



City of Kenora

Committee of the Whole Minutes

Wednesday, January 11, 2023

9:00 a.m.

City Hall Council Chambers

Live Stream Access: <https://kenora.civicweb.net/Portal/>

Present:

Mayor Andrew Poirier
Councillor Graham Chaze
Councillor Lindsay Koch
Councillor Barbara Manson
Councillor Lisa Moncrief (virtual attendance)
Councillor Kelsie Van Belleghem

Regrets:

Councillor Robert Bernie

Staff: Kyle Attanasio, CAO, Heather Pihulak, Director of Corporate Services/City Clerk, Roberta Marsh, Director of Human Resources, Risk & Insurance, Stace Gander, Director of Community Services, David Pratt, Director of Fire & Emergency Services, Marco Vogrig, Acting Director of Engineering & Infrastructure, Ryan Marsh, Director of Finance.

Blessing & Land Acknowledgment – Councillor Van Belleghem

As we gather, we recognize that we are on Treaty Three Lands which are steeped in rich Indigenous history and home to many First Nations and Metis people today. We continue to be thankful for the partnerships with Indigenous people.

We give thanks for the many blessings we enjoy in the City of Kenora. We seek wisdom in our minds, clearness in our thinking, truth in our speaking and always love in our hearts, so that we may try always to unite the Citizens of Kenora. Let these principles guide us in our decision making.

A. Public Information Notices

As required under Notice By-law #160-2022, the public is advised of Council's intention to adopt the following at its January 18, 2023 meeting:-

N/A

B. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest & the General Nature Thereof

- 1) On Today's Agenda
- 2) From a Meeting at which a Member was not in Attendance.

C. Confirmation of Previous Committee Minutes

Resolution #1 - Moved by Councillor Van Belleghem, Seconded by G. Chaze &

Carried:

That the Minutes from the last regular Committee of the Whole Meeting held December 5, 2022 and the Special Committee of the Whole meeting held December 29, 2022 be confirmed as written and filed.

D. Deputations/Presentations

Municipal Property Assessment Corporation Presentation – Steven DeRocco

At MPAC, we are Ontario’s Property Experts. Their job is to assess and classify more than 5.5 million properties across Ontario worth a combined value of more than \$3 trillion. In the past year, Ontario has grown by approx. 45,000 new residential homes, and in 2022 they added more than \$37 billion to Ontario’s assessment rolls, and \$12 billion to Kenora’s assessment roll which is very high. Every municipality uses our assessments to make informed decisions about their community, including the distribution of property taxes. Ontario’s property tax system, and these assessments, generate approximately \$30 billion in tax revenue annually.

There are 4 key players in Ontario’s Property Assessment and Taxation System, and all have a different role and interest in this process. The Provincial Government, specifically the Ministry of Finance, is responsible for setting assessment and taxation legislation as well as policies. They also determine the education property tax rate. There is also an independent body that adjudicates appeals of MPAC’s assessed values - the Assessment Review Board. This also falls under the jurisdiction of the Province: Tribunals Ontario.

MPAC is an independent, not-for-profit corporation funded by all Ontario municipalities. Their role is to accurately assess and classify all properties in Ontario. They do this in compliance with the Assessment Act and regulations set by the Government of Ontario. They are accountable to the Province, municipalities and property taxpayers of Ontario through a Board of Directors that is comprised of provincial, municipal and taxpayer representatives appointed by the Minister of Finance.

Municipalities determine their budget requirements, set tax rates, and collect property taxes to pay for municipal services such as police, fire, roads, recreation, water, among many others. Municipalities use MPAC’s assessments and the established tax rates to distribute their tax requirement to ratepayers. The Property Owners pay the property tax bill, and help set ‘market value’ through ongoing property purchases and sales.

Maintaining Ontario’s property database is very important. Property data is continuously updated so that municipal records are accurate when our municipal stakeholders are making important tax decisions. Maintaining Ontario’s property database includes: inspecting and assessing new construction, additions and renovations promptly. Responding to property owner inquiries, and working to help them understand their assessment.

