



RMFEO Meeting Minutes – November 4th, 2016

Members Present: Reeve Bonnie Adams, Mayor Vivian Bloom, Deputy Reeve Brian Campbell, Mayor Jim Gibson, Mayor Garry Gruntz, Reeve Henry Hogg, Mayor Kim Love, Mayor Glenda McKay, Mayor Shaun McLaughlin and Mayor Tom Peckett

Members Absent with Regrets: Mayor Ron Higgins, Mayor Robert Kingsbury, Mayor Frances Smith and Mayor Brian Stewart

Others Present: Councillor Tony Fritsch, Addington Highlands and Christine Reed, Clerk-Treasurer, Addington Highlands.

1. Welcome and Introduction – Henry Hogg

Reeve Hogg welcomes the members and calls the meeting to order.

2. Update on the 2017 OPP Numbers – Kim Love

Mayor Love presents an analysis of the 2017 OPP Billing for the member municipalities.

The 2017 OPP costs range from \$92,141 to \$1.8 million with most being in the mid-range. The mean is \$815,761 and the medium is \$822,740 – which is up by \$100,000 over last year. Two more municipalities are over the \$1.0 million point for 2017.

Mayor Love reviews the three year trend (2015, 2016 and 2016) for all municipalities looking particularly at yearly billing amounts, annual calls for service and when the phased-in period would be over. There are three municipalities in the group which will still not be phased-in in 2017.

During the review, Mayor McKay reports that, to date, she has been unsuccessful in being able to audit the calls for service. As these calls impact the OPP bill, municipalities should have the ability to audit the calls being charged for accuracy. For example, calls in Provincial Parks or on Provincial Highways, are they being billed to the municipality in which they are located or to the Province?

There is a poll taken around the table to see which municipalities have a false alarm by-law.

Mayor Love, during the course of her examination, identified an oddity which occurred in the 2016 billing. The starting value indicated on the 2016 bill was different than the final bill for the preceding year. When examining the 2017 bill, the starting value was correct. In addition, the bill for 2016 was the only one which included the Court Security Prisoner Transport Grant. It is evident that municipalities really need to study the bills when they receive them. Even though using a billing model should make things consistent, it doesn't appear that things are consistent.

Discussion ensues surrounding the oddity identified by Mayor Love and who it should be discussed with.

Mayor Love speaks to the change in property counts. Using 2013-2014 data, the property counts for 2016 changed significantly whereas the property counts for 2017 didn't change as much. Municipalities will really want to examine their property counts after an election year.

Mayor McKay indicates that once the base is established then examining once a year is not too onerous.

The Province's push for affordable housing and the promotion of two dwelling units per property will also have an effect on household counts. It is suggested that there should be a minimum assessment that must be met before it qualifies as a household in terms of OPP billing. In addition, perhaps an additional roll number should be assigned for a "B" unit – currently they are not assessed separately but they should be.

Mayor Love indicates that these concerns should be put forward as a problem to which we need a solution to.

Discussion ensues surrounding the OPPA Arbitrated Wage Settlements. For three years there was a 0% increase in wages, in 2015 they received two increases. When the increases are averaged out over eight years they are receiving a cumulative increase of 23.76%. This impacts our OPP billing and yet we have absolutely no control over it.

Mayor Gibson notes that it is the binding arbitration that does this and it effects policing and fire service. This trend line can't continue as it is unaffordable.

Mayor Gibson requests that Mayor Love e-mail her presentation to him so he can make a presentation to his Council.

3. Discuss which OPP issues RMFEO would like to Present to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services at ROMA – Kim Love

Mayor Love asks the group if they would like to make a presentation to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services at ROMA. The group indicates that they would.

Discussion ensues surrounding the content of the presentation.

It was determined that the presentation should start out on a positive note by thanking the Minister for the properties which have been removed from the household counts for OPP billing purposes.

The following topics were decided on for the presentation;

- the need for simplified, auditable, fair and accurate Calls for Service
 - Crown Land, Provincial Parks, Crown Leases, Crown Forced Roads and Provincial Highways need separate coding when logging in calls for service
- count the number of units for each commercial property
 - commercial properties are taxed at a higher rate , so why not more for OPP
- granny flats and seniors housing to allow individuals to age at home will result in additional OPP charges
- minimum assessment to cover OPP costs – in support of ROMA's position
- involve input from AMO regarding the recommendations from OPP Municipal Policing Bureau for what is changed
- the OPPA wage increases are not sustainable for municipalities and the Province

The ability to charge each property directly for OPP costs was discussed but it was decided to not include it in the list of topics to discuss.

