

For Immediate Release April 27, 2021

Council Connect: Highlights from the April 27, 2021 meetings of Council

Tecumseh Town Council met electronically this evening and here are the highlights:

Zoning By-Law Amendment: Council held a public meeting to hear comment on a Zoning By-Law Amendment to the Sandwich South Zoning By-Law 85-18 to rezone a 0.47 hectare property on the west side of the 11th Concession Road, south of County Road 42 from “Agricultural Zone (A)” to a site specific “Residential Zone 1 (R1-19)”. The rezoning will facilitate the creation of three new residential lots and the future construction of three single-unit dwellings.

Zoning By-Law Amendment: Council held a public meeting to hear comment on the proposed Housekeeping Zoning By-Law amendment to the Sandwich South Zoning By-Law 85-18. The purpose of the proposed housekeeping amendment is to restrict cannabis greenhouse operations in the Agricultural (A) Zone of Zoning By-Law 85-18, in accordance with the policies of the newly-adopted Town of Tecumseh Official Plan. The newly adopted Official Plan establishes that cannabis greenhouse operations are not permitted as-of-right in the Agricultural designation and are only permitted by way of site-specific Zoning By-Law amendments that are required to meet a number of locations and design criteria.

COVID-19 Update on Services: Council received an update on the impact to services and staff hours in response to the COVID-19 pandemic over the last year. The pandemic continues to be a major disruption to normal operations with Town Hall currently closed to the public and services being provided by phone, email and secure drop box. The Town continues to offer services remotely with the website and social media being the primary source of communications.

Municipal Insurance Trends: Council received a report on Municipal Insurance Trends which follows a request from the Mayor at a January 2021 Council Meeting. At that meeting, the Mayor requested that the topic of joint and several liability as it affects Municipalities be raised at an upcoming regional Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) meeting. The topic was discussed at the February 19 meeting. The Town will participate in a regional review of insurance coverage in an attempt to address escalating general liability insurance costs in a hard market. Additional information will be provided to Council at a later date.

Service Line Warranties of Canada: Council approved a 1-year renewal of the agreement with Service Line Warranties of Canada (SLWC) which was executed in 2016. SLWC advised the Town that they will continue their marketing campaign this year with letters to go out to residents who have not purchased a warranty from SLWC. 305 property owners are currently enrolled in the program, down from 327 in 2020. SLWC provides residents the opportunity for a low cost warranty program that will help repair, replace, or restore water and sewer lines from the home to the property line, which is often perceived as the municipality’s responsibility.

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Rural Broadband Committee: Council received a report on the creation of a Rural Broadband Advisory Committee and approved the striking of said group. The need for broadband connectivity has been increasing in the last 20 years and became more important than ever in 2020. In recent years there have been improvements to internet service but there are still many areas of Town that are underserved. The Town's Strategic Plan includes an endorsement to advocate for broadband connectivity in areas of the municipality that are currently underserved. As such, Administration recommended the establishment of an advisory committee that will provide recommendations, advice and information to Council on matters related to broadband connectivity issues. It is felt that by establishing a Committee to work on connectivity solutions from the ground up, there will be an opportunity to enhance and augment any studies or proposals now and in the future. The first tasks of the Committee will be to complete a community assessment, build awareness in the community, explore service improvement strategies, review the digital divide experienced by our residents and businesses, and develop and implement a plan. The Committee would be comprised of members of Council and four members at large from the community. The Town will advertise the opportunity to participate on this Committee with members appointed at the June 8, 2021 meeting of Council. The Term of appointments will coincide with the term of Council. Status of the Committee will be reviewed at the outset of the next term of Council. It is proposed the Committee will meet quarterly with meetings conducted virtually where required.

The next Regular Meeting of Council is Tuesday, May 11, 2021. The meeting is scheduled to be held electronically. The live stream will be available on our website at www.tecumseh.ca. The agenda for the Regular meeting will be made available on Thursday, May 6, 2021.

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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