They have important statutory duties such as handling requests for reconsideration, and maintaining people data by tracking school support for over 5.5 million properties. Monitoring the market and assessing newly built and renovated properties are things we do every day to keep our property data current. They also periodically update every single property assessment in Ontario based on the same legislated valuation date – they call this an assessment update or a reassessment.

The valuation date for the most recent assessment update, which took effect in 2017, was January 1, 2016. This is when they determined what every single property in Ontario could have reasonably sold for in its current state and condition at a particular point in time. Regular

reevaluation of properties ensures that assessments stay up-to-date and similar properties of similar value in the same municipality pay similar property taxes. Provincial legislation determines when MPAC conducts each province-wide assessment update and sets the valuation date for each update cycle.

The reassessment that was scheduled to occur in 2020 was postponed by the Province to provide stability and certainty to Ontarians and to enable municipalities to focus on responding to the challenges posed by the Covid 19 pandemic. As a result, property assessments continue to be based on a legislated valuation date of January 1, 2016. This should not have a negative financial impact on municipalities, as MPAC continues to maintain and update the assessment roll to reflect changes such as new construction and improvements to property. For new buildings or structures, MPAC determines a value as of January 1, 2016, to ensure equity when comparing to existing properties. Ontario's property tax system is based on everyone paying their portion of what it costs to deliver community services. To do this, all properties are assigned a value at a common valuation date as noted in the prior slide. This is a principle called current value assessment. This is the price a property might reasonably be expected to sell for if sold by a willing seller to a willing buyer after appropriate time and exposure on an open market. While MPAC awaits news from the provincial government about the next province-wide assessment update, January 1, 2016 continues to be Ontario's legislated valuation date.

Although the assessment update remains paused, their work continues to keep property data up to date. Property owners will still receive an updated property assessment notice from MPAC if there are changes to their properties. In November, MPAC sent out almost 800,000 notices to reflect changes to properties. Once the Province announces when the next assessment update will take place – and what the valuation date will be – we will let you know and can then work to have meaningful conversations as we work to finalize assessed values within your community.

When we're looking at the valuation of a residential home, although their analysis tool considers over 200 factors, there are five factors make up approximately 85% of a typical home's value. These include: location, lot dimensions, exterior square footage, quality of Construction of the home; and age of the property, which gets adjusted for any major renovations or additions that have occurred.

In Ontario, there are three industry-wide standardized approaches to valuing properties. The first of these approaches is the direct comparison approach and this valuation approach is used primarily for residential properties, condos and vacant land. With this approach, they analyze recent sales of comparable properties that were sold for a similar or identical use as the property to be valued- to provide an indication of value. It is also important that only valid open market transactions are used in this analysis. The second is the income approach. This approach is used for industrial malls, large medical/dental buildings, office buildings, shopping centres, and large sport stadiums. In income-producing properties, the ability to earn revenue is directly tied to its current value. To value these properties, they need to determine how much revenue it could generate, as well and the sale price. This method requires a detailed analysis of the income and expenses, both, for the property being valued and other similar properties - to determine how much income a property could be expected to generate, if sold on the open market. Those two factors create a 'capitalization rate' that helps us determine the property's assessed value.

Lastly, is the cost approach, and it is typically used for general purpose industrial properties, small retail, gravel pits, and warehousing - just to name a few. This approach is used when a property type is unique and rarely sold, on the open market, as we cannot rely on either the

direct comparison or the income approaches to determine its current value - due to lack of data.

The cost approach is a three-step process: First, We calculate the cost of replacing buildings, structures or other assessable fixtures on the land. Then they apply a deduction for depreciation on all structures due to age, as well as any functional or economic adjustment, if there are conditions impacting the value of that property.

What draws our attention to a property? It is typically one of the following things: a market sale, request from a municipality or property owner, building permit activity, an RfR/Appeal. MPAC's role is to take building permits and plans and turn them into assessment. Their municipal stakeholders rely on MPAC assessments to levy property tax. The sooner MPAC can deliver assessment, the sooner our municipal stakeholders can realize new revenue. Every year, MPAC processes on average 300,000 building permits for new development or renovations.

