

**TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN
ADMINISTRATION/FINANCE/FIRE COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

MEETING NO. THREE

April 17, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Township Administration Building

318 Canborough Street, Smithville, Ontario

Council: Councillor Jason Trombetta
Councillor Shelley Bradaric
Mayor Cheryl Ganann
Councillor Mike Rehner
Councillor William Reilly
Councillor Terry Bell
Councillor Joann Chechalk

Staff: Bev Hendry, CAO
Joanne Scime, Director of Legislative Services/Clerk
Mike DiPaola, Director of Public Works & Recreation
Donna DeFilippis, Treasurer/Director of Finance
Katelyn Hall, Deputy Treasurer
Tim Hofsink, Deputy Fire Chief
Wendy Beaty, Coordinator of Recreation Services
Kevin Geoghegan, IT Help Desk Analyst

Others: Regional Councillor Albert Witteveen
Staff Sergeant Chris Lemaich, Niagara Regional Police*
Rajdeep Dhillon, KPMG*
Carlos Alvarex, KPMG*
Bruce Harris, WeeStreem

1. CHAIR - Councillor Jason Trombetta

The Chair called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m.

Prior to commencing with the Administration/Finance/Fire Committee meeting agenda, Chair Trombetta read the following announcements:

1. Comments from the public for a matter that was on the agenda may be provided in person by attending the meeting and advising the Chair during the "Request to Address an Item on the Agenda" Section of the agenda. For those individuals that are unable to attend the meeting in person, you may submit comments for matters that are on the agenda by either (1) emailing jscime@westlincoln.ca before 4:30 pm. on the day of the meeting. Comments submitted will be considered as public information and read into public record OR (2) by contacting the Clerk's Department to request a Zoom Link to attend the meeting virtually.
2. This meeting will be livestreamed. The link to watch the meeting live can be found on the Township's website by selecting the "Township Office" tab at the top of the website, then clicking the Council or Standing Committee meetings tab and scroll down the meeting list to find the link.
3. This meeting will be recorded and will be available to view by clicking the meeting video link found on the Township's website within 48 hours after the meeting unless otherwise noted.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

The Chair read the following Land Acknowledgement Statement:

The Township of West Lincoln, being part of Niagara Region is situated on treaty land. This land is steeped in the rich history of the First Nations such as the Hatiwendaronk (Hat-i-wen-DA-ronk), the Haudenosaunee (Hoe-den-no-SHOW-nee), and the Anishinaabe (Ah-nish-ih-NAH-bey), including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. There are many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people from across Turtle Island that live and work in Niagara today. The Township of West Lincoln, as part of the Regional Municipality of Niagara, stands with all Indigenous people, past and present, in promoting the wise stewardship of the lands on which we live.

3. CHANGE IN ORDER OF ITEMS ON AGENDA

There were no changes in order of items on the agenda.

4. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND/OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There were no disclosure of pecuniary interest and/or conflict of interest declared by any Member of Committee.

5. APPOINTMENTS

5.1 ITEM A23-23

Staff Sergeant Chris Lemaich - Grimsby Detachment

Re: Introduction as the Local Staff Sergeant and Overview of Police Services in Niagara and West Lincoln

Staff Sergeant Chris Lemaich, District Commander for the Grimsby Detachment of the Niagara Regional Police (NRP) reviewed a PowerPoint Presentation that was attached to the agenda. Staff Sergeant Lemaich reviewed the following in detail:

- (1) NRP's Mission Statement,
- (2) NRP's current organizational structure
- (3) Police programs in Niagara
- (4) West Lincoln calls for services which are trending upwards
- (5) The number of speed violations for West Lincoln (being 481 speed infractions in 2022 and 103 to date for 2023)
- (6) Project Speed Alert on Rural Roads (proactive patrols in the rural area)
- (7) NRP has a collaborative partnership with Niagara Region with respect to the "Vision Zero" program as well as with the establishment of "Community Safety Zones" (John Calvin School & Cairns Elementary School/Smithville District Christian High School); as well as
- (8) Provided a number of other various statistical figures.

