



The Corporation of the Township of Perry

MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING - FIRE DEPARTMENT

Thursday, January 11, 2018

6:00 p.m.

Council Chambers

(1695 Emsdale Road, Emsdale, ON)

Any and all Minutes are to be considered Draft until approved by Council at a Regular Meeting of Council

In Attendance:

Council Members:

Mayor Norm Hofstetter
Councillors: Jim Cushman, Jeff Marshall,
Margaret Ann MacPhail and Les Rowley

Municipal Staff:

Beth Morton, Clerk-Administrator;
Melinda Torrance, Deputy Clerk
Dan Marshall, Fire Chief

Members of the Public:

Members of the Fire Department - See Sign in sheet

Resolution No. 2018-01

Moved by: Jim Cushman

Seconded by: Jeff Marshall

Be it resolved that in accordance with Section 239 of the *Municipal Act*, 2001, as amended, Council shall proceed into 'Closed Session' at 6:00 p.m. in order to address matters pertaining to (2)(b) personal matters about an identifiable individual including municipal or local board employees (firefighter(s)).

Carried

Resolution No. 2018-03

Moved by: Jim Cushman

Seconded by: Jeff Marshall

Be it resolved that the Council of the Township of Perry hereby reconvenes the January 11th, 2018 Special Meeting of Council at 6:41 p.m.

Carried

Report Out of Closed

Council reviewed the resignation of a firefighter provided to the Mayor, along with other accusations that firefighters were turning their radios off and not responding. The purpose of the review was to provide all of Council with an update as the emails were provided only to the Mayor by the firefighter.

Council took a short recess between 6:41 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Mayor Norm Hofstetter called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.

Declaration of Pecuniary Interest - No pecuniary interest was declared.

Mayor Hofstetter opened the meeting by welcoming the firefighters and addressed that as a result of a recent string of emails and accusations, this Special Meeting was called to provide an understanding of where we are.

He advised that he wanted to start the meeting by clarifying where the municipality is at and how far the Fire Department has come. 15 to 20 years ago, the Fire Hall required significant repairs, but the previous Council did nothing to upgrade the Emsdale fire hall. Within the current term of Council, an Engineer was hired to review the condition of the hall and in August 2015 the building was condemned. Council had only a few short days to sort out how to proceed – should they stay in the hall and take the liability risk; or move equipment to Novar. The move to the Public Works was not a decision of Council, but a suggestion from the Manager of Public Works. The Manager volunteered part of the garage for the Fire Department while Council worked on a new fire hall. Council never imagined that it would take 3 years to have a new fire hall built. The Mayor stated that it causes him concern, from what he believes to be a lack of communication, that a firefighter is now resigning and that some firefighters may be turning their radios off.

The Mayor outlined the process that staff and Council have gone through preparing for a Fire Hall build. He outlined why the trucks and grader need heated space and that it is important to understand what the Public Works crew has also go through as well to accommodate the fire equipment. He commented that safety is the Township's first priority.

Mayor Hofstetter than provided an outline of costs associated with managing and operating the Fire Department. He provided a breakdown of purchases over the last 7 years and estimated costs to operate into 2019 with a new fire hall.

The discussion shifted to the tanker that was moved to Novar. He outlined that the tanker is not out of service, it is still active in Novar and that the Fire Chief has confirmed that there is equipment in place that can be used for highway calls and that there is not always enough manpower to run all of the equipment. He also made it clear that the decision to move the tanker was made between the Fire Chief and the Manager of Public Works and Facilities. The Mayor opened the floor for discussion and asked for feedback on the tanker in Novar for approximately 12 weeks, but noted that the tanker will not be moved back to Public Works. Clarification was provided on the tanker and the Fire Chief advised that there is not always enough responders to respond with all of the vehicles. It is hit and miss during the day, and there are not always enough responders at night also.

The firefighters are concerned with the time lost going to get the tanker in Novar. There are no firefighters in Novar licensed to drive the tanker.

It was then communicated that the tanker isn't the biggest concern, the firefighters are more worried about the medical lifesaving equipment left outside in below 0 temperatures. The defibrillator, air tanks, alarms, batteries, generator for the jaws of life are not meant to be out in the cold. The squad and rescue should not be left outside.

Firefighters also commented that the pumper should not be used as a blocker and

that the rescue does not meet requirements to be a blocker.

The Mayor said that as a result of the condemned building, all of the Township is in a tight spot.

Firefighters questioned why the trucks and grader needed to be inside all of the time. Perhaps trucks could be unloaded and stored outdoors to make room.

Council directed the Clerk to review space at the Public Works yard with the Manager of Public Works and Facilities to allow for the Rescue to be moved inside, and to contact Marshall Well Drilling to enquire if a bay was available for the tanker.

A firefighter suggested that Council consider establishing a Fire Board. The Mayor advised that Council acts as the Board. Mayor Hofstetter advised that a policy will be in place that the Fire Department meet with Council twice a year to review items. The firefighters supported a Spring and Fall meeting.

Firefighters also outlined concerns of responding in their own vehicle to Novar to pick up the tanker. Staff will verify if Township insurance covers firefighters when they respond to the fire department in their own vehicles.

The Mayor asked if anyone was turning off their radios, and all the members confirmed that they were not. He also asked Robbie Davidson if he was still planning on resigning. Mr. Davidson confirmed that the Township has not resolved anything tonight and therefore he would still be resigning.

Firefighters requested consideration for DZ license training. A firefighter noted the costs to be in excess of \$8,000 now. Council supports training, but requested staff to follow up on requirements for DZ license.

The Mayor provided a brief update on the discussions at the Regional Fire Services Committee.

Firefighter Graham Stetler requested assistance with recruitment. Deputy Clerk Melinda Torrance offered assistance with the recruitment process.

Council thanked the Fire Department for attending and looks forward to future meetings to be held twice a year.

The firefighters exited and following a brief discussion, Council directed staff that if Robbie Davidson has resigned, that the Fire Chief be informed that he cannot attend at the Fire Department or any future training sessions as a result of his resignation.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m.

Dated this 17th day of January, 2018.

Original Signed by Norm Hofstetter
Norm Hofstetter, *Mayor*

Original Signed by Beth Morton
Beth Morton, *Clerk-Administrator*