They are the only organization with a data set of all building permits in Ontario - their understanding of this data gives them a unique perspective on ways to modernize its collection and exchange to support the municipal partners. In 2021, Ontario saw more than 48,000 new residential homes constructed, with just under 50% being detached homes.

As a member of Council, you may hear from a property owner concerned about MPAC's assessment, but it is important to remember that that property assessments are not taxation. Encourage people to visit AboutMyProperty to review the information MPAC has on file regarding their property to ensure it's correct and to reach out to MPAC with questions.

The difference between property taxes and assessment is assessments distribute taxes, they do not determine the taxes paid. When a province-wide assessment update occurs, the most important factor is not how much the assessed value of a property has changed, but rather how the assessed value has changed relative to the average change in the class in that community. In anticipation of the next provide-wide reassessment, MPAC has implemented a strategy to address misconceptions about the relationship between assessed value and taxation, including resources for municipalities that will ensure when an announcement is made MPAC is ready.

Council thanked Mr. DeRocco for his presentation and a copy was left with the Clerk.

Dave Schwartz – Old Miller Rapids Road/Urban Trail System

Trails have dramatically improved Kenora for residents and visitors by providing free, healthy recreation for residents and visitors. They also help residents and visitors connect with Kenora's history, culture and our natural environment. Our trail system and its connection to nature is a powerful draw for new residents, businesses and tourism.

The Old Miller Rapids Road would be an excellent addition to our present Urban Trails network and would serve an area of the city which is about to experience considerable commercial and residential growth. Incorporating the Old Miller Rapids Road into the urban trails system would facilitate immediate links to the present trail network and long term potential to link with the Tunnel Island Trails via Old Fort Island. The trail would increase the attractiveness of the Rideout area to businesses and developers. The Parks and Recreation master plan public opinion survey indicate that trails are very highly supported by our citizens. It also recommends expanding the present trails network. The addition of this trail to the system was also discussed and supported by the former Kenora Urban Trails Committee. This is an opportunity that deserves high priority. It could easily be lost and if it is lost, the loss will probably be permanent.

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The trail is already there. Little development would be required as it has 900 meters of beautiful riverside scenery. The flat topography is wheelchair accessible for its entire length. Tree canopy is already there something that is identified as lacking in Kenora by the parks and recreation master plan. It fills a gap in an area where there are no formal trails. Parking would be easily provided at either end.

The parks and recreation master plan identifies a shortage of neighbourhood parks in Kenora. At least one site along the Old Miller Rapids Road could possibly alleviate that shortage.

City ownership of the appropriate property would be the best path forward. The parks and recreation master plan identifies several possibilities in this regard such as land dedication, direct purchase, land swaps, donations and gifts. Public opinion supports increased spending on parks according to the plan. It is important to start discussions with private land owners now.

The parks and recreation master plan goal is to optimize places, spaces, and services. Integrating the Old Miller Rapids Road into the urban trail system would be a big step in achieving that goal. Integrating the area into the parks inventory would be an important addition to our city and the trail system.

Council thanked Mr. Schwartz for his presentation and a copy was left with the Clerk.

Jill Hager – Public Skate in Keewatin

There has always been a public skate in Keewatin from 6-7:30 p.m. and it has been cancelled this ice season. There are no regularly scheduled public skates for school aged children to skate. It is important to have a public opportunity for everyone that allows for families to have an opportunity to skate together. It is affordable for families and safer for families to attend. The January schedule indicates there is public skating on Sundays from 12-2pm (with a notation that all public times are subject to change without notice). After review of the Kenora Arena schedule available online there are in fact only three public skates scheduled from January 1, 2023 to ice out in April (February 26, March 5 and March 19) – other skates are scheduled in on an ad-hoc/last minute basis – the remaining 12 Sundays are cancelled due to youth tournaments, adult tournaments and other special events. There is public skating Tuesdays/Thursdays from 11:30am-1230pm however, this is not an accessible time for any family with school-aged children. The tourism Kenora campaign also highlights the arenas to attend/public skating as a destination but there are few to actually to participate in.

