

6. Public Input

Brenda Martin advised a Councillors job is already a full-time job. Their role includes representing their constituents, preparing for Council Meetings, and being representatives on sub-committees, etc. If Wards 2 and 3 are combined it would be very difficult to represent the people. Ward 1 is 450 square kilometers and Wards 2 and 3 would be 1,000 square kilometers if combined. A Councillor would struggle to represent that large of an area. There has been a lot of material downloaded from the Province and it takes a lot of hours to prepare. If the numbers are reduced it will be very difficult to find people interested in running for Council.

Janice Arthur asked each Council Member to explain which Committees they sit on. She also wanted to know what the tax base and population is for each Ward.

Councillor Good (Ward 1) advised:

- Joint Fire Committee for the Kaladar-Barrie Fire Department
- Road Allowance Inspector for Township

Deputy Mayor Martin (Ward 2) advised:

- Chair of Personnel and Audit Committee
- CPAC Task Force
- Alternate Member - Joint Fire Committee for the Kaladar-Barrie Fire Department
- Lake Association Liaison – Ward 2
- County Council Member, including Board Member for Fairmont Home

Councillor Fowler (Ward 3) advised:

- CPAC Task Force Chair and Sub-Committee for the Essential Services Fair
- Economic Development Task Force (EDTF)
- Liaison for the Committee of Adjustment/Planning Advisory Committee
- Liaison for Snowmobile and ATV Clubs, including Board Member for Eastern Ontario Trails Alliance

Councillor Hermer (Ward 2) advised:

- Personnel and Audit Committee
- CPAC Task Force
- Liaison for Pine Meadow Nursing Home
- Community Living
- Land O' Lakes Community Services
- Seniors Housing Representative

Councillor Inglis (Ward 3) advised:

- Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority Board Member
- Chair of EDTF, including Sub-Committee for Welcome Package
- Personnel and Audit Committee (in Councillor Perry's absence)
- Lake Association Liaison – Ward 3

Mayor advised:

- County Council
- Ex-officio to all Committees

The Mayor explained Councillor Perry's positions in his absence:

- Joint Fire Committee for the Kaladar-Barrie Fire Department
- Personnel and Audit Committee
- Liaison with Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
- Representative on the Lakelands Family Health Team Committee
- Lake Association Liaison – Ward 1

The Mayor advised the Assessment is \$431,000 for Ward 1; \$333,000 for Ward 2; and \$175,000 for Ward 3. Therefore the combined amount for Wards 2 and 3 is approximately \$505,000.

Glen Bucci advised he sent a letter to Council. He noted he is negative toward the proposal. He doesn't believe there will be a cost savings because if the Councillor takes on more responsibility they will require more money and staff may need to work overtime. He also noted only 0.00097% of the population are represented here today. Therefore; they should not use this turnout to make their decision. He noted he is the fifth generation in North Frontenac and there have been a lot of changes. He thinks the current system is best. He advised it shouldn't be necessary to contact the Clerk to be provided information it should be available on the website for everyone to view. He also asked about seasonal people being notified. He noted not everyone has internet; the tax bills were just sent and there wasn't anything about this proposal included. This would have been a good opportunity to notify everyone. Mr. Bucci advised he is totally against the proposal. It was brought up before and defeated and there was significant resistance. He asked how many times we have to go through this process. He also noted his letter was provided to the Frontenac News and he is hoping it will be printed this Thursday.

The Mayor advised the process is democratic. This is the second meeting which is not required but Council wanted it. He advised it was advertised in the Frontenac News, on social media and the Township's website. He advised they are not making a decision based on today only. They are gathering information to make an informed decision. He noted there are 20 people here out of 1,800 full-time residents.

Mr. Bucci advised there are 8,000 residents approximately and noted we should never separate full-time and seasonal.

Gerry Lichty advised he disagrees with the proposal. He noted a few years ago there was a decision not to move forward with this proposal. He noted the proposal is to decrease two Councillors to save money. If there were savings they would be temporary as everyone would have to work harder. If the salary is the same and additional work is added something will be lost. He advised the Mayor he is four or five years ahead of

time on this proposal. There may be a future need to negotiate with Central Frontenac and South Frontenac.

Betty Hunter advised there is 11,000 square kilometers of Crown land in Wards 2 and 3. If turned over this would provide a lot of potential growth as there would be more people and more development. She noted for taxes brought in for Wards 2 and 3 there is \$3 million in farmland. If this was changed to residential or commercial there would be a big difference. She noted she was on Council before with Bud Clayton and he wanted to reduce to five members by having the Mayor and Deputy Mayor elected at large and one Councillor from each Ward. She noted if the position paid more money it may attract younger people. An increased workload would require an increase in pay and therefore combining Wards will not be useful. The EDTF is working on several projects and there is a lot of potential for growth; we will need people to do the work.

