



# **MINUTES**

## **SPECIAL**

### **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**November 20, 2015**  
**8:35 a.m.**  
**City Council Chambers**

**Present:** Mayor D. Canfield  
Councillor R. McMillan  
Councillor S. Smith  
Councillor L. Roussin  
Councillor M. Goss (arrived at 9:05 a.m.)  
H. Lajeunesse, Deputy Clerk

**Regrets:** Councillor D. Reynard  
Councillor C. Wasacase

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#### **1. Council Welcomes Newly Appointed Member of Parliament, Bob Nault**

##### **Discussion – Priorities of Council**

Mayor Canfield called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. and welcomed new MP Bob Nault.

A short video “Connecting Kenora – Gas Tax In Ontario” was shown. The video was created by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) in partnership with the City of Kenora. The video portrays how the federal Gas Tax Fund helped Kenora rehabilitate the Winnipeg River West Branch Bridge, a key piece of local infrastructure. Bridges and other infrastructure remain a priority for Kenora and it is important for the City to seek further funding for these critical repairs and unsustainable costs that are solely the municipality’s responsibility.

MP Bob Nault shared his intentions for governing in Kenora and the region. He is interested in helping the north and is currently seeking priorities from the region’s municipalities to bring to the federal level. He stressed that there is a need to come together as a region, that we are the most underdeveloped region in the Province, and relationship building between all levels of government will benefit us. He indicated that the big investments will include \$10 billion annually for infrastructure and asked Mayor and Council to clarify the City’s top current priorities, shovel ready projects, to bring forward for discussions in parliament. There is lots

of activity planned for the year with remaining dollars to go to the gas tax for municipalities.

Council and the MP discussed priorities for the area. Issues facing Kenora and region include infrastructure (bridges, sewer and water, roads) energy costs, health care, housing, homelessness and transportation. Keewatin Channel Bridge repairs and Downtown Revitalization were identified as current priorities for Kenora. Council expressed concerns on how municipalities cannot continue to sustain the costs of aging infrastructure as well as be responsible for medical and social costs in which other provinces are not. It was suggested that the gas tax be calculated differently in the north being that our land is unique and priorities are different. Gas tax funding should only be for core services such as bridges, roads and sewer and water, and flexibility should be given to municipalities in deciding where to use the funds, with fewer restrictions in place. More commitment from the federal government is desired to increase this funding and it is hopeful that this will be on the agenda to alleviate the concerns in our area. Other items of importance noted were highway twinning, Freedom Road, First Nations relationships, employment and the economy in general, environmental protection, recreation, as well as new up to date amenities such as hospital, airport and educational facility.

Meeting closed at 10:48 a.m.