



RMFEO Meeting May 6, 2016

9:30 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.

Township of United Townships of Head Clar Maria
Municipal Office at 15 Township Hall Road
Stonecliffe, Ontario K0J 2K0

Attendance:

Robert Kingsbury – Mayor, Township of Horton

Ron Higgins – Mayor, Township of North Frontenac

Garry Gruntz – Reeve, Township of Brudenell Lyndoch Raglan

Brian Campbell – Deputy Reeve, Township of Tay Valley

Kim Love – Mayor, Township of Madawaska Valley

Bonnie Adams – Reeve, Township of Carlow/Mayo

Vivian Bloom – Mayor, Township of Hasting Highlands

Tom Peckett – Mayor, Township of McNab-Braeside

Henry Hogg – Reeve, Township of Addington Highlands

Jim Gibson – Mayor, United Townships of Head Clara Maria

Brian Stewart – Mayor, Lanark Highlands

Shawn McLaughlin – Mayor, Municipality of Mississippi Mills

Glenda McKay – Mayor, Greater Madawaska

Guests: MPP John Yakabuski, Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke; Debbi Grills, Councillor, United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria; Melinda Reith, CAO/Clerk, United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria;

1. Welcome

Welcome at 9:30 a.m. with an introduction by Mayor Gibson – history of the area – community growth and expansion. Mayor Gibson explained that Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MPP, John Yakabuski was planning to visit; that when he arrived, the meeting



would be recessed until after Mr. Yakabuski addressed the group.

2. Feed back on EOWC presentation Mayor Higgins & Mayor McKay

The group was represented at the Eastern Ontario Warden's Caucus meeting in Morrisburg – each forum member has been provided with a copy of that presentation. The perception from meeting attendees was that some members of the EOWC appreciate the RMFEO group, some question its need. Overall neutral response. Not sure the groups will be able to work together. Similar agenda? Seemed to be concern by members of the EOWC with this group duplicating the Urban group's effort. An offer was made to assist the EOWC; which was not taken up. It was felt that the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) is likely the best organization to work with going forward.

The split between the Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) and ROMA was discussed. How will it affect us? There seemed to be a disconnect between ROMA and who it was they were representing. Perhaps the OGRA/ROMA conference separation is a response to that. Decided that the group - RMFEO will continue to contact/interact with ROMA to increase exposure.

- The group decided to return to the EOWC after new membership was established at the upper level.
- **Action:** Follow up letter to EOWC leaving the door open – reiterate key points – we are here as a resource. RMFEO seminar/presentation will be presented to members of ROMA.
- **Action:** Mayor Gibson to cost professional name tags – RMFEO nametag. Mayor Higgins has specs to share from municipal use.

3. Review decision making process – use OPP letter as an example.

A discussion took place surrounding how RMFEO members represent respective Councils when making decisions? Are we making decisions on behalf of our council?

Mayor McKay expressed concern and described a situation in her municipality where she felt she did not have her council's full support on one issue and whether or not that municipality's signature should remain on RMFEO correspondence about it.

The group discussed various methods of addressing that issue including advising the person tasked with sending correspondence to remove individual municipal logo's and representative signatures when addressing the issue of concern.

It was expressed that so long as funding promises were not made without individual council involvement it was the legislated role of the Mayor to represent individual municipalities at various functions, including membership in the RMFEO.

- Decided that when making group decisions as to support a position taken by RMFEO or not, the decision would have to be made at the meeting to ensure timely response. That



waiting until each member discussed the issue with their respective councils and brought responses back would not be effective.

As this topic was running over the allotted time, there was a consensus to extend the time for further discussion.

- **Agreement** was made that as the heads of councils, RMFEO members are following the Municipal Act – if a specific council has a challenge on an issue and you as head of council wish not to support that stance – it has to be stated at the meeting at which the decision to take next steps was made.
- Mayor Higgins obtained permission to keep electronic signatures for future use. Will email copies of correspondence and obtain permission prior to using them in each instance.

4. Discussion on waste action – Mayor Gruntz, Mayor Kingsbury

Mayor Kingsbury to share information about shipping plastics.

Styrofoam – Beaumen's not taking it any longer. The issues with some products are widespread.

Discussion ensued concerning the importance of waste management at the ROMA conference.

- **Action:** Correspondence to be forwarded to ROMA - Why did ROMA say that Waste Management was an important current topic? What input did they want?

Break from 10:51 – 11:12

5. John Yakabuski, MPP – Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke. Mr. Yakabuski arrived during coffee break and proceeded to address the group directly after the break.

Bill 181 – changes to Municipal Act and elections. Input – PCs not supporting as it stands. Concerns that allows municipalities to bring in a new voting system – weighted vote. You will face pressure to adopt that from certain segments. The bill has gone to committee.