Herbert Kent advised we went through this with the Council Chambers and taxes will go up again. He advised he went up to Norcan Lake/North Canonto and only two people knew about the Meeting because they don't get the paper and they don't have internet. He advised half of the road he travelled is private. They pay a large amount of taxes and don't get anything in back. He noted there have been 2,500 By-laws passed and this adds to the cost of the overhead. There used to be a grocery store in every community and now you have to drive miles to get milk and bread. There is one store left in the Township. The Township was amalgamated in 1998 to save money and with the number of people employed now compared to then there is no savings. Also, spending \$60,000 on a washroom is ludicrous.

Betty Kelford asked what the benefit is to having only two Wards and reducing Councillors.

The Mayor advised he was asked to look at the diversity and make-up of Council. He noted the current Council does not have any young people or women. The proposal was driven by this initiative. He has talked to several people and a couple are considering running for Council but none for Mayor. He looked at options to try and make the position more attractive. He thought perhaps the salaries from the two positions removed could be added to the Councillor salary which may attract more young people and get diversity. He noted he is not married to the proposal.

Janice Arthur advised the suggestion to reduce is an inequity. She suggested perhaps if Ward 2 and 3 are combined there should be 2 Councillors from Ward 1 and three Councillors from Wards 2 and 3 combined. This would not reduce costs but would be more equitable.

The Mayor advised when Council is considering matters they look at what is good for the whole Township not a specific Ward.

Councillor Fowler advised he disagree with this and is concerned about area representation. He noted there will be a lot of power for these five members and most will be from Ward 1 which may not be proper representation. He noted he keeps Ward 3

residents informed and they appreciate it. He advised the people in Norcan Lake appreciate what I have done for them or they might not get it, for example snowplowing. I don't ignore the rest of the Township if they call me and represent the area but we need regional representation. If there is a local concern or someone requires direct answers the local Councillor can look into it.

The Mayor noted he was advising the decisions made at the table are made on what is good for the community as a whole.

Councillor Hermer advised he agrees with Councillor Fowler. North Frontenac was originally three Townships with unique characteristics. There is personal pride and fellowship in each. During amalgamation it was agreed to have two Councillors for each Ward. Everyone needs fair and equal representation.

Paige Cousineau noted she has yet to hear a single problem that the proposed change will resolve. She wondered who put the proposal for Wards, a consultant from Toronto. She noted she is against the proposal because she wouldn't be better served with less representation. With less Councillors the chance of diversity would decrease. In order to have better democracy you need more representatives. She advised the federal representation isn't just based on population but on other factors including community interests, history, manageable size, etc. She noted if it isn't broke don't fix it.

Councillor Fowler advised he feels he represents the demographics of the Township as it is an older community. As the population changes and there is more development the demographics will change and younger people will elect younger Councillors.

Councillor Hermer advised a review was done of Council Member salaries for rural municipalities and the pay scale for North Frontenac is in the middle and thinks it should remain the same. If a Councillor received a \$6,000 pay raise that would be a 40% increase.

Deputy Mayor Martin advised in training sessions he attended it is noted that people do not take jobs because of money. They choose it because they like it. He noted people who are getting into politics for the money should not be there.

Brenda Martin advised it is a large geographic area and downloading from the Province has increased the responsibilities of the Township. People criticize the increase in the number of staff and Council but people want questions answered and information provided quickly. People have several jobs and responsibilities and it is a large geographic area to service. She also advised how important it is to have representatives on other Committees otherwise North Frontenac will have no voice. It is important for the Township to be represented.

Councillor Inglis advised he hasn't made up his mind yet. He noted he has half as many to represent as Councillors Perry and Wayne but he doesn't hear this as being a problem and this would be the reason to change.

Betty Hunter noted the geographic area of Wards 2 and 3 is much larger and the population could change at any time and we are not considering this potential. She noted Councillors are voting for the Township overall and their area. There is potential for the whole area.

Deputy Mayor Martin noted they dealt with something similar when there was a recommendation from a consultant to close the small halls and construct one large hall. This was a local issue and with local input Council decided to keep all the halls as they form the hub of the communities. We need to think about the big picture. Projects have been completed in each of the Wards based on the needs but also by looking at the big pictures. Some examples include the playground equipment in Cloyne, the community park in Plevna and community hall improvements in Snow Road.

Barbara Sproule advised when the restructuring occurred she was a Member of County Council. One of the goals was to try and make amalgamation as fair as possible. It was decided to have two representatives from each of the Townships on the new Council and it has remained that way since then. She advised if the plan is to save money it is not going to happen. The work has to be completed. If less Council members then more staff may be required to complete the work. She also noted younger people don't want to be on Council because they have a full-time job and have to work. She also advised a challenge may be because Council Meetings are in the day time. If they were in the evenings it may attract some others. She would like to know the number of permanent and seasonal residents in each of the Wards. She noted there are 2,000 permanent residents but the seasonal residents should have same rights and be counted.

The Mayor advised there are between 1800 and 1900 full-time residents.