Staff Sergeant Lemaich provided a phone number for open communication, to address concerns regarding policing within West Lincoln and the Niagara Region, which was 289-248-1060. Staff Sergeant Lemaich touched on various Community Engagement events such as Lock it or Lose it Campaign, Park and Premise Checks, Truck Safety Blitzes, and their Twitter Account (@8Nrps). Staff Sergeant Lemaich ended his presentation by thanking Council for their time, and advised he was open to answer any questions.

Councillor Bradaric stated that living in the rural areas, speed was one of the more concerning issues and potential accidents from speeding can be catastrophic. Councillor Bradaric inquired into Project Speed Alert, and if the Staff Sergeant could expand on this project in light of West Lincoln being one of the largest rural area municipalities in Niagara Region.

Staff Sergeant Lemaich touched on the Project Speed Alert initiative, and stated that it was spearheaded by the Traffic Enforcement Unit, and will be

targeting rural areas for speed enforcement. Staff Sergeant Lemaich agreed with Councillor Bradaric, and stated that the rate of speeding was the leading cause of most catastrophic accidents occurring locally and within the Niagara Region. He further noted that mobile and stationary radar speed enforcement was and will continue to be conducted by the Traffic Enforcement Unit in Zone 8 for speeding in the rural areas.

Councillor Bradaric thanked the Staff Sergeant for his insights, and further inquired regarding 'breaking and entering', and if there was an incident in West Lincoln, what would the average response time.

In response to Councillor Bradaric's inquiry, Staff Sergeant Lemaich stated the response time would be approximately 7 minutes; however, he noted that West Lincoln was a large geographic area, and despite having officers in the area, the geography of the municipality can impact these response times slightly. Staff Sergeant Lemaich stated that while geography can impact response times, officers can quickly reroute from neighboring zones to provide assistance if needed.

Mayor Ganann stated that we have seen more police presence in West Lincoln, and noted when the Chief of Police spoke at the Region, he stated an average response time of 10 minutes. Mayor Ganann inquired if this was being monitored and tracked.

Staff Sergeant Lemaich stated that this type of tracking and monitoring was done at a level higher than his own, but the response times are being studied and reviewed to ensure police officers are making those targeted times.

Mayor Ganann thanked Staff Sergeant Lemaich for his response, and noted she wanted to make sure those responses are being looked at especially as West Lincoln grows and as the municipalities' needs change. Mayor Ganann noted that there was quite a few were traffic related incidents within West Lincoln, and appreciated these issues were being examined and will continue to be.

Councillor Chechalk stated she was most interested in the comments regarding oversized trucks using West Lincoln roads to avoid the truck weight centres, and inquired what the Staff Sergeant meant by the NRPS trying to divert or intercept trucks.

In response to Councillor Chechalk's inquiry, Staff Sergeant Lemaich explained that in Vineland when the MTO activates their scale, some truck operators exit the QEW and divert through West Lincoln in order to avoid

the scales for one reason or another. The Staff Sergeant noted that police are in those rural areas of West Lincoln to target those operators who are diverting their course to avoid the MTO weight scales to insure of no infractions with respect to the vehicles they are driving.

Councillor Reilly thanked the Staff Sergeant for taking the time to make a presentation, as well as the NRPS work on social media with various initiatives as well as informing the public of the NRP's presence. Councillor Reilly questioned the numbers of complaints received online from West Lincoln, and how many complaints were followed up on. Councillor Reilly clarified that the inquiry was in regards to the Online Traffic Portal, and that he would prefer to see what the numbers would be for West Lincoln but noted that if this was not possible, then Niagara Region's wide numbers would be acceptable as well.