Mayor McLaughlin offers to assist Mayor Love and Mayor Higgins in the preparation of the delegation request with the Minister.

4. Discuss the “Unofficial” OPP Presentation for interested municipalities at the Conference – Kim Love

Mayor Love asks the group if there is interest in doing an “unofficial” presentation on OPP Billing for interested municipalities.

Discussion ensues surrounding whether or not to do an “unofficial” presentation. They identified that one challenge may be in finding a space to do it.

It is determined that they should do the presentation. Mayor Love is going to prepare the presentation and Mayor Peckett will look into getting a room to make the presentation in.

5. Survey of Asset Management Questions – Kim Love

Mayor Love requested that members submit their questions about asset management that they would like pursued by the December 2, 2016 meeting. The questions previously circulated were not to be answered but rather used to illustrate what questions they were interested in finding out answers to.

For the meeting in December, Mayor Love would like to do a workshop on gaining public and council acceptance of asset management, was there buy-in, if so, what tools did you use to achieve this? Was there anything you did which didn't work?

Mayor McLaughlin notes that Mississippi Mills adopted a long-term financial plan first then the asset management plan was built into that.

6. Review of Action Log

The Action Log – Parking Lot is reviewed.

Mayor Love indicates that she will pull the information together for the “unofficial” presentation on OPP Billing at ROMA.

Mayor Bloom speaks to succession planning and suggests that staff from Hastings Highlands would be willing to do a presentation at one of the meetings.

The Residential Tenancies Act and the potential financial implications as a result of proposed changes to that Act are discussed. Mayor Gibson questions whether RMFEO would support a resolution from his Council opposing the changes.

Mayor Love indicates that she has drafted a resolution which is a little more generic than the resolution from Head, Clara and Maria which focuses on municipality's inability to provide this service as cost effectively as the Province. She offers to circulate it out to the members for consideration at the December meeting.

Mayor Bloom speaks to the changes regarding vulnerable occupancies and how they are making it cost prohibitive to operate facilities which fall under vulnerable occupancy regulations.

Mayor Gibson expresses his concern that down the road increased responsibilities as a result of changes to the Residential Tenancies Act will be cost prohibitive for municipalities.

Mayor Peckett indicates that they do have a property standards by-law for both inside and outside and inspections are completed by the CBO but they have had very few calls over the years. However, he still isn't comfortable the proposed changes.

Mayor McLaughlin fears that more and more tenancy related matters will be downloaded to the municipalities and with that a need for increased administration services.

Mayor Love speaks to the Premier's Mandate Letter to the Ministries. Of particular interest is the one to the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services regarding Fire Service and changes anticipated for 2017. Discussion ensues surrounding the provision of a fire service. This should be on the Rural Mayor's Forum of Eastern Ontario's radar.

7. Set Meeting Dates and Locations for 2017

Discussion ensues surrounding the value of the Rural Mayor's Forum of Eastern Ontario. All members around the table feel that participation in this group is very beneficial and would like to continue on. Many include the activities of the group in a regular report to their respective Councils.

It is agreed that the meetings should continue to be held on first Friday of every month with the exception of July in the same rotation.

Discussion ensues surrounding the pins. It is suggested to maybe hold off on the pins until the group's financial situation is examined.

Mayor Love would like an update on the group's financial situation from North Frontenac for the January meeting.

As everyone will have had an opportunity to host a meeting, it was decided that it was no longer necessary to provide welcome gifts for the attendees.

Mayor McKay volunteered to bring the rotation of meeting locations to the next meeting.

Mayor Gibson informs the group of a recently attended landowners association meeting where he made a presentation on the activities of the Rural Mayors' Forum of Eastern Ontario.

8. Review of New Actions from Today

Calls for Service – Mayor McKay and Mayor Peckett - discussion on calls for services including best practices for reducing calls for service including the adoption of a false alarm by-law for the January meeting

Mayor Peckett offers to look at the OPP Monthly reports and compare municipalities for those that are willing to share their information. Of particular concern is whether the weighted hours associated with each type of call are consistent across Counties. Mayor Love offers to forward all the billing statements for Mayor Peckett to review.

Room for the “unofficial” presentation at the ROMA Conference – Mayor Peckett to call Jennifer Murphy regarding this.

Preparation of the delegation request for the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services – Mayor McLaughlin

Preparation of the “unofficial” presentation at the ROMA Conference – Mayor Love

Resolution regarding the changes to the Residential Tenancies Act – Mayor Love

Discussion with respective fire departments regarding possible changes coming into effect in 2017 – Everyone

Request for the financial position of the Rural Mayor's Forum of Eastern Ontario from the Township of North Frontenac for the January meeting – Reeve Hogg

Finalize meeting dates and locations for 2017 at the December meeting – Mayor McKay

9. Round Table/New Business

Mayor Love indicates that there may be a situation in her municipality which will affect her ability to run for a position on ROMA. In the event that she is unable to run she hopes that someone from the group will.

