

The Corporation of the City of Kawartha Lakes

Council Report

Report Number ED2017-007

Date: August 22, 2017
Time: 2:00 p.m.
Place: Council Chambers

Ward Community Identifier: All

Subject: Farm Drainage

Author: Kelly Maloney, Economic Development Officer – Agriculture

Recommendation(s):

RESOLVED THAT Report ED2017-007 Farm Drainage, be received; and

THAT staff develop a Terms of Reference for Council approval of a Drainage Issues Task Force to review the City's municipal drain program and recommend potential improvements and efficiencies to that program for Council's consideration.

Department Head:_____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other:_____

Chief Administrative Officer:_____

Background:

At the Council Meeting of February 7, 2017, Council adopted the following resolution:

CR2017-102

RESOLVED THAT Report ED2017-002, Agricultural Development Advisory Board 2017 Work Plan, be received;

THAT the Agricultural Development Advisory Board 2016 Accomplishments be received; and

THAT the 2017 work plan for the Agricultural Development Advisory Board, be approved.

The first item of the approved Work Plan indicates that the Agricultural Development Advisory Board (ADAB) will review and advise Council and Economic Development on matters related to the agricultural industry to improve economic environment of the agricultural sector and prosperity of the rural areas. The Work Plan also indicates that ADAB will consider drainage issues of concern to the agricultural sector.

At the ADAB Meeting of February 9, 2017, the following motion was passed:

WHEREAS the ADAB Committee has identified that there are concerns being raised that the cost of assessments and reports, installation and maintenance of drains has grown significantly in some cases and is approaching a prohibitive situation; and

WHEREAS there may be improvements which could be made within the policies and mechanisms used by the municipality and its partner agencies; and

WHEREAS this is an issue affecting the local agricultural sector which can be addressed by municipal government, agency partners and landowners to develop a more favourable solution;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT ADAB recommends that Council strike a Drainage Issues Task Force with representation from Council, the Drainage Board, the Agricultural Development Advisory Board, and staff from the Engineering Department, including the Drainage Superintendent, and from the Kawartha Region Conservation Authority to review the current drainage program, policies and industry best practices to develop recommendations for council to reduce costs and shorten timelines for delivery of the program and services.

The Director of Engineering requested an opportunity to meet with ADAB regarding the current drainage program. Juan Rojas attended the ADAB meeting of April 13, 2017 and reviewed the current drainage policies and application

procedures. Committee members were also asked to review the policy documents for a further discussion at their June meeting.

At the June 27, 2017 meeting of ADAB, the following motion was passed:

WHEREAS the ADAB committee has consulted with the Director of Engineering and reviewed the municipal drainage policies, ADAB recommends that Council strike a Drainage Issues Task Force to develop recommendations for council related to project management, oversight, and cost control measures to reduce costs and shorten timelines for delivery of the drainage program and services.

This report addresses that motion.

Rationale:

The Agricultural Development Advisory Board serves to advise Council on matters affecting the agriculture and agri-food sector.

One area of concern which affects both farms and rural land owners is that of municipal/agricultural drains. There has been significant work completed by the Engineering Department staff and the Drainage Board over the recent years in developing a program to efficiently address the requirements for both installation of new and maintenance and clean out of existing drain systems.

While positive achievements can be seen there remain challenges in costs and timelines that accumulate within drainage projects for engineering reports, environmental reviews and assessments.

The ADAB committee suggests that a Task Force be struck to review best practices which may be in place in other areas, and to problem-solve for potential improvements to the municipal drain program. The end goal of the Task Force would be to identify a set of policies and directives to recommend to Council for adoption that would save time and reduce costs while supporting an effective municipal drain system (in keeping with the Drainage Act).

Other Alternatives Considered:

None were considered.

Financial/Operation Impacts:

The Task Force would not have a budget and all of the task force members would be staff, councillors or volunteers and utilize municipal facilities to conduct their work.

Relationship of Recommendation(s) to the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan:

The development of an effective municipal drain system putting less strain on the farmland owner contributes to a more vibrant and growing agricultural sector and the Council Adopted Strategic Plan, namely:

- Goal 1 – A Vibrant and Growing Economy
- Goal 3 – A Healthy Environment

Review of Accessibility Implications of Any Development or Policy:

Not applicable

Servicing Implications:

Not applicable

Consultations:

Agricultural Development Advisory Board
Director, Engineering and Assets

Attachments:

None

Department Head E-Mail: cmarshall@kawarthalakes.ca

Department Head: Chris Marshall