In response to Councillor Reilly's inquiry, Staff Sergeant Lemaich noted that while he did not have those numbers on hand, he would be happy to get those numbers from the Online Traffic Portal for Council to see. He further noted that he appreciated the comments regarding the NRP's social media presence, which has been a focus as of late with local initiatives, and has seen an increased following of approximately 18%.

Councillor Reilly thanked Staff Sergeant Lemaich's comments, and further noted that one of the issues West Lincoln faces was not just speeding but also the lack of adherence to road signs, specifically stop signs. Councillor Reilly inquired to the CAO regarding the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee traffic control and managing during the event, and noted that there will be a letter from a member of this committee regarding issues regarding involvement from the NRPS.

The CAO noted that a letter from the Police Chief regarding Special Duty Requests was distributed to municipalities, stating there will be a reduction or different approach from the NRPS to Special Duty Requests, and inquired if the Staff Sergeant could comment on this.

In response to CAO inquiry, Staff Sergeant Lemaich noted he was aware of the letter and was also provided a copy. Staff Sergeant Lemaich stated that the letter addresses the NRP's staffing pressures, but stated he was willing to work with the municipality in regards to special requests, and that it would not be a "hard no" with respect to the NRP providing service for special events. Staff Sergeant Lemaich suggested that as an event(s) get closer, he and staff could meet to figure out taking a different approach,

using the resources available, and exploring different avenues to make the event safe and successful.

Councillor Reilly noted the growing costs of the event, and that often times volunteers were in charge of the traffic control for the event which may not be the best option. Councillor Reilly stated he wanted it to be clear in terms of cost and responsibilities and on the administration side of things the Parade Committee recently received an invoice from 2 years ago, as the invoice was going to the Town of Lincoln and not the Township of West Lincoln and that he did not want this issue to have a negative impression on the municipality.

Staff Sergeant Lemaich apologized for the mistake with the invoicing with being sent to the incorrect municipality, and stated that as Canada Day approached all the municipalities will be having events on the same day, and as the event deadline gets closer he would be happy to sit down and work collaboratively with staff should policing assistance be required.

The CAO stated that nuisance issues were becoming a bigger issue within West Lincoln and staff were needing new strategies on how to deal with this increasing problem, especially in our Community Centre and Library(ies).

Staff Sergeant Lemaich stated that he would welcome those discussions, and meet with staff to come up with some strategies to mitigate those issues.

With respect to the number of speeding infractions in West Lincoln, which appeared to be going down (2022 - 481, 2023 - 108 YTD), Councillor Bell advised that he was pleased to see there was a downward trend and thanked the Staff Sergeant and his officers for the patrolling in rural areas.

Councillor Rehner thanked the Staff Sergeant for his presentation, and stated he would like for him to come back on a regular basis to Council or Committee Meetings. Councillor Rehner touched on the larger issues in the rural areas, specifically speed and alcohol. Councillor Rehner inquired to the Staff Sergeant about the enforcement of drinking and driving in the rural areas, as he often finds alcohol containers in the roadside ditches.

In response to Councillor Rehner's inquiry, Staff Sergeant Lemaich stated that they have more officers being trained in standard field impairment assessments, and that officers are out 24 hours, 7 days a week. The Staff Sergeant stated that the number of officers patrolling does increase on

weekends, and people are encouraged to report any erratic or suspected impaired driving that they may witness.

Mayor Ganann asked about RIDE Programs and if they were still being done, in which the Staff Sergeant confirmed that yes, NRP does have RIDE Checkpoints, which are random, so they are not predictable.

Councillor Reilly noted that with the enhancing of our gravel roads the municipality will likely experience more speeding as drivers become more confidence on these roads. Councillor Reilly also inquired into whether the NRPS had any outreach programs specifically that may target schools and inform students of self awareness, stranger danger, and other general safety tips.

Staff Sergeant Lemaich stated that they have recently went through a change in their outreach programs as they don't just target these programs towards schools but also address these issues on the streets.