No other items are identified.

10. Update from the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus, Peter Emon, Renfrew County Warden and Chair of the EOWC

Warden Emon reviews the 2016 priorities for the Eastern Ontario Wardens Caucus with the group.

These priorities focused on advancing economic development and employment opportunities for the region by convincing the Province and energy suppliers to invest in the region's hydroelectricity and natural gas transmission systems; working with the Eastern Ontario Regional Network to close the cellular network and broadband gaps that exist in many communities; making our voice heard against any development-control that would limit growth and economic development opportunities in rural Eastern Ontario; supporting the Leadership Council as it begins the implementation of key actions proposed in the Eastern Ontario Economic Development Strategy; and advocating for an across the board decrease in Ontario Provincial Police Costs.

They have met with the Premier and the leaders of the opposition with respect to rising hydro costs where he expressed the opinion that we would have to go outside of government to solve this problem. This was not well received. He is not confident that there will be any immediate improvements.

Approached members of Provincial Parliament regarding natural gas and informed them that they needed a 20 year investment to build natural gas lines. This would save ratepayers, residential and commercial, energy costs. The only progress that has been made was that there was an indication that there would be an announcement within the next 60 – 90 days where details of an upcoming program will be released. In his opinion, this won't have much of an impact in this area do to the rock but they partnered with a larger group.

EOWC has met a couple of times with the Ontario Chamber of Commerce and have developed a partnership with them and the Western Ontario Wardens Caucus and they are talking about increased infrastructure spending in terms of broadband, cell and innovative technology. Looking at going to Queen's Park for a lobbying day. Partnerships have been really important to the EOWC.

With respect to the cell gap project, it was quickly realized that this was not going to solve all the areas of concern. Renfrew County is struggling how they are going to manage their Emergency Services Communications. They have had meetings with two Ministers on Parliament Hill over the past few weeks.

The Eastern Ontario Leadership Council was established with a focus on rebuilding the economy through the following strategies: provide the right infrastructure for business, create a stable and predictable business environment, develop a regional approach to economic development, delivery of innovative services, reinvent traditional sectors of the economy, and the adoption of new technology. They partnered with post-secondary educational institutions to discuss the programs they offer and their relevance. Seems to be a time lag between what programs are needed to fill the needs of the workforce and what is available. A group has been established to address this and they are making nice progress.

They have had an opportunity to meet with the Premier regarding policing costs. The Province is not going to address anything for two years as it was a five year program to roll it out and they have indicated that it will be reviewed after two more years once it's fully implemented. The EOWC will keep pushing on this.

During the meeting with the Premier, joint and several liability was also discussed however, the Province is not going to do anything about it.

The priorities for the Eastern Ontario Warden's Caucus for 2017 are continuing the work on the partnership with respect to natural gas; pushing for expanded cell networks with an emphasis on mobile broadband services particularly how it relates to public safety; supporting the Picton Terminals and the Marmora Pump Station; asking \$3.7 billion in new investment in critical municipal infrastructure; will continue to work away on joint and several liability, implementation of the Eastern Ontario Leadership Council objectives and policing costs; electricity and increasing the reliability of the grid supply.

The floor is opened up to questions. Discussion ensues surrounding potential school closures and policing costs and the inclusion of the Rural Mayor's Forum of Eastern Ontario in future discussions in an effort to give rural Ontario a larger voice, infrastructure funding both at the Provincial and Federal levels and economic development.

Warden Emon speaks about a newly release document entitled Mapping the Innovative Ecosystem in Eastern Ontario. The critical assets identified in Eastern Ontario include technological infrastructure and access to broadband, the entrepreneurial culture, the strong concentration of post-secondary institutions per capita, world class research capacity, pockets of wealth and access to capital, the proximity to major markets and the quality of life and recreational assets.

Some of the challenges identified in the document for Eastern Ontario include the fragmentation of strategies, unclear branding, lack of population density and distance between centres which impedes networking, lack of the adoption of technology by small business, post-secondary institutions not being aligned with the region's needs, fewer people with university degrees and more without high school diplomas, low attraction and retention of immigrants, and a skills gap where there is a misalignment of talent needed and talent available.

Reeve Hogg thanks Warden Emon for his presentation.

11. Adjournment

The meeting is adjourned at 14:57. The next meeting is to be held on December 2nd, 2016 in Madawaska Valley.