Barbara Sproule noted maps should be published to show what happens when the two Wards are combined and compare the hectares in each of the Wards. She also advised the public need to be notified with solid solutions and how money will be saved otherwise the proposal should be forgotten.

Herbert Kent advised the township has several dead-end roads and there are currently a lot of wildfires across the country. He noted these roads are within one kilometer of having access to Road 506. He noted the people have no hope out except by helicopter. He is concerned by the amount of private and dead-end roads.

Councillor Good noted he has been on Council for 15 years. Council used to have night meetings and they would continue until 1:00 am. He noted it is difficult for Council Members who work as well as staff. Also, people didn't show up unless they had a specific matter they wished to discuss. He noted there is farmland in Ward 1 as well but it is no longer used for that. These lands could also be subdivided to increase the population and tax base in Ward 1. He advised we can't afford to build any new roads with the current tax base. Road 506/509 and Harlowe Road were downloaded and had to fight to keep the reserves for years. They have spent time and money to extend the life of waste sites. He noted he spends a lot of time inspecting Road Allowances and participating on the Joint Fire Committee. The concept of saving \$30,000 per year is a

lot of money. He noted everyone at the meeting today is from Wards 2 and 3. There is no one from Ward 1 as it does not affect them. We need to look at all three Wards. In the back of your mind as a Councillor you are looking at what is a priority for your Ward but need to look at the overall as well. He advised whether someone is seasonal or not doesn't matter. He advised the meeting was advertised in the paper, on the website and social media.

Councillor Fowler asked the Clerk to explain the Township's website alerts. The Clerk advised you can sign up for alerts from the Township website. You can subscribe to the website or specific pages and you will receive an email when something changes.

Steve Dunham advised the proposal was presented as a way to see cost savings but none were explained today. He advised Councillors represent everyone but everybody looks at their own Ward a bit and that is why we vote them in.

Deputy Mayor Martin noted based on assessment/taxes Ward 1 has 47% and Wards 2 and 3 have 53%.

Councillor Hermer noted they represent the Township as a whole but consider their Ward first based on the Municipal Act.

Herbert Kent advised not everyone has the internet and the people in Norcan Lake do not receive the Frontenac News.

The CAO advised Council has established a Communications Plan to increase communications to the public. This includes sending emails to the local businesses and cottage association, website enhancement, etc. She noted there have been suggestions for improvement which have been implemented and we are open to further suggestions.

Betty Hunter advised when she was a Council Member she represented her Ward but also looked at the overall good for the Township.

Deb Gervais-Hermer advised she is the spouse of a Council Member and it is more than a part-time job. Members are required to miss other personal/family events/vacations in order to fulfill their duties. It takes several nights to review an agenda because they are 300 or 400 pages in order to be prepared for a meeting. She advised an increase from \$15,000 to \$21,000 to increase workload as they will be required to sit on more meetings. They will also need to travel more because many of the meetings are outside the Township (i.e. Godfrey). There is also time required to prepare for these additional meetings. She advised the decrease in the number of Councillors will either mean a loss of representation or adding staff to complete the tasks.

Glen Bucci asked if there could be a formal survey of the people in attendance who are for and against and if this could be reflected in the minutes. The Mayor advised 100% of the people in attendance are against the proposal. Higgins advised there have also

been letters and emails submitted and there will be an electronic meeting as well later today.

Paige Cousineau asked how many people were registered for the electronic meeting. The Clerk advised eight as of last night. Ms. Cousineau advised no one from Ward 1 appears to be upset.

Hermer advised he agrees it should be recorded who in attendance is for and against the proposal.

Gerry Lichty advised this is a Public Meeting and all were invited to attend and have an opportunity to speak. He advised regardless of whether the meeting has a few or a lot of attendees it is still a cross-section of the North Frontenac people and a majority have agreed they are not in favour of this proposal.

Herbert Kent suggested there should be a referendum and be put on the next election.

George Ross advised he is against the proposal. He advised a lot of people had to work today and couldn't attend the meeting. He suggested they could contact their Councillors to express their views.

Councillor Fowler advised he has a list of people who are against the proposal and others are welcome to sign.

Betty Kelford advised she agrees with Ms. Cousineau. If it isn't broken, don't fix it.

George Ross suggested if Council is looking for ways to save money they could have a Public Meeting to look for suggestions to save money. He also noted anyone can run for Council they just require time.

The Mayor noted the proposal was to look at trying to attract a more diverse Council.

Councillor Inglis noted he thinks it is okay for now. However; there is an election in one year and we need to encourage people. Last election everyone was acclaimed which was very disappointing. He noted he enjoys being on Council and he doesn't do it for the money. He advised it is very fascinating. He noted he is not sure who has time to run.

Brenda Martin noted the Notice quoted a \$30,000 savings and this was circulated to the Lake Associations.

The Mayor apologized and noted the messaging should have been clearer.

Betty Hunter recommended if there are people interested in running for Council they should talk to Council Members. As a Councillor you are a champion of the community and they are needed. She advised it can be a very rewarding job.