Councillor Trombetta inquired into the statistic where less people are getting their vehicles being broken into, and how this was coming about.

Staff Sergeant Lemaich stated that most of the reduction of car break-ins has been due to people getting into a routine of always locking their vehicles, regardless if they are in the urban or rural areas.

5.2 ITEM A24-23

Rajdeep Dhillon & Carlos Alvarez, KPMG

Re: Presentation - Audit Service Plan

Carlos Alvarez of KPMG, spoke with respect to the PowerPoint Presentation that was attached to the agenda with respect to the Audit Service Plan for West Lincoln. The presentation covered various topics including but not limited to: what the audit covers, risk management, the importance of separation between the corporation and auditors, asset management, changing regulations, and various educational packages available to Council. Carlos Alvarez, KPMG, stated that the group would come back in June, 2023 to present the audit findings.

6. REQUEST TO ADDRESS ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

The Chair inquired if the IT Help Desk Analyst was aware if there were any members of the public in attendance virtually on the Zoom meeting call that wished to address a specific item on tonight's agenda as permitted under Section 6.7 of the Procedural By-law, for which the IT Help Desk Analyst confirmed he did not.

Additionally, the Chair asked the Director of Legislative Services/Clerk if she had received any emails or correspondence from a member of the public prior to 4:30 p.m. today to read into the record, for which the Director of Legislative Services/Clerk confirmed she had not.

With respect to Item A28-23 (Recommendation Report T-09-2023 - 2023 Community Sponsorships and Cemetery and Hal Board Grants), Councillor Reilly read into the record a letter that he received late today from the Chair of the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee thanking Council for considering their grant request and the reasons for their request of \$7,500. A copy of the letter has been attached to the minutes as **Schedule A**.

7. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

7.1 ITEM A25-23

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Moved By Councillor Joann Chechalk

Seconded By Mayor Cheryl Ganann

That the Administration/Finance/Fire Committee hereby approves the following Consent Agenda Items:

1. Items 1 and 2 be and are hereby received for information.

Carried

SUMMARY OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS APPROVED:

1. Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee - Minutes of March 1, 2023
2. Information Report WFLD-06-2023 - Monthly Update March 2023

Councillor Trombetta inquired to Acting Fire Chief, Tim Hofsink, on how the construction on the new Fire Station 2 was going, and when the public would be able to tour the building in an open house format.

In response to Councillor Trombetta's inquiry, Acting Fire Chief Hofsink stated that the construction project was going well, and the finishing touches were underway and that he expected the fire department to be able to move into the building at the end of May to early June. Acting Fire Chief Hofsink stated that he hoped that an open house of the new Fire Station would be held sometime later this year.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

8.1 ITEM A26-23

Al McLaren

Re: Resignation from Heritage Committee

Moved By Councillor Joann Chechalk

Seconded By Councillor William Reilly

(1) That, the email from Al McLaren, dated March 31, 2023 advising of his resignation from the Township of West Lincoln Heritage Committee; be accepted with regrets; and,

(2) That, a by-law removing Mr. McLaren from the membership of the Heritage Committee be presented at the April 24, 2023 Council Meeting

(3) That, staff be directed to advertise the vacancy on the Heritage Committee as well as any other Committees or Boards that do not have a full membership compliment and that staff advertise these vacancies, as they feel appropriate, using the Township's website, social media outlets, newspaper advertisement and any other advertising avenues.

Carried

9. STAFF REPORTS

9.1 ITEM A27-23

Administrative Assistant (Justin Paylove) and Director of Legislative Services/Clerk (Joanne Scime)

Re: Recommendation Report C-03-2023 - Sunday Gun Hunting

Councillor Bradaric and Councillor Reilly stated their appreciation for the speed of the report in question returning to Council, and the opportunity for the residents of West Lincoln to participate in hunting all days of the week.

