

Meeting of the ROMA Board

Thursday, October 12, 2017

9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

AMO Office
200 University Avenue, Suite 801
Toronto, Ontario

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Chair Ronald Holman, Mayor, Township of Rideau Lakes (Zone 7)
Past Chair Ron Eddy, Mayor, County of Brant
First Vice-Chair Allan Thompson, Mayor, Town of Caledon (Zone 4)
Second Vice-Chair Liz Danielsen, Deputy Reeve, Township of Algonquin Highlands (Zone 5)

Zone and AMO Rural Caucus Representatives

Bill Bilton, Councillor, Township of Dawn-Euphemia (Zone 1)
Ric Bresee, Councillor, County of Lennox and Addington (Zone 6)
Liz Danielsen, Deputy Reeve, Township of Algonquin Highlands (Zone 5)
Eli El-Chantiry, Councillor, City of Ottawa, West Carlton-March Ward (Zone 8)
Liz Huff, Councillor, Township of Leeds & the Thousand Islands (AMO Rural Caucus)
Bill Vrebosch, Mayor, Township of East Ferris (Zone 9)
Mark Wales, Councillor, Township of Malahide (AMO Rural Caucus)
Chris White, Mayor, Township of Guelph-Eramosa (Zone 2)
Chris Wray, CAO/Clerk-Treasurer, Municipality of Wawa (AMO Rural Caucus)

Staff:

Executive Treasurer Afshin Majidi
Senior Advisor Cathie Brown
Policy Advisor Leslie Muñoz

Regrets:

Robert Pasuta, Councillor, Ward 14, City of Hamilton (Zone 3)

1. Chair's Welcome

Chair Ron Holman welcomed Board members and staff to the meeting.

2. Declaration

- Pecuniary interest – none
- Early departure – none

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

3. Approval of August 13, 2017 Board Meeting Minutes

Moved by Chris Wray
Seconded by Ron Eddy

“That staff be directed to pay ROMA’s Agscape membership invoice; and

That the Minutes of the August 13, 2017 ROMA Board of Directors Meeting be approved as circulated.”

CARRIED

- 3a. Business Arising from Minutes

The ROMA Board clarified that it appreciates the changes made on OPP Billing Property Counts, but contends that more improvements are possible to address a lack of fairness in distributing costs.

Moved by Liz Danielson
Seconded by Allan Thompson

“That ROMA write the Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services on OPP Billing/Property Counts as per the August 13, 2017 Minutes, to thank the Minister for resolving this issue and to encourage further discussion on other types of properties.”

CARRIED

4. Executive-Treasurer’s Report

Moved by Liz Huff
Seconded by Allan Thompson

“That the August 2017 Financial Statements be accepted as presented.”

CARRIED

5. 2018 ROMA Conference

ROMA Board Registration and Accommodation:

The ROMA Board discussed Board registration and accommodation costs during the 2018 ROMA Conference.

Moved by Mark Wales
Seconded by Liz Huff

"That current policy be amended so that Board members' conference registrations are covered by ROMA for 2018 and beyond; and

That registration fees will be refunded to the individuals or municipalities which have already paid for the Board members' registration."

CARRIED

Conference Planning Update: Chair Holman said that the ROMA 2018 agenda is nearing finalization. There are 445 paid registrations for ROMA 2018 on the books so far, 9% ahead of this time last year.

FONOM/NOMA will have a hospitality suite and AMO's County Caucus will be hosting a breakout session.

It may be useful to address changes to provincial cemetery policies given implications for municipalities, particularly small and rural. ROMA will monitor the file and determine whether cemetery policy should be addressed in a ROMA Conference session next year.

The ROMA Board agreed that the Governor General should be invited to speak at the 2019 ROMA Conference.

Moved by Chris Wray
Seconded by Allan Thompson

"That ROMA discuss cemetery issues at a future Board meeting; and

That the update be received."

CARRIED

6. Strategic Plan Implementation

Chris Wray provided an update on the implementation of the strategic plan, including the possibility of changing the ROMA bylaw, improving ROMA/Board Member visibility, election asks, the relationship with AMO and increasing engagement with provincially elected officials. ROMA discussed the possibility of having a rural lobby day at Queen's Park on top of engagement with the Province at the ROMA Conference.

Moved by Liz Danielson
Seconded by Eli El-Chantiry

"That the update be received."

CARRIED

7. 2018 Proposed ROMA Meeting Dates

The Board discussed strategies to strengthen ROMA's brand in Northern Ontario and to broaden ROMA's understanding of rural issues specific to different regions of the Province. It was proposed that a ROMA Board meeting be held in the North to work towards these objectives. This meeting may replace the mid-term meeting.

Moved by Bill Vrebosch
Seconded by Chris Wray

"That the proposed list of meeting dates be approved; and

That the ROMA Acting Executive Director be directed to plan a May or June 2018 ROMA Board meeting in Wawa, with arrangements to be determined at a later time."

CARRIED

TIMED ITEMS

8. #OnMuni Online: Digital Transformation and Opportunities

Nicholas Ruder, LAS Research Advisor, gave a presentation on the AMO/LAS Project: #OnMuni Online: Digital Transformation and Opportunities.

Following the presentation, the Board discussed the need for governments to adapt to digitalization and the particular challenges faced by small, rural and northern municipalities (such as broadband access, limited resources to hire digital expertise, labour gaps in rural areas). AMO and LAS are beginning to explore potential solutions and may play a role in facilitating a sector-wide municipal response to the ever-evolving digital environment.

