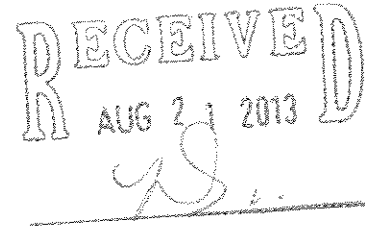


The Corporation of the  
**TOWNSHIP OF BALDWIN**

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August 16, 2013

Reeve and Council  
Townships of Head, Clara and Maria  
Town Hall  
Stonecliffe, ON K0J 2K0

#### REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

Greetings from the Township of Baldwin. On behalf of our Council, I am providing this correspondence to seek your support. We would like to initiate a dialogue with the Province on the real needs of small municipalities that are not accommodated by their cookie cutter approach. We are frustrated by the uncontrollable rising costs we are constantly forced to incur as we try to manage our financial house in an effective manner. We are tired of having to explain to the local taxpayers why their taxes are going up with no increase in service. We firmly believe that it is time that the Province take a new approach in how they share provincial revenues. Our voice alone will not garner any attention. We are too small. This letter is being sent to each of the 195 municipalities in Ontario with a population less than 5,000 with the intent that like us, you too are frustrated and are willing to offer your voice.

Baldwin Township (McKerrow) is a small rural community in Northern Ontario located along Highway 17 near the Town of Espanola. We have a year-round population of 553 people swelling slightly in the cottage season. We do not have a large commercial or industrial sector. Our total assessment in 2012 was around 34 million. Our tax rate is getting to a point that we consider it to be preposterously high considering we do not have large costly municipal services like water and sewer.

Around one-third of our municipal budget expenses come from provincially mandated services that are provided by third parties that we have no control over. In addition, fire protection is not even considered as an essential service that should receive acknowledgement and funding subsidies like Policing and ambulance. Yet thirty percent of our fire calls in the previous 48 months were to calls on a provincial highway. While we can be compensated for some of the calls there is no recognition of the cost of the equipment and firefighter training required to undertake the provision of this service in the first place. The small amount of money that we can collect from these calls does not even cover the cost of maintaining the equipment annually. It is also unlikely that we would even have this equipment if we did not have the provincial highway within our Township.

Adjacent to us, as well as in many areas throughout Northern Ontario are unincorporated areas. In fact there are 1,580 in the North. The people who have properties in these townships are required to pay property tax directly to the province. Based on the current PLT rate, a house assessed at \$54,000 would pay \$87.33. This is supposed to be the contribution that is made to offset the costs of the services provided by the Province like policing, social service and health unit costs. The same property in Baldwin Township would be paying \$827.23 for the year. Based on our total assessment and if our policing cost was the only service we had to levy taxes for that same house would be paying \$407.06. Is this fair? Is it fair that we as individual income tax payers are subsidizing the cost for someone to live in one of these municipalities? In some of these townships there are \$400, 000+ homes.

In order for there to be real and significant impacts to communities there needs to be an overhaul of the Provincial Land Tax system. This would allow for additional monies to be collected by the province that would in turn be able to augment the OMPF contributions made to municipalities. As well, the Province needs to recognize that fire protection is an essential service that we just cannot simply stop providing. The Province also has to recognize the challenges that we face are often different than our larger counterparts. We need to be able to have a stronger voice with the province when small municipalities having a population of under 5000 represent 44% of all the municipalities in Ontario.

So, we would like to initiate a campaign. We are requesting that you provide us with a letter of support and if you could provide us with the following information:

1. Total Assessment
2. Total Cost for
  - a. Policing,
  - b. Fire Protection,
  - c. Ambulance,
  - d. Social Services,
  - e. Health Unit,
  - f. MPAC,
  - g. Child Care
3. Total budget and Total levy
4. Total infrastructure deficit

We will prepare a summary and package to be sent to the Province for consideration. We would like to have the package sent before the middle of September. If you are willing to support this initiative can you please forward the above noted information to our Clerk-Treasurer by email to [peggy@townshipofbaldwin.ca](mailto:peggy@townshipofbaldwin.ca) and then a letter of support by regular mail by no later than September 12, 2013.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and collaboration in this matter.

Sincerely

  
Archie Bovin  
Reeve