Moved By Councillor William Reilly

Seconded By Councillor Shelley Bradaric

1. That, Recommendation Report C-03-2023, dated April 17, 2023 regarding "Sunday Gun Hunting" be received; and
2. That, Sunday Gun Hunting in the Township of West Lincoln be permitted within the guidelines of the Township of West Lincoln's Regulation of the Discharge of Guns or other Firearms By-Law; and
3. That, the Township of West Lincoln advise the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) to add the Township to its list and

map of Southern Ontario municipalities that permit Sunday Gun Hunting, which is updated by the Province every April 1 and September 1.

Carried

9.2 ITEM A28-23

Treasurer/Director of Finance (Donna DeFilippis)

Re: Recommendation Report T-09-2023 - 2023 Community Sponsorships and Cemetery and Hall Board Grants

Councillor Bell stated that he feels that the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee should be given the full amount of their request being \$7,500, as this event benefits all of West Lincoln and was open to the benefit of the entire community.

Councillor Reilly stated that the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee was a Committee of Council and not a private organization, and inquired if we could take the additional money from the reserve in order to ensure that the event could continue to function at a full capacity.

The Treasurer/Director of Finance stated that if Council wishes to award the full grant request to the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee, she suggested that the account be allowed to go over budget as other accounts may go under budget which would offset the additional funding. The Treasurer/Director of Finance further stated if there was a potential issue with the need for amending the budget, she would advise Council well in advance.

Councillor Bradaric stated that consideration should be offered to the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee, and that a review of staff's involvement with respect to this event should be undertaken to ensure proper buy in from all parties.

The Director of Public Works & Recreation stated that a staff person does acts as a liaison to the Parade Committee, and the department will be trained and educated in order to participate in the road closures. The Director further stated that staff could present something in the 2024 budget with respect to working with the volunteers of the Parade Committee.

The CAO spoke to the inquiry in how we compare to other municipalities in this regard, and stated that some have events coordinators which may be something the Township could explore in the future. The CAO advised that there were many specifics changed made to this year's Parade which

staff and the committee worked very hard to pull off a fantastic event despite the challenges.

Councillor Bell stated that the ask to increase the grant funding had no reflection on staff nor the committee members but the Santa Claus Parade was one of the biggest events that West Lincoln does, which requires a lot of work and dedication. Councillor Bell stated that the Parade was an important event for the community and he would like the Township to take a bigger role in the event by assisting the Committee volunteers who have done a great job alongside staff to bring a very successful event that is enjoyed by the community and he felt the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee was deserving of an increase in funding.

Councillor Chechalk stated that getting an operating budget for the parade outside of the grant system would be most appropriate and that the Township should look at hiring an Events Coordinator in the future or an event budget that does not take away from other initiatives within the grant program.

Mayor Ganann stated that the Committee can be allowed to step back from various outside responsibilities, such as public skating or caroling, as they should be allowed to focus on the parade and do not have to focus on other events following the parade as she understood the Committee's expectations are quite high but were not necessary to organize a full scale event including the other activities that followed the parade.

Councillor Reilly thanked the Mayor and stated he would relay her message, and further stated that when the new committee was formed during the pandemic and they came up with ideas to add on to the event. Councillor Reilly stated that the stress from the increased expectations and rising costs of certain aspects of the event have been weighing on the volunteers, and requires much more staff involvement.

Moved By Mayor Cheryl Ganann

Seconded By Councillor Terry Bell

1. That, Recommendation Report T-09-2023 regarding "2023 Community Sponsorships and Cemetery and Hall Board Grants", dated April 17, 2023 be received; and,
2. That the Community Sponsorships and the Cemetery and Hall Board grants for 2023 as recommended in this report, be approved.

Carried AS AMENDED (see below)

Moved By Councillor Terry Bell

Seconded By Councillor William Reilly

- (1) That, the Director of Finance/Treasurer's Recommendation Report No. T-09-2023 be amended to increase the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade's Community Grant from \$5,000 to \$7,500.00; and,
- (2) That, staff be directed to report back in the Fall of 2023 on a plan for further involvement of staff and resources as part of the 2024 budget for the planning and execution of the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade event commencing in 2024 while continuing to work with the volunteer committee members of the Parade Committee.

