

Here are the highlights from the regular Lanark County Council meeting held Wednesday, June 21.

- **Tax Rates, Ratios and Reductions Set:** Council approved bylaws to set tax ratios, rate reductions and tax rate levies to municipalities for 2017 following a presentation by CAO Kurt Greaves earlier this month. The \$32.5-million budget was approved in December. Council then sets tax ratios, which distribute taxes between the various classes (e.g. industrial, commercial, residential). Mr. Greaves indicated some changes have been implemented by the Ministry of Finance, a change for multi-residential apartment buildings that limits tax increases on these properties to zero, and a new tax class “new multi-residential” for properties built after April 2017 and tax ratio class for landfill sites, including municipally owned sites. New capping measures for 2017 include excluding vacant lands where properties are within 50 per cent of current value assessment, and limiting capping to only reassessment-related changes prior to 2017. The number of properties affected by capping rebates is declining steadily. Council also passed a motion that taxation revenue collected by the county on municipally owned landfill sites be rebated back to the local municipality paying the tax. The county portion is only one of three components on the tax bill, with the local municipality and education portion making up the balance. For more information, contact Kurt Greaves, County CAO, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1101.
- **2016 Auditor’s Statement Presented:** Following a presentation by Howard Allan of Allan and Partners LLP Chartered Professional Accountants at the corporate services committee of the whole meeting earlier this month, the 2016 audited financial statements were accepted as information. “Overall the county is in good hands,” Mr. Allan said. “There has been a respect for the budget and a respect for spending money.” He noted a surplus was generated, adding that almost \$8 million was spent, “but even with the monies spent you increased your financial assets by \$2.4 million. You increased reserves and paid down debt.” Mr. Allan concluded “the financial management at the county has been strong.” Councillors thanked staff for their work during the audit process. For more information, contact Jennie Bingley, Treasurer, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1320.
- **County Addresses ANSIs:** Following a presentation by Brian Whitehead of Jp2g Consultants Inc., council has passed a motion to modify Amendment No. 5 of the Lanark County Sustainable Communities Official Plan (SCOP), which pertains to Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI). Since the SCOP was approved by the province in 2012, it was identified that technical corrections were needed to the ANSI policies and mapping in the plan. Official Plan Amendment No. 5 is designed to establish how ANSIs will be protected through the SCOP and local plans, and to ensure consistency with the Provincial Policy Statement. The modifications include clarifying how confirmed ANSIs will be designated on the plan and modifying ANSI policies within the SCOP related to development. Development may be permitted in accordance with the policies of the underlying land-use designation or on adjacent lands if an environmental impact study shows there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or ecological functions. The amendment specifies which schedules will be removed and how ANSI designations will be shown. The modifications are considered technical corrections for clarification purposes, which do not require additional public consultation. For more information, contact Leslie Drynan, Clerk, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502.
- **County Opposes Proposed WSIB Change:** Council has passed a motion directing Warden Bill Dobson (Montague Reeve) to write a letter to Premier Kathleen Wynne, MPP John Fraser and MPP Randy Hillier demanding that municipalities retain the right to be a Schedule 2 Workplace Safety

and Insurance Board (WSIB) employer for its long-term care operations. This comes in light of tabled legislation, Bill 145: WSIB Coverage for Workers in Residential Care Facilities and Group Homes Act. Under current legislation municipalities have the right to be WSIB Schedule 2 employers if they elect to do so, which means they can be self-insured. "Being self-insured under Schedule 2, municipalities and their employees have an enormous incentive to create a safe workplace," the motion states. The tabled legislation would force municipalities to be Schedule 1 WSIB employers for long-term care, paying premiums into an insurance fund, which would cost Lanark County taxpayers at least \$225,000 more per year. The letter is to be copied to the Eastern Ontario Warden's Caucus. For more information, contact Kurt Greaves, CAO, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1101.

- **Support for Vital Signs Project:** Councillors expressed support for the Perth and District Community Foundation's Vital Sign Program following a presentation by past-president Deborah Duffy at the community services committee meeting earlier this month. The project is designed to "celebrate life in Lanark County, measure community well-being and identify areas for improvement." Information gathered will help community leaders to work together to address areas of greatest need, and it will help the foundation to set funding priorities for its catchment area. Vital Signs is a national program coordinated by Community Foundations of Canada and delivered locally by PDCF and its partners. The survey can be found at www.pdcf.ca. For more information, contact Leslie Drynan, Clerk, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502.
- **Pledging Support for Expanded Broadband:** Council passed a motion supporting the submission of the Eastern Ontario Regional Cellular Mobile Broadband Project as the region's highest economic development priority and pledging to partner with the Eastern Ontario Warden's Caucus (EOWC), Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN), provincial and federal governments, and the private sector to improve mobile broadband access and services in eastern Ontario. The motion states the county will make a financial contribution once the full extent of the project is determined by the federal and provincial governments. Revitalization of the regional economy has been a primary objective of the EOWC, with improved mobile broadband and cellular networks highlighted as a critical need across many sectors. The EOWC and EORN have undertaken a detailed and comprehensive engineering analysis of the gaps in cellular coverage and capacity across the region and have found significant gaps in coverage and capacity that affect public safety, economic growth and quality of life. EORN, on behalf of the EOWC, has prepared a full business case to support improvement and expansion of the services across eastern Ontario. As well, the establishment of a Public Safety Broadcast Network for first responders is a national imperative and EORN is proposing a pilot project covering eastern Ontario to support a national network. "EOWC has proven itself capable of designing, building and delivering a major telecommunications project on behalf of the businesses and citizens of eastern Ontario, Ontario and Canada," the motion states. Council is also requesting MP Scott Reid and MPPs Randy Hillier and Jack MacLaren work closely with the partners on this project. For more information, contact Kurt Greaves, CAO, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1101.
- **Agreements Related to Trail Property:** Council passed a series of motions authorizing agreements related to work being completed on portions of the Ottawa Valley Recreation Trail (OVRT) in Lanark County (the former CP Rail Corridor). One is with Thoburn Mill Condominiums in Almonte, which provides permission for them to landscape the sideline of the trail that abuts the

condominium property. Another motion authorizes the Town of Carleton Place to proceed with drainage work on the OVRT property owned by the county in the area of Lansdowne Avenue. A third agreement authorizes Mississippi Mills to remove a chain link fence between the trail property and the property owned by the town near Bridge and Reserve streets. For more information, contact Kurt Greaves, CAO, at 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1101.

- **Upcoming Meetings: No meetings in July. County Council, Wednesday, Aug. 9, 5 p.m.;** Community Services, Aug. 9 (following County Council); Corporate Services, Aug. 9 (following Community Services). **County Council, Wednesday, Aug. 23, 5 p.m.;** Economic Development, Aug. 23 (following County Council); Public Works, Aug. 23 (following Economic Development). All meetings are in Council Chambers unless otherwise noted. For more information, contact 1-888-9-LANARK, ext. 1502. Like "LanarkCounty1" on Facebook and follow "@LanarkCounty1" on Twitter!