

For Immediate Release October 22, 2019

Council Connect: Highlights from the October 19 & 22, 2019 Meetings of Council

Here are the highlights from the Special Meeting of Council on October 19 and the meetings of Council this evening:

Annual Road Tour: On Saturday, October 19, Council and Directors completed their Annual Road Tour. As part of the tour, Council viewed more than 80 municipal works projects completed or underway as well as some planned for 2020. The projects included roads and sidewalks, bridges, water mains, wastewater and sewer improvements, as well as projects managed by Parks and Recreation and Planning and Building Services.

Fire Alarm By-Law: Council approved amendments to the Town's Fire Alarm By-Law to address issues with "at-fault" or false alarms and to require registration of both fire and security alarms. The changes mean that owners with registered fire alarms will be allowed two (2) at-fault (false) alarms before being subject to a charge. Following the two alarms, a fee of approximately \$463 per hour for the response will be imposed. Unregistered alarms will be charged following the first at-fault alarm. Owners in Town who have a fire alarm that dials 9-1-1 are encouraged to check the settings to avoid any false alarms.

Urban Hens: Following two previous reports on the keeping of urban hens, Council approved holding a Public Information Centre (PIC) on the proposed *Urban Hen Licensing Pilot Program* presented at this evening's meeting. The Pilot Program proposes a limit of six female chickens, four months or older, for properties under 10,000 square feet. For properties over 10,000 square feet, an additional hen is permitted per 3,000 square feet up to 12 hens. Owners will require a license that will cost \$25.00 per year and provides bands for each hen. Planning and Building Services will conduct an on-site inspection to ensure compliance prior to the issuing of the permit. The Pilot Program would be conducted for two years with evaluation conducted at the end and a recommendation to Council on the program. Details on the PIC (once scheduled) will be provided on the Town's website (www.tecumseh.ca) and on the social media feeds.

Alley Closing: Council received a new *Alley Closing Policy* and directed staff to post it for a 30 day public review period. The Town has had no previous policy on alley closings and Council requested Administration to develop one that establishes a fair and consistent manner to address requests for alley closures and sales. The policy will provide a consistent, transparent and fair procedure relating to the disposal of alleys deemed surplus. Following the completion of the 30 day period, if no comments are received, the policy will be adopted by the Town. If changes are required based on public comment, these will be brought forward to Council when Council considers the policy for adoption.

20th Anniversary of Amalgamation: The Town will be launching a public campaign seeking photos and information on the history of Tecumseh since amalgamation following Council's approval of a storyboard to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of Amalgamation. A large storyboard will be placed outside the main entrance to the renovated Town Hall with two smaller storyboards placed in St. Clair Beach and Sandwich South. The boards will be made available digitally on the website and will tell the story of the municipalities that became the Town of Tecumseh in 1999. The project will involve assistance from the Town's Cultural and Arts Advisory, Heritage, Youth Advisory and Senior Advisory Committees, as well as the Sandwich South and Tecumseh Historical Societies to choose the images that will be displayed on the storyboard. Submission details will be posted at www.tecumseh.ca.

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Charitable Bingo and Gaming: Council approved the execution of a contribution agreement with Ontario Lottery and Gaming (OLG) to permit Charitable Gaming (cGaming) at the Classic III Bingo Hall in Tecumseh. The initiative is expected to be launched in Spring 2020. Charitable gaming provides fundraising for charities delivering local programs and services and cGaming provides a number of activities Bingo Halls can operate on the premises. The Town is not permitted to charge a permit fee for this initiative but will receive quarterly electronic payments from OLG in the amount of 2.79% of the net gaming wins.

Liability and Insurance Cost: Council supported the report from the Association of Ontario Municipalities (AMO) on joint and several liability and directed Administration to share this support and copy of the report with the Ministry of the Attorney General as well as other agencies including AMO and local MPPs. Under the *Negligence Act*, joint and several liability dictates that damages may be recovered from any of the defendants regardless of their individual share of the liability. Meaning that if a municipality has 1% of the share of liability, they could be responsible for 100% of the judgement if the other defendants in the matter cannot pay. In some cases, municipalities are targeted deliberately as they are seen to have “deep pockets”. In July, the Ontario government invited participation in the government’s consultation on joint and several liability, insurance costs and the ‘liability chill’ affecting the delivery of everyday public services.

Budget Variance: Council approved the Budget Variance Report for amounts at August 31, 2019. The variance report looks at both operating and capital budgets. Based on contributions from all departments, the 2019 August Variance analysis projects a year-end surplus of \$63,000 (Tax Supported surplus \$309,000 and Rate Supported deficit \$246,000). Final budget variances will be known in early 2020.

The next Regular Meeting of Council is November 12, 2019 at 7 p.m. Full agenda details will be available on the Town’s website Thursday, November 7.

Information on this and all Town of Tecumseh news and events is available at www.tecumseh.ca, Twitter (@TownofTecumseh), and Facebook (www.facebook.com/townoftecumseh).

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