Carried

10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 ITEM A29-23

CAO (Bev Hendry)

Re: Employee Professional Accomplishments

1. Jennifer Bernard - Completion of Stormwater Management course through Ontario Good Roads Association

The CAO recognized and congratulated Jennifer Bernard on her completion of the Stormwater Management course through Ontario Good Roads Association.

10.2 ITEM A30-23

Council

Re: Council Expense Policy

Councillor Bradaric stated that she thought the Director of Finance/Treasurer had provided a thorough policy in 2022 and in a more digital age there should be a limited need for expenses such as stationary. Councillor Bradaric further stated that there may be some Councillors that may want to print materials; however, this was not a necessary expense, and that she was supportive of the policy as it stands.

Mayor Ganann stated that she supports the policy as it stands, with the caveat of the phone items. She stated that we are supplied with computer so the amendment regarding a computer was not necessary. She stated that the additional coverage for phones for someone that was on vacation or away could be looked into.

Councillor Reilly inquired into the limitations of purchasing items with the allowance, and gave the example of someone purchasing something

unrelated to their duties as a Member of Council and putting it through their protocol account

In response to Councillor Reilly's inquiry, the Treasurer/Director of Finance stated that at the beginning of the policy there is a notation that expenses must be related to Members of Council carrying out their respective roles and responsibilities. The Director of Finance/Treasurer further stated if there was a questionable expense then it would be looked into, but stated the expense that Councillor Reilly gave as an example would not be approved by the Finance Department.

Councillor Chechalk stated that she believes the policy stated that a Member of Council can purchase their surface pro at the depreciated amount, which the Treasurer/Director of Finance confirmed was correct. Councillor Chechalk stated that she felt that it was common sense and does not want this to become ridiculous, as there was enough language in the policy to ensure that protocol expenses are only reimbursed if they are deemed to be appropriate for a Member of Council to carry out their responsibilities.

The Director of Finance/Treasurer questioned what the date would be that the amendments to the policy would be effective. With respect to proposed amendment to allow the purchase of a computer as a eligible reimbursable expenditure, the Director of Finance/Treasurer advised that any purchase of equipment not owned by the Township would not be supported by the IT Department.

Councillor Trombetta stated that he feels that a Member of Council should be reimbursed for cost of using their phone when outside of the country for holidays, as he has found residents want a call back when they contact a Member of Council. Councillor Trombetta stated that there were some products that a Councillor may need to purchase and expensed to the protocol that he would suspect would not need to be returned such as the purchase of earbuds to use on virtual meetings. Councillor Trombetta noted that the two main adjustments that he would like made to the policy were adjustment of the \$100 capping for phone services and internet and any other supplies, equipment or technology that was needed for a Member of Council to carryout their duties.

Councillor Reilly clarified that there was a cap on Councillor's protocol account of \$4,000 per year which was not being eliminated and that the removal of any caps for reimbursement for personal month cellular phones

or internet service would not change the yearly protocol account reimbursement maximum that a Councillor could claim.

Treasurer/Director of Finance Donna DeFilippis provided clarification into the discussion of 9b of the policy regarding Office Supplies.

Moved By Councillor Terry Bell

Seconded By Councillor Mike Rehner

That, the Township of West Lincoln's Council Expense Policy POL-T-02 2022 be amended as follows to take effect as of January 1, 2023:

- i) That, Section 11 (Mobile Phones / Telecommunication Services), specifically items f) and k) be amended by removing any wording relating to reimbursement to a maximum amount (i.e. "reimbursement will be a maximum of \$100/month").
- ii) That, Section 3 (General Requirements), specifically items f) and g) be amended to add the following sentence to the end of each of these items: "This does not apply to any items purchased from the Mayor's or Councillor's protocol account."
- iii) That, Section 9 be amended, specifically item b) by add the following words: "including computers" following the words "Stationary and Office Supplies"
- iv) That, Section 9 be amended, specifically item c) by removing "not" in the first sentence.