PC stance is that a referendum will be required – would have to happen in 2018 in each municipality before that municipality could adopt any change.

Other changes – dates for application – campaign start – May 1. PCs want to shorten that. Ask for feedback – volunteer firefighters – not being able to take a leave of absence to run for municipal office.

City of Toronto and their taxation abilities – municipal land transfer tax. PCs were certain the province was going to allow all municipalities to do that. PCs stood up against that; feeling that they are doing us a favour. The Liberal's were not going to give you a new



source of revenue – the minute one municipality brings it in – pressure for everyone to do it. When people complain – complain to us/municipalities. When implemented it is felt that the Liberal government will then state – now you have a new source of revenue – we'll give you less.

Liberals and balancing budget. Hoping not to face opposition on the Land Transfer Tax but when they did, they cancelled it.

Always concerned about how decisions affect rural municipalities. Assessments and taxes; looking for every way to make their pockets bigger and you to pay the bills.

Green Energy Act – changes made – clearly a decision about money. 2009 changes – disaster. Change the way we produce power – done at a tremendous expense. Green Power – pay highest price possible to make developers happy. Developers are happy – allowed to offer inducements to municipality – declare welcoming host.

How much are they making if they can actually do that? All challenged with budgets every day. Not providing enough services, charging too much for what you do provide. New revenue tools – I did, introduced a private member's bill. Require a municipality to go to people for referendum for green energy projects over a certain size.

Amount of money spent on Hydro – would not sign another contract for wind power in this province. Solar a little different story. Price has come down with available technology – wouldn't rule it out completely, we pay way too much for solar we have now. I'd like to see what technology does for it. Our capacity today is more than enough when you try to balance system – intermittent megawatts – too many – to sit. Wind/solar – when you don't have sun or wind – waste. 130+ solar installations in Renfrew County – helped to get them connected. My job, make sure people in my county are not froze out. The money's going around anyway – let's make sure we get our share. Not happening any more, grid capacity challenged. Challenge is that we don't know how long the solar panels will last, new industry – in 20 years all panels will no longer be working – not everyone in favour of nuclear but it works. Base load of power in our province. PCs supported the refurbishment of Darlington and Bruce Nuclear.

Don't have the kind of storage capacity that other provinces have. What's happened, water still high – letting water going over dams, free power. We have to take the wind first – allow water to go because of decisions made in the Green Energy Act.

Gas Tax – would like to see a fair share returned to all municipalities. Directly to municipalities to decide their own priorities. Comes from federal level, why not from province? Submitted as a private members bill of Mr. Yakabuski a number of times.

Q&A

- Elections and ranked ballots – dates for registration as candidate. Debate on



merits/pitfalls of ranked ballots.

- Harder to attract people to political office everywhere. How difficult the job is.
- Q - Ranked ballot – as the legislation sits – it is a choice. Why are you not supporting the bill to give the municipalities the opportunity to choose?
- A - We want the people to choose – a referendum in the next election to determine whether they want to implement ranked ballots or not. Ranked ballots could not then be used until 2022.
- If ranked voting is allowed, municipalities have a choice – choose to have a referendum – PC proposal is that each municipality **must** have a referendum. Should go to the people to make the decision.
- Green Energy – private members bill – discussion about solar/wind – excess power in current system not being used.

Mr. Yakabuski was asked to draw a ticket for the door prize. The group broke for lunch.

Mr. Yakabuski left the meeting during lunch.

13:01 meeting resumed with all others still in attendance.

6. Municipal Infrastructure Placemat

Mayor Love provided a copy of the AMO placemat which lists all available infrastructure programs from provincial and federal levels.

7. CP Rail Corridor Acquisition

Mayor Gibson reviewed the CP Rail Corridor Acquisition purchase presentation from the County of Renfrew. A brief discussion of trail systems ensued. Discussion surrounded the potential for connecting trails throughout eastern Ontario to improve tourism and the benefits for individual municipalities. Thoughts were expressed about using what's already been created as a template for moving forward.