The ROMA Conference committee will explore the possibility of adding Digital Government to the program for ROMA 2018.

Moved by Ron Eddy
Seconded by Liz Huff

"That ROMA write a letter of support to Ontario's Chief Digital Officer; and

That the report be received."

CARRIED

9. Natural Heritage Linkages

Ala Boyd and Alan Dextrase, Natural Heritage Section, Natural Resources Conservation Policy Branch, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) gave a presentation on National Heritage Selection and mapping in Ontario.

ROMA discussed the need to groundtruth MNRF mapping because of inaccurate classifications that fail to consider weather/seasonal changes, drainage requirements, and more. The Board communicated that private landlords are upset about lands being inaccurately classified, and undeveloped/inactive lands being classified as natural heritage when they have the potential to be developed for agricultural purposes. MNRF needs finer scale data and municipal refinement may be useful. The Province should address mapping errors.

Moved by Eli El-Chantiry
Seconded by Allan Thompson

"That the report be received."

CARRIED

POLICY ITEMS

10. Policy Update

Cathie Brown provided an update on the Conservation Authorities service review, ongoing wetlands work, watershed planning, local government's role in Crown's duty to consult, Bill 148, Bill 139, the legalization of recreational cannabis-consumption and on waste-free Ontario.

Board members requested a presentation on changes to waste management. They also discussed receiving a presentation for the Board and a webinar for the municipal sector on the cannabis file, as it moves forward.

Moved by Allan Thompson
Seconded by Chris Wray

"That Ric Bresee to be appointed as the ROMA representative to AMO's Indigenous Relations Taskforce."

CARRIED

Moved by Eli El-Chantiry
Seconded by Allan Thompson

"That a letter be written supporting AMO's position on Cannabis Legalisation and Regulation, expressing concerns focused on financial costs and rural implications."

CARRIED

**Moved by Liz Danielson
Seconded by Eli El-Chantiry**

"That the Policy Update be received."

CARRIED

DISCUSSION ITEMS

11. Sprinklers in Retirement Homes

Liz Huff said that the Province has created a program providing retirement homes with funding to retrofit facilities with sprinklers to increase fire safety.

**Moved by Liz Huff
Seconded by Liz Danielson**

"That ROMA write letter to Minister of Seniors Affairs expressing appreciation for these efforts."

CARRIED

11a. Proposed Leadership Research Project: Advanced Agricultural Leadership Program.

The ROMA board discussed leveraging its relationship with the Rural Ontario Institute (ROI) to access and promote research on issues impacting rural Ontario.

**Moved by Liz Huff
Seconded by Chris White**

"That ROMA apply to participate in this ROI initiative."

CARRIED

12. Nuclear Waste Management Ontario Municipal Forum

The NWMO Municipal Forum meets four times a year to discuss nuclear waste issues. Chris White has represented ROMA in the past but no longer has capacity. The file impacts rural Ontario because nuclear waste trucks may transit through rural regions.

Moved by Eli El-Chantiry
Seconded by Allan Thompson

“That Liz Huff be appointed to participate in this forum on behalf of ROMA.”

CARRIED

13. Removal of the Weather Network from Basic Subscription

Chair Holman advised that the Weather Network may be removed from basic cable subscription. Such a change would negatively impact rural municipalities because the Weather Network provides an essential service and is important for the agricultural sector.

Moved by Allan Thompson
Seconded by Mark Wales

“That ROMA write to the CRTC in favour of keeping the Weather Network a part of basic cable as it is essential to the rural economy.”

CARRIED

14. High Speed Rail

Chair Holman said that high-speed rail between Windsor and Toronto will cut across rural Ontario and more information is necessary to determine impact on rural communities. Staff to search for an expert to present at the ROMA Board’s next meeting.

REPORTS OF AMO and ROMA COMMITTEES

15. i) AMO Board of Directors, Rural Caucus Update

No report.

ii) Rural Ontario Institute (ROI)

See item 11a.

iii) Workforce Planning Board

Chris White advised that ROMA’s involvement in the Workforce Planning Board has limited value.

Moved by Chris White
Seconded by Liz Huff

"That ROMA withdraw from participation on this Board."

CARRIED

- iv) Greenbelt Consolidation Policy Group – Allan Thompson

No report.

- v) Drainage Working Groups

No report.

- vii) Agricultural Wildlife Conflict Working Group

Mark Wales said that deadstock issues are becoming increasingly prominent due to changes to the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program. Staff will provide more information.

- vii) Other

No report.

**Moved by Allan Thompson
Seconded by Chris Wray**

"That the Committee Reports be received."

CARRIED

INFORMATION ITEMS (Items 16 – 29)

**Moved by Eli El-Chantiry
Seconded by Chris White**

"That the Information Items be received."

CARRIED

OTHER BUSINESS

30. Other business brought forward by members

No further business.

31. Agenda items for future ROMA Board meetings
 - 2018 Strategic Actions
 - Waste Free Ontario
 - High Speed Rail
 - Propane Association presentation
 - Update from low carbon economy working group
 - Updates on cemetery policy

ADJOURNMENT

32. Next meeting: Thursday, November 9, 2017, 9:30 – 1:30 p.m., AMO Office, 200 University Avenue, Suite 801, Toronto, Ontario
33. Adjournment

Moved by Liz Huff
Seconded by Mark Wales

That we do now adjourn to meet again."

CARRIED