Carried

10.3 ITEM A31-23

Members of Committee

Re: Verbal Updates from Members of Boards and Committees - If required

1) Councillor Shelley Bradaric

Re: Heritage Committee

Councillor Bradaric stated that she attended the inaugural meeting of the Heritage Committee which was a great success, and Senior Planner, Gerrit Boerema had provided an update on the changes to the Heritage Act and Bill 23. Councillor Bradaric acknowledged the wealth of knowledge on the Heritage Committee and that they have reached out to the Smithville Christian High School History class who will be assisting in various ways.

2) Councillor Joann Chechalk

Re: West Lincoln Chamber of Commerce Mayor's Luncheon – May 18

Councillor Chechalk stated that the West Lincoln Chambers of Commerce will be holding an event coming up, being the Mayor's Luncheon, which will be held on May 18th, 2023 from 11 am to 1 pm. Councillor Chechalk stated she hoped would be a great success, and that tickets were available from the West Lincoln Chamber of Commerce.

3) Mayor Cheryl Ganann

Re: Age Friendly Event - Fraud Awareness Seminar
& Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee - Designs for Township's Christmas Cards

Mayor Ganann noted that the Age Friendly Committee will be hosting a fraud alert seminar with flyers being posted around Town to promote the event. Mayor Ganann noted that the Township's Communications Specialist, has done a good job on a Media Release to also promote the event.

Mayor Ganann noted that Members of the Mayor's Youth Advisory Committee will be working on designs for the Township's Christmas Cards this year.

4) Councillor Jason Trombetta

Re: Orthodox Easter

Councillor Trombetta wished those that celebrate, a Happy Orthodox Easter.

10.4 ITEM A32-23

Members of Council

Re: Other Business Items of an Informative Nature

There were Member of Committee that brought forward any other business items of an informative nature.

11. NEW BUSINESS

There were no new items of business brought forward by any Member of Committee.

12. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

There were no confidential matters.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The Chair declared the meeting adjourned at the hour of 9:32 pm.

**JOANNE SCIME, DIRECTOR OF
LEGISLATIVE SERVICES/CLERK**

**COUNCILLOR JASON
TROMBETTA, CHAIR**

Schedule A



Dear West Lincoln Council and Staff,

On behalf of the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade Committee, I would like to thank you for taking the time to consider our grant request. The amount received from the grant is essential to our basic operating budget and ensures the event's success.

As you may be aware, the cost of living has increased significantly in the past few years and the parade is not immune to this current reality. Entertainment, health and safety, Region and Policing costs have increased, therefore raising our overall monetary need from previous years and I would like to take the time to outline our \$7,500.00 request.

While we conduct a significant amount of fundraising by outreaching to over 200 local businesses, we only received financial support/donations from roughly 26 community businesses and partners in 2022 totalling \$9,050.00. Unfortunately, due to circumstances outside of the committee's control, being associated with council, as a "committee of council", we did experience the loss of previous donors due to the impacts of COVID-19 and the necessary measures council and staff took during that time. As you may know, not everyone was not in agreement with these measures required by the Province, which created a significant divide within our community, unfortunately, the parade has not been immune to this reality either. In conjunction with this, many businesses also experienced losses during the pandemic and are not in a position to support the parade.