Transportation in our community is a known barrier. There is no bus service on Sundays for those lacking transportation to attend a public skate at the Kenora Rec Centre on a Sunday. Access to neighbourhood rinks is also important. Over the years we as a community have lost an outdoor rink in Norman, what was once JM, Central is currently under construction and there is no ice at the Whitecap this year. This leaves Evergreen and Rideout (which is used 3 evenings a week for the local adult broomball league) where hockey predominately takes up the ice making it near impossible for a beginner to learn, or others to enjoy skating without participating in hockey.

Irregular Sunday public skating is not equitable or accessible. Families are out taking advantage of what our community has to offer on Sundays and spending time as a family. We attended some of the Sunday skates in the fall of 2022 but once there was enough snow and ice we turn our attention to outdoor activities – skiing, hiking, fishing, snowmobiling, etc.

The Keewatin public skate was affordable for families and was offered in a safe and controlled environment (compared to the outdoor rinks). This City is more than just hockey and our recreational opportunities need to reflect that.

Wants to see a redevelopment of the ice allocation policies, procedures and costing to better outline the guiding goals of the parks and recreation master plan. They also want to see an immediate reinstatement of the Wednesday public skate times.

This council was voted in on their commitments to improve our community for young, working families. Eliminating the weekday evening public skate in Keewatin does not align with the Parks & Recreation Master Plan nor does it support the young children and families living in the City of Kenora, and specifically those in the neighbourhood of Keewatin.

The immediate ask to the City is to reinstate the Wednesday evening public skate at the Keewatin Arena. The long term ask is to see a redevelopment of the ice allocation policies, procedures and costing to better align with the information, goals and guiding principles outlined in the Parks & Recreation master plan and in conjunction, to see City lead development of administrative practices to promote efficiencies within the various ice user groups in order to maximize the recreational resources we currently have for all users.

Council thanked Ms. Hager for her deputation and a copy was left with the Clerk.

E. Reports:

1. Corporate Services / Finance / Human Resources

1.1 2023 Conference Attendance

Recommendation:

That Council directs Administration to register members of Council for the various 2023 conferences in accordance with discussions at the January 11, 2022 Committee of the Whole meeting.

Discussion: A 2023 Council meeting calendar was provided to Council at the December 5, 2022 Committee of the Whole meeting which outlined the various conferences available for attendance for members of Council, and administration.

Many of these conferences require registration months in advance and do sell out early. In order for Administration to ensure preferred conference registration is secured, we require commitment from members of Council on attendance.

1. Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) – Toronto (January 22, 23, 24)
Registered Attendees Include:
Mayor Andrew Poirier
Councillor Barbara Manson
Councillor Kelsie Van Belleghem
Councillor Robert Bernie
2. Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Sustainability Communities Conference – Ottawa (February 7, 8, 9, 10)
 - If there is an online option available, Councillor Van Belleghem would attend

3. Rainy-Lake of the Woods Watershed 2023 Forum – International Falls, MN (March 8,9)
 - Mayor Poirier could possibly attend
4. Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) – Toronto (April 16, 17, 18, 19)
 - Councillor Chaze
 - Councillor Manson
5. Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) – Thunder Bay (April 26, 27, 28)
 - Mayor Andrew Poirier
 - Councillor Lindsay Koch
 - Councillor Van Belleghem
 - Councillor Moncrief
6. Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Annual Conference–Toronto (May 25, 26, 27, 28)
 - Possibly Mayor Poirier
 - Councillor Koch
7. Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) – London (August 20, 21, 22, 23)
 - Mayor Andrew Poirier
 - Councillor Lisa Moncrief

1.2 Bill 5 - Stopping Harassment and Abuse by Local Leaders Act Advocacy Support

Recommendation:

That given the Stopping Harassment and Abuse by Local Leaders Act has been reintroduced after the Provincial Election as Bill 5 and received first reading on August 10, 2022 the Council of the Corporation of the City of Kenora hereby supports endorsing this Act that would create a process for municipal councils to remove Councillors who violate workplace violence and harassment policies; and further

That a letter of support be directed to Minister Greg Rickford, Kenora-Rainy River District MPP, Premier Doug Ford, Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO).