8. Review Action Log

- Provincial collaboration - Off the list – have actioned issue as far as possible to date.
- \$250 to RMFEO account - Off the list – all submitted but one.
- Invoice and receipt for funds above - All set up
- OPP Billing – Mayor Love provided background information and update.
 - Meeting – set– MPAC, Ottawa and Toronto managers – meeting for May 30th in Calabogie. OPP representative will attend as well.
 - Some discussion around attendance – decided that a smaller representative group will lead to more frank discussion.
 - Letter from ROMA – trailers, assessment etc. Properties only earning less than a



- certain amount – should not be in OPP billing. Invite ROMA to that meeting.
- MPAC's response to discrepancy in lists between property counts and billing lists.
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- OCIF Funding - On hold. Presented position – new formula coming out. No use pursuing until new rules are in place.
 - EORN
 - Resolution template - Received.
 - Go Zoom – Mayor Gibson provided an update.
 - Received \$ to help them. Why did it not go through EORN? EORN met its mandate – province/feds infrastructure money from each – is not a service provider – enables service providers to apply for funding. EORN's attention now is to focus on cell coverage.
 - Letters of thanks
 - AMO ROMA – Mayor Higgins - complete
 - Minister and Deputy Minister Community Safety and Correctional Services – Mayor Love - Complete – electronic signatures.
 - ROMA zone rep invite to mtg – Mayor Higgins
 - Should remain an action for every meeting.
 - MPP invite to meeting – Mayor Gibson
 - John Yakabuski attended this meeting – open – keep on – leave to chair of each meeting to invite guests.
 - RMFEO provide presentation to each county.
 - Presentation completed. Can begin to present to each county. Have someone from outside the county complete the presentation. Renfrew dates? Have someone from the county extend an invitation to another member to give presentation.
9. Review new actions from today – Mayor Higgins
- Send EOWC follow-up letter for invite leaving the door open – reiterate key points – we are here as a resource. RMFEO seminar/presentation will be presented to members of ROMA.
 - Approval ROMA conference participation whether workshop or conference.
 - RMFEO name badges - Mayor Gibson to cost name tags – RMFEO nametag. Mayor Higgins has specs to share.
 - Roma – letter – why waste management? Correspondence to be forwarded to ROMA - Why did ROMA say that Waste Management was an important current topic? What input did they want?



- John Yakabuski – send email re: referendum rules
- Invite Ron Holman to MPAC meeting.
- Lead MPAC meeting – others plan to attend. Ron to draft an agenda. Keep it small.

10. Round Table/ New Business – All

Mayor Tom Peckett – gratitude for participation in group. Promoting group.

Mayor Brian Campbell – challenges in municipality, request for sharing of information. Private roads – provide services, subsidies, grants – please email info. Recreation agreement with urban neighbour – samples – how do they work?

Mayor Garry Gruntz – positive meeting – comments on discussion with Ross Jeffrey, MPAC – RMFEO – they know we're out here.

Mayor Bob Kingsbury – good meeting, feelings on EOWC reaction to RMFEO. We're looking for answers. On the right track.

Mayor Vivian Bloom – never leave without new info to share with staff or council. Nowhere to go but up. We know how hard everything is hitting taxpayers. Good wake up call to ROMA – great working group.

Reeve Bonnie Adams – name tags good idea, great meeting, all learn from each other. Appreciate hard work – OPP, OCIF. Private roads information, would also like to receive it. OMB meeting – hasn't happened yet.

Mayor Kim Love – fantastic meeting. Always learn something. Able to share. Recharges.

Mayor Glenda McKay – great meeting. Recharging.

Mayor Brian Stewart – good meeting, relaxing, look forward to it every month.

Mayor Henry Hogg – everyone else has the same concerns – good to know we're not alone. 6% increase due to OPP billing this year.

Mayor Shaun McLaughlin – by-election – unique procedures to replace councillor. Happy to share. (Will email to everyone.)

Councillor Grills – observer – Mayor McKay you spoke of difficulty with a specific councillor and presentation at EOWC – and after being an observer at county – can sometimes see what happens when there is a lack of leadership. When after a meeting or presentation you are met with silence; it is not a good place to be. I think that there is a lot of leadership in this room – municipalities are lucky to have you as heads of council. Thank you.

Mayor Ron Higgins – echo sentiments. Transformation in my council – ½ questioning –



feedback, see the benefits. People are talking about us.

Presenting at the OEMC, Kingston.

Policy of decision making – create a one page policy. Volunteer – Mayor Gibson – to take that on. Simple, plain language.

Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority – problems with dam. No asset management plan, no money – hiring a consultant to do a benefit analysis for anyone using the system – pay towards a levy to use dams. Will eventually affect all CAs across the province. Are allowed to do it. Heads up for now.

Might want to bring it up at AMO– history that anything of provincial significance should be paid for by province – delegation request at AMO to speak to it.

Mayor Jim Gibson – Bill 100 draft letter. Don't think as a group there is time to react but could do so individually.

Mayor Bloom – tax sales and how you manage them. Direct deposit for low income/seniors for taxes.

CAO/Clerk – Melinda Reith – after 10 years still learning that at the County level the larger municipalities are proportionately represented and move their own agenda forward. What each of you is doing is bringing issues important to small municipalities to everyone's attention and that is an important job. Thank you.

11. The meeting adjourned at 14:40.