In 2022, our entertainment costs totalled roughly \$8,000.00, this included three (3) bands and three (3) entertainers. In our experience and through our research, the average cost for a performer generally falls between \$800.00 to \$1,500.00 and the average cost of a polished band (e.g. Burlington Teen Tour) costs between \$3,000.00 to \$4,000.00, with more recreational bands ranging from \$500.00 to \$1,500.00. Following our experience in 2022 we received a great amount of positive feedback on the performers and bands we hired for the event, they were definitely a highlight and many of the performers and bands appreciated our organized approach and taking part in the event. Based on this, the committee hopes to increase the number of bands and/or performances, or at the very least, ensure we can have the same or similar in our 2023 parade. For example, hiring Burlington Teen Tour Band and the Top Hat Marching Orchestra would be ideal, but based on 2022 pricing, this would cost \$6,800.00 and will not be possible without more support from Council and the community.

The costs mentioned above do not include policing (\$1,345.00), Niagara Region bills for road closures and signage (\$1,839.00) and general health and safety costs, advertising, bank fees, the sponsored skating event and other miscellaneous costs (roughly \$2,800.00). Fortunately, due to selling some of the leftover decor from the 2021 drive-thru parade, some carry-over from previous years and the 2022 Community Grant, we were able to pull it off. However, there is significant concern in the longevity and success of future years due to the substantial costs, as mentioned above, volunteer time, commitment and liability without staff support from senior management and council support.

Unlike other communities within the Niagara Region, the West Lincoln Santa Claus Parade has never had a determined yearly operating cost, defined roles for Township staff or much involvement from council. This is at no fault of anyone, it is just the way things have always been. However, to my limited understanding, the shift to becoming a committee of council protected both the volunteers and the Township, with little of those

Schedule A

perceived liabilities being removed from the volunteers. For example, in 2022, I found myself, with no traffic control experience, directing traffic into and out of the Community Centre while Highway 20 remained open during the float arrivals. It was chaotic to say the least. Additionally, while we appreciate the work Officers do, this has been the second year in a row where the support provided by the Niagara Regional Police was not overly effective. However, how are we to know until the day of the event is upon us? Unfortunately, hiring both NRP and traffic control was not a possibility due to financial constraints. What is the liability if I had been hurt? Is this something Township Staff and Council have considered in the past? Things like, collecting and organizing float entry insurance and waivers falling to volunteers - what if something is missed? What is the liability as a Committee of Council? Would this ultimately fall back on the Township? Is there a perceived level of risk we are not considering after all these years? All this to say, the support we have received from our Township Liaison and Council Liaison has been wonderful - and we cannot thank them enough. However, my concerns lie with senior management staff and their awareness of the liability the Township assumes through volunteers as well as for their and Councils commitment to the success of the event.

As previously mentioned, neighbouring communities provide further support to ensure a successful event. For example, in Grimsby, much of the planning and organizing is dependent on the Township, with fundraising and day of activities involving the volunteers. Thorold recently hired a Special Events Coordinator and assumed a large portion of their annual parade and also to assist with events like the Farmers Markets and other holiday events (e.g. Canada Day) that were traditionally run by volunteers. Lastly, the Town of Pelham includes their Santa Claus Parade in their Special Events and Festivals Operating Budget to ensure the events success. Therefore, I truly believe for the longevity and continued success of the parade that staff and council should consider their involvement in the future.

I know I don't need to explain the importance of bringing community together to the people around the tables in the room - and it is more important now more than ever since what we all endured during the pandemic. Doing this for the children and those who enjoy it is very important to the committee and I hope that we can explore different themes and events to ensure an inclusive and fun filled event in the future, no matter how it is celebrated by an individual but to focus on the community as a whole. I am exploring how to highlight different ways community members celebrate on our social media and website as well as considering a future theme of "Christmas Around the World".

As you can see, I am unfortunately not there to speak with you all directly, as a busy mother of two young children and a full time Senior Advisor for the Federal Public Service, as much as I am committed to my community, I am also committed to my family, friends and career and therefore, hope you can understand my absence at tonight's meeting. If you have any remaining questions or concerns, please contact me directly. I look forward to seeing you all at the 2023 parade and would like to thank you again, for your time, consideration and support to date.

Sincerely,

Nicole Scime
Committee Chair