1.3 Community Safety & Well Being Coordinator Position

Recommendation:

That Council hereby approves an increase to the City of Kenora's core staff complement and operating budget by one (1) FTE, \$87,617 Step 3 of Band 17 of the Professional and Managerial Salary Grid, to reflect the addition of the Community Safety and Well-Being Coordinator; and further to provide an operating budget of \$75,000.00 for 2023.

That Council hereby directs Administration to begin recruitment to fill this position immediately.

Discussion:

Effective January 1, 2019 the Province of Ontario mandated the development and implementation of community safety and well-being planning under the *Police Services Act*. Under legislation, municipalities were required to develop and adopt community safety and well-being plans working in partnership with a multi-sectoral advisory committee comprised of representation from the Police Service Board and other local service providers in health/mental health, education, community/social services and children/youth services.

Additional requirements were also outlined in legislation pertaining to conducting consultations, contents of the plan, and monitoring, evaluating, reporting, and publishing the plan. The prescribed approach required municipalities to take a leadership role in defining and addressing priority risks in the community through proactive, integrated strategies to ensure vulnerable populations receive the help they need from the providers best suited to support them.

Municipalities have the flexibility to engage in community safety and well-being planning individually, or in partnership with neighbouring municipalities and/or First Nation communities to develop a joint plan.

Community safety and well-being planning recognizes that complex risks to safety and well-being cannot be addressed in isolation by any one organization or sector. Too often, situations rooted in issues like mental health, substance use disorder, lack of safe and affordable housing, inadequate access to services, or social isolation require an emergency response from police, paramedics, hospital emergency department, or other crisis-driven services.

Council renewed its commitment and responsibility to community safety and well-being by directing administration to undertake the necessary steps to hire a community safety and well-being coordinator to develop and advance a new community safety and well-being plan that will include future community consultations. These steps will provide long-term strategies and coordination of community partners.

There is a concern from Council that the salary is not enough to attract the right individual. There are hesitations around the salary and ideally you want someone who already has connections in the community. Worry not attracting the demographic who are at that level with the current salary band.

This is not to have a temporary position, this is a permanent and full time request for the organization. In terms of positions that are vacant, Roberta will report that back to Council. Not an HR position this position will report to the office of the CAO. A priority level reporting to CAO.

There may be duplication and silos in the community and this is a required committee in the province. Want to make sure we are cognizant of our budget when looking at wages.

1.4 Amend Terms of Reference – Crime Prevention & Community Well-Being Advisory Committee

Recommendation:

That Council hereby amends the Terms of Reference for the Kenora Crime Prevention & Community Well-Being Advisory Committee; and further

That three readings be given to a bylaw to adopt a new Terms of Reference.

Discussion:

While Council provides recommendations for changes, administration is recommending Council consider including some procedural matters and determine the parameters around this committee's meetings. There will be a great deal of community interest and it will be important to ensure there are procedural processes that will assist the Chair and guide the committee on process.

It was questioned what our goals are of this committee. What does it mean at a tangible level in this committee? Limiting membership to 9 and one councillor along with an employee of the municipality is important.

Suggested waiting to February Council meeting in order to review any proposed changes. We have covered most of the basis, should consider someone from the justice system as this is a key area missing on this. Would like to see how we are going about developing the plan and what is in the plan before amending the terms of reference to the committee.

Administration perspective is how do you set up City employee to be successful and the committee to be successful. There will be many approaches across the province to this, but each community may do their own. We should focus department by department what we can do, that focuses on each department. Those are the things that we can control. The draft plan has 32 action items and only 14 fall under the City's control. We need a separate what the City is going to do, and others outside the City's control are going to do with this lead trying to influence in outside organizations to do.

Having the person in place and developing the plan feels like the starting point. There are bigger pieces to this and we need to ensure we know what our goals are. This position should be a champion to bring the community together. Our City is looking for a champion and the public is looking for results. We want to set them up to be successful.

