

Pontiac Council - new directors & inspectors hired

Mo Laidlaw

The regular monthly meeting of Pontiac municipal council was held on 24 August 2021 at 7:30 pm, by teleconference. As usual about 10 members of the public joined council and director general Pierre Said online.

Public input

Wendy Ryan emailed questions about the lots acquired by the municipality in Plage Bélisle, following the floods. She is concerned about ragweed that isn't cut and people using municipal lots for unauthorized storage. Mayor Joanne Labadie replied that when she inspected (the day before) there was little ragweed, various neighbours have already cut the weeds. The municipality doesn't own a mower as it contracts out grass cutting. She apologized for not replying to Ryan's emails as they had been forwarded to public works or the planning department for action. These departments are short staffed and very busy, with all 12 public works employees now involved in preparation work on ch Tremblay. The mayor said that she will meet with the beach association to see if there is a consensus among owners. The municipality cannot fund a park or boat launch if the association wishes to maintain a private road and beach. Some owners may wish to buy lots so that they have enough room for a septic system rather than a holding tank. Permission is required from Québec to sell these lots.

Marie-Anne Davis/Larose asked why council meetings are still being held on Zoom. The mayor replied that in-person meetings are better, but numbers of Covid infections are increasing daily and many of the people who attend these meetings are over 65, so at higher risk. Municipal Affairs directives are being followed. Davis also asked when to expect a reply to a query. Labadie replied that the municipality is short-staffed: Paul Doucet is the new director of Urban planning starting in September along with two new inspectors. The Public works director left in June and the Finance director is on sick leave.

Vanessa Galpin asked "What is considered a priority: there are potholes on Clarendon in Quyon, stop signs and speed signs are needed near the ferry." Labadie explained that the triennial budget is decided every year in November by the 6 councillors and mayor. Sometimes there are changes due to unexpected events like floods and tornadoes. Clarendon, Murray and Pontiac roads are due to be fixed next year. She welcomed Ms Galpin to Pontiac.

Administration

Yves Jacques Savard is hired as Director of finance for 12 months.

A level 1 office clerk is hired on contract for 2 years.

A sale of properties for non-payment of taxes by the MRC des Collines is scheduled for 2 December. Pontiac will bid up to the amount owing plus interest and fees. Properties are listed for sale when they are 3 years in arrears. The owners are advised many times by the taxation department about their unpaid tax bill and about the sale. After the auction there is still a one year delay in which the defaulting owner can pay what is due. Councillor McDonald asked, what if there is a mortgage? Usually the bank would bid on such properties.

Because of the municipal elections on 7 November, dates of council meeting have changed. Instead of the second Tuesday, the October meeting will be on the 5th and the November meeting on the 23rd.

Fire department

Councillor McDonald queried the wisdom of paying up to \$20,000 to Battleshield to repair an “old” fire truck with a faulty pump. Councillor Howard, a long-time volunteer fire fighter, said a new pump will cost about \$7,000 but other issues might be found. If fixed the 2003 truck will have many years of useful life left, while a new truck would cost \$500,000. He reminded McDonald that councillors are accountable for their decisions, and should err on the side of safety. Fire Director Kevin Mansey confirmed by phone that the fire department needs this truck, which has many good years left. Finally the resolution was passed unanimously.

Planning

Council approved the hiring of a new planning inspector, Georges Apreutesei, as well as an inspector on a one year contract, Lianne Couture-Dubé.

Council voted against the advice of the planning committee (CCU) and supported the request to the CPTAQ by the owners of 710 ch Tremblay to build a residence on 3762 m² of already subdivided farm land, which according to the request is too wet for prime farmland.

There were three request for minor variances:

The owners of 33 ch de la Rivière, a 3751 m² lot, want to put a 2nd entry on the main facade, for a bi-generational dwelling. This was refused by the CCU: 2 unit dwellings are not allowed in zone 8. Council accepted the variance on condition that the 2nd door is on the side to avoid the appearance of a duplex, and the unit cannot become a rental apartment in future.

The owners of 123 croissant Bingley (off Rivière), want to put a shed 3.6 m from the front margin, closer than the 10 m norm. Because this is at the end of a dead end and there are constraints due to trees and the flood zone this was accepted.

The owner of 239 ch Cedarvale wants to put an attached garage 2 m from the side margin, while the norm is 5 m. The flood zone limits the usable area, and for a detached garage the norm is 2 m. This variance was accepted on condition that the garage never becomes habitable, as no habitation is allowed within 5 m. Councillor Patry voted against.

Recreation

The mandate to install the lighting system at the Luskville Recreation Park is awarded to Gannon Blackburn Electric Inc, for \$100,989.64 (lowest of 2 offers) to be paid by the BlueJays grant and the Ministry of Education.

Lauriault Électrique won the contract to install LED lighting in the Luskville community centre for \$9761.38.

The municipality donates \$1500 to the Pontiac Agricultural Society for Shawville Fair.

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

The municipal website is www.municipalitepontiac.com