



Special Council Meeting

Minutes

C#10-20

Wednesday, March 25, 2020, 3:30 p.m.

(Electronic Meeting during an Emergency, pursuant to Sections 238(3.3) and 238(3.4) of the Municipal Act, 2001)

An electronic Emergency Special Council meeting pursuant to Sections 238(3.3) and 238(3.4) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* of the Council of the City of Richmond Hill was held on Wednesday, March 25, 2020 at 3:30 p.m. in Council Chambers via teleconference.

Council Members Present via teleconference:

Mayor Barrow
Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola
Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli
Councillor Beros
Councillor Muench
Councillor Liu
Councillor West
Councillor Cilevitz
Councillor Chan

Staff Members Present:

M. Dempster, Interim City Manager
P. Waddell, Manager, Client Support
A. Stephen, IT Service Desk Technical Analyst
S. Huycke, City Clerk
L. Sampogna, Council/Committee Coordinator

Staff Members Present via teleconference:

S. Adams, Acting Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services
D. Joslin, Acting Commissioner of Community Services
K. Kwan, Commissioner of Planning and Regulatory Services
P. Masaro, Acting Commissioner of Environment and Infrastructure Services
T. Dimilta, City Solicitor
S. Kraft, Fire Chief

B. Ellsworth, Deputy Fire Chief and Interim EOC Director, COVID-19 Task Force
D. Dexter, Director, Financial Services and Treasurer
M. Gandhi, Director, Strategy, Innovation and Engagement
T. Steele, Director, Community Standards

Mayor Barrow provided opening remarks with respect to today's emergency meeting and extended his appreciation to staff for their continued efforts to responding to residents' needs during unprecedented times. Mayor Barrow noted that the meeting was being conducted electronically, and Members of Council were participating in the meeting by teleconference. He advised that the *Municipal Act* had been amended to permit electronic participation in a meeting during a declared emergency, and advised that the Government of Ontario and Richmond Hill had both declared an emergency under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*.

The City Clerk conducted the Roll Call.

1. Adoption of Agenda

Moved by: Councillor West
Seconded by: Councillor Muench

That the agenda be adopted as distributed by the Clerk with the following addition:

a) Written delegation submission from Jason Cherniak, 2 Cider Crescent, dated March 25, 2020, regarding Electronic Meeting Procedures During an Emergency (refer to Item 3.1).

Carried

2. Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest by Members of Council under the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

3. Scheduled Business

3.1 SRCM.20.04 – Electronic Meeting Procedures During an Emergency

Moved by: Councillor Chan
Seconded by: Councillor Beros

- a) That Council enact By-law 40-20 (Attachment A to Staff Report SRCM.20.04), a By-law to Amend the Procedure By-law to establish procedures for electronic meetings held during an emergency;
- b) That By-law 40-20 be approved and be in force and effect upon adoption of this recommendation.

A recorded vote was taken:

In favour: (9): Councillor Beros, Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola, Councillor Cilevitz, Councillor West, Mayor Barrow, Councillor Chan, Councillor Liu, Councillor Muench, Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli

Opposed: (0): None

Carried Unanimously (9 to 0)

3.2 Property Tax Deferrals - Presentation by David Dexter, Director, Financial Services and Treasurer

David Dexter, Director, Financial Services and Treasurer, provided a summary of the information shared during discussions held earlier in the day with area municipal Treasurers regarding how property tax payment deferrals were being addressed during the COVID-19 pandemic within their respective municipalities.

D. Dexter made a presentation to Members of Council regarding the deferral of property tax payments. He provided a breakdown of the property tax bill and prescribed legislation, identified upcoming property tax installment and payment dates, reviewed the cash flow outlook up to May 31st, and advised of what other municipalities were doing for their residents in terms of deferring property taxes. D. Dexter concluded the presentation with proposed recommendations for the deferral of property tax payments within the City of Richmond Hill for Council's consideration.

Moved by: Councillor Muench

Seconded by: Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola

Whereas Richmond Hill has declared a state of emergency on March 20, 2020 in support of the Province of Ontario March 16 state of emergency initiatives fighting the COVID-19 virus; and

Whereas many municipalities have moved measures to assist the unprecedented stop in economic activity by providing property tax interest

relief and deferral including the City of Brampton which passed tax deferral and penalty motions for as much as 5 months; and

Whereas many businesses in Richmond Hill will be significantly impacted economically and may be ill prepared financially to cope with the legislation to close without notice; and

Whereas Richmond Hill wishes to ensure that all taxpayers are treated fairly and equitably and to provide staff guidance for decision making, consistent with the city's strategic plan in Corporate Excellence and continued financial stability; and

Whereas Richmond Hill wishes to send a signal that landlords should offer the a rent deferment consistent with this motion to their renters;

Therefore, be it resolved that the City of Richmond Hill Interim City Manager make all efforts to implement for 90 days the following:

