

Pontiac Council - majority pass tax bylaw

Mo Laidlaw

The first regular meeting of Pontiac municipal council of 2021 was held on 12 January at 7:30 pm, by teleconference. About 16 members of the public joined the council, director general Pierre Said, and director of finance Ginette Chevrier Bottrill.

Public input

Joanne Marcotte asked about the business tax rate. "It's more like 5% increase, not 1.9%." (Actually 1.6% increase for business tax rate). Mayor Joanne Labadie explained that the tax bill is made up of taxes, plus fees for services such as sewer and water (in Quyon) that are only paid by users. "Last year there was a deficit for the water plant, the electricity alone was \$47,000, so it was necessary to increase the fee for water supply." Mme Chevrier Bottrill added: "A few years ago the municipality established different taxation categories. Most farmers get a tax rebate for their land. The business tax rate (1.1455 per \$100 evaluation) is lower or on a par with other municipalities, but in some municipalities, for example in Chelsea, businesses have to arrange their own garbage pickup. Most businesses can claim expenses against income tax."

Seven emails were received from members of the Plage Pierre-Tremblay road association, attempting to obtain municipal funds for snow ploughing etc. Mayor Joanne Labadie replied that the municipality has reserved funds in its budget which cannot be disbursed before permission is received from Municipal Affairs, because it is not a municipal road. The municipality has been working on this for 18 months, but Québec government policy is not to spend municipal funds on private property. The municipality may be fined if it does not conform to the municipal code. On the evaluation roll the 1.6 acres of ch Dollard (for example) belongs to the estate of Pierre Tremblay. In theory the 25 households should also not receive door to door garbage pickup. One solution is for residents to bring the road up to the standard required for a municipal road (width, drainage etc) so it can be taken over by the municipality.

Bylaw setting tax rates and service charges for 2021

Bylaw 01-21 was passed by a majority with Councillors Draper Maxsom and McDonald voting against.

(Selected information, see the municipal website for complete information.)

Residential and farm tax rate per \$100 evaluation: 0.7111, up 1.9%.

Non-residential (business) tax rate: 1.1445, up 1.6%.

Garbage service fee (residence): \$170.90, up 3.9%.

Recycling fee (residence): \$62.13, down 2.8%.

Additional fees for Quyon residents:

sewer (residence): \$328.48, up 6.5%.

water infrastructure, sector tax (residence): \$159.33, up 0.3%.

water supply (residence): \$523.72, up 12.2%.

Public Works

Notice of a motion for an umbrella borrowing bylaw (02-21) to borrow \$2 million for road works over 20 years was given.

A call for tenders was authorized for rehabilitating ch Tremblay with flexible paving, for 4 km from route 148, at an estimated cost of \$1 million. A Ministry of Transport grant will be applied for. A second call for tenders for an engineering firm to supervise this work was passed. Councillor Draper Maxsom voted against both, saying that ch Steele Line and ch Hammond had been on the

triennial program for several years and should be fixed first. Mayor Labadie replied that this was decided at the budget planning meetings.

Fire department

Samuel Jacques is hired as a volunteer firefighter. He has Pompier 1 certification.

Planning

Council supported an application to the CPTAQ to allow the “construction” of a house at 170 ch Alary. The house already exists, was built in 1981. This is to regularize its existence on farmland. A minor variance for an existing house at 239 ch Cedarvale, is to regularize it although it is on a lot that is smaller and with a smaller frontage than the current norm for unserviced lots. This will enable renovation work to be done.

Municipality still at work

There were no public questions at the end of the meeting. Mayor Labadie took the opportunity to say that most municipal services are still working despite the apparently empty parking lot at the town hall. Office employees are working from home and are accessible by phone (819-455-2401) or email. See telework/télétravail on the municipal website for details.

Mo's reports are archived at: www.heritagepontiac.ca/Municipality

The municipal website is www.municipalitepontiac.com