tender results for RFT-TS-01-19 Grey Road 13 Road Rehabilitation, Pulverizing and Hot Mix Paving be received; and

That Harold Sutherland Construction Ltd. be awarded the Tender for a total amount of \$1,059,672.90, excluding HST.

Carried

TR-CW-10-19 Award of RFT-TS-03-19 Holstein Bridge Replacement - Southgate

CW91-19 Moved by: Councillor Mackey Seconded by: Councillor Bartnicki

That Report TR-CW-10-19 containing the tender results for RFT-TS-03-19 Holstein Bridge 109-353 Replacement be received; and

That South Shore Contracting of Essex County Inc. be awarded the tender for a total amount of \$1,499,810.00, excluding HST.

Carried

TR-CW-11-19 Keppel and Sarawak Storage Agreements – Georgian Bluffs

CW92-19 Moved by: Councillor Clumpus Seconded by: Councillor Carleton

That Report TR-CW-11-19 be received and the agreements with the Township of Georgian Bluffs to share the Sarawak and Keppel storage buildings, located at 323554 East Linton Sideroad West, in the Township of Sarawak and 401297 Grey Road 17 in the former Township of Keppel be approved; and

That the by-laws be brought forward for Council's consideration.

Carried

Other Business

Councillor McQueen requested an update on ALUS. The Clerk confirmed she will bring a report to the first meeting in May.

Notice of Motion

Councillor Bartnicki provided a notice of motion to request a report on healthcare spending.

Adjournment

On motion of Councillors Milne and Mackey, Committee of the Whole adjourned at 2:21 PM to the call of the Chair.

Selwyn Hicks, Warden

Heather Morrison, Clerk