- a) The City of Richmond Hill is to waive all interest and late fees on tax payments for 90 days from March 30 to in response to COVID-19, meaning the City of Richmond Hill allows residential tax payers the ability to choose to make the outstanding interim tax payments within 90 days of March 30 without incurring penalty and interest;
- b) Neither interest nor late fees will be charged for the second instalment of taxes, which was due on March 18, or for the third instalment, which is due on April 22;
- c) Those who sent postdated cheques to the City for tax instalment within the 90 day period may be allowed to cancel the payment without penalty for 90 days;
- d) Taxpayers who have pre-authorized tax payments through their bank can cancel their instalment, by submitting their request in writing;
- e) In order to resume the pre-authorized payment at a later date, the payment holder will need to re-apply to the City within the 90 day period;
- f) Pre-authorized Payment Plan (PTP) instalments for the 90 day period will be withdrawn for those who did not cancel their PTP;
- g) Taxpayers are encouraged to make tax payments on the original due dates. Payments will continue to be accepted and processed by the City. You could make smaller payments over the next few months or could pay as a lump sum. But be sure to pay all deferred amounts within 90 days of March 30 to avoid penalties on overdue balance;

h) It is understood the 90 day deferral is not waiving fees but rather delays a payment due to a future date without penalty. This deferral does not cancel the payment, it still must be made at a future date. Waiving penalty and interest fees means that payments that are made late do not incur any further penalty until the 90 days period from March 30, 2020. Tax payers can choose to pay their taxes as originally billed and according to the due dates previously billed. If customers choose not to pay, only the original instalment amount as billed remains in arrears;

i) The City will do its best to accommodate all requests for cancellation of the pre-authorized tax payment program but cannot guarantee that all requests can be processed prior to the April withdrawal due dates;

j) That staff report back on implementing the foregoing;

k) That billing and collection for Water/Wastewater accounts continue, but residents be permitted to defer payment for up to 60 days without any penalty.

A recorded vote was taken:

In favour: (4): Councillor Muench, Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola, Councillor Chan, Councillor Liu

Opposed: (5): Councillor West, Councillor Beros, Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli, Mayor Barrow, Councillor Cilevitz

Motion Failed to Carry (4 to 5)

Moved by: Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli

Seconded by: Councillor Beros

a) That the 2020 interim tax levy instalment date of May 1st be deferred to June 1, 2020;

b) That the charging of Penalties and Interest for late payment of taxes, continue to be waived through to May 31, 2020;

c) That the 2020 interim tax levy instalments for the months of May and June for properties enrolled in the City's pre-authorized payment plan, be maintained and that staff provide flexibility to defer payments upon request by the property owner;

d) That billing and collection for Water/Wastewater accounts continue, but that overdue accounts not be transferred to the Property Tax account, for the period to May 31, 2020;

- e) That the necessary by-laws be enacted;
- f) That staff continue to work to extend the deferral period for taxes and fees, in full consultation with the Region of York and the Government of Ontario, and report back at the Special Council Meeting April 1, 2020.

A recorded vote was taken:

In favour: (8): Councillor Liu, Councillor Cilevitz, Mayor Barrow, Councillor Chan, Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola, Councillor Beros, Councillor West, Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli

Opposed: (1): Councillor Muench

Carried (8 to 1)

3.3 SRCS.20.11 - Suspension of Overnight Parking Restriction Enforcement and the Residential Temporary Parking Permit Program

Moved by: Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli
Seconded by: Councillor Beros

- a) That enforcement associated with Section 3.7 (o) and (p) of the Parking Regulation By-law 402-89, (Municipal Code Section 1116.3.7(o) and 1116.3.7 (p)), being the prohibitions against parking on a highway between the hours of 3 am and 6 am (April to November) or 1 am and 7 am (December to March), be temporarily suspended;
- b) That the residential Temporary Parking Permit program be temporarily cancelled so that residents do not need to obtain a permit to park on streets overnight;
- c) That the Commissioner of Community Services be delegated authority to end the above temporary suspensions as appropriate.

A recorded vote was taken:

In favour: (9): Regional and Local Councillor Perrelli, Councillor Liu, Councillor Beros, Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola, Councillor Muench, Mayor Barrow, Councillor West, Councillor Chan, Councillor Cilevitz

Opposed: (0): None

Carried Unanimously (9 to 0)

4. By-law to Confirm the Proceedings of Council at this Meeting

4.1 By-law 41-20

Moved by: Councillor West

Seconded by: Councillor Chan

That By-law 41-20, A By-law to confirm the proceedings of Council at this meeting, be passed.

Carried Unanimously

5. Adjournment

Moved by: Councillor West

Seconded by: Councillor Chan

That the meeting be adjourned.

Carried Unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

Dave Barrow, Mayor

Stephen M.A. Huycke, City Clerk