The accountability and role that this position will have will include Council decisions. When looking at the expectations of this individual, is champion the right word on this individual. We are all champions of change for our community and any opportunity for success has to be attainable for someone to step into this role. There are multiple facets to the issues and multiple decision makers who are outside the city. It is important that the legislation outlines criteria and legwork for the committees and focus.

We are going to decide today to move forward with the position and this person is going to be a conduit to politician connections, and be able to build the network and pick up the phone to the various groups and leaders to connect with others. We can't solve the problems at this table, but how we can advocate with other groups and agencies.

There are other communities out there that have these plans in place and it will be step by step. Hire someone then start that process, then what the plan looks like, but have to get it right.

The report will come forward at the January 18th and may be recommended for a deferral.

2. Fire & Emergency Services

No Reports

3. Engineering & Infrastructure

3.1 Drinking Water Quality Management System Regulatory Approval

Recommendation:

That Council hereby approves the attached Drinking Water Quality Management System Commitment and Endorsement; and further

That Mayor Andrew Poirier be authorized to sign this document on behalf of the Corporation of the City of Kenora.

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3.2 FoodCycler Household Organic Waste Diversion Phase 2 Budget Commitment Recommendation:

That Council hereby approves an allocation of \$84,750.00 (plus applicable taxes) for a municipal subsidized purchase of 250 FoodCycler Units in order to implement a FoodCycler expanded pilot program in partnership with Food Cycle Science Corporation; and further

That Council further supports an additional \$10,000.00 allocated towards replacement filters for this project at a discounted rate that the City will sell to participants of the program when replacements are required; and further

That Council commits \$11,107.92 funded through the Bearwise Funding Reserve, and \$83,642.08 funded through the Solid Waste Reserve in advance of the 2023 budget approvals for this project.

Discussion:

The City participated in this program in 2021 and this initial pilot program saw the City purchase 250 Food Cycler Units, which allowed 250 households to partake in this program at a subsidized cost which sold out to residents in 6 days.

At the recommendation of Food Cycle Science Corporation, City administration is eager to pursue an expanded pilot program. This would allow double the amount of households within the City of Kenora to participate in this initiative. Food Cycle Science Corporation assessed participant feedback and developed a larger capacity FoodCycler unit to offer to households. This expanded pilot program would allow City administration to see if there is a larger demand for household participation before moving forward with a City wide comprehensive program.

Council supports the option of purchasing the \$10,000 in replacement filters in addition to the FoodCyclers to assist with subsidizing the cost of the filters. Should consider only the filters as the buckets have a much longer life and we likely would not sell those.

Costs recovered from the sale of the FoodCycler Units will be put back into the Solid Waste Reserves, therefore the actual costs to the City of Kenora will be \$11,107.92 from the Bear Wise Reserve and \$17,392.08 from the Solid Waste Reserve. It was questioned if we have any discretion on the model type quantities. Would like to push back on FoodCycler that these filters are very wasteful and taking these filters back and disposing in a more efficient manner is also worth exploring as well.

4. Community Services

No Reports

5. Development Services

No Reports

F. Proclamations

Mayor Poirier then read the following proclamations:

- Alzheimer Awareness Month

G. Other

H. Next Meeting

- Wednesday, February 8, 2023

I. Adjourn to Closed

Resolution #2 - Moved by Councillor G. Chaze, Seconded by K. Van Belleghem & Carried:

That Council now adjourn to a closed session at 11:08 a.m.; and further

That pursuant to Section 239 of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, the Closed Session will discuss items pertaining to the following:-

- i) Education & Training Members of Council (1 matter-Hospital Education)
- ii) Labour Relations (1 matter-Pay equity/compensation review)
- iii) Personal Matter about an Identifiable Individual (1 matter – Accessibility Advisory Committee appointment)
- iv) Disposition of Land (1 matter-offer to purchase municipal property)

J. Reconvene to Open Meeting

Council reconvenes to open session at 2:51 p.m. with the following reports from its closed session:-

Appointments to Accessibility Advisory Committee

Recommendation:

That Council hereby appoints Corrie Neufeld and Heather Bird to the Accessibility Advisory Committee for a term at the pleasure of Council no later than November 14, 2026.

K. Close